DESCRIPTION

AJOG MFM is one of two companion titles to the highly-respected American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology, and focuses on the latest research in the specialty of maternal-fetal medicine, or high-risk pregnancy. It includes practice-changing studies on maternal complications; fetal complications including prenatal diagnosis, ultrasound and genetics; as well as prenatal care, intrapartum care, and postpartum issues. The Journal is a forum for trusted peer-reviewed research, preferentially randomized trials and meta-analyses of these trials, to supply researchers and clinicians with up-to-date guidance on how to best manage women with high-risk pregnancies and their unborn children.

Manuscripts with a focus on regional reports and cross-border healthcare delivery can be submitted to the journal’s open access companion title, AJOG Global Reports.

EDITORIAL BOARD

Editor-in-Chief
Vincenzo Berghella, Thomas Jefferson University, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, United States of America
Prediction and Prevention of preterm birth, Labor, Delivery, Clinical obstetrics, Maternal-Fetal Medicine, Clinical trial design

Deputy Editor
Tracy Ann Manuck, University of North Carolina System, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, United States of America
Translational obstetrics, Pharmacogenomics, Obstetric epidemiology, Preterm Birth, Cervical insufficiency, Preeclampsia, Racial disparities in obstetrics

Emily S. Miller, Northwestern University, Dept of Obstetrics & Gynecology, Division of Maternal Fetal Medicine, Evanston, Illinois, United States of America
Perinatal mental health, Perinatal infectious diseases, Perinatal epidemiology, Cervical insufficiency

Managing Editor
Stacy Bolzenius, Hilliard, Ohio, United States of America
Obstetrics, Gynecology

Editorial Board Members
Jon FR Barrett, Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre, Toronto, Ontario, Canada
Chair Southern Obstetrical Network, Multiple Pregnancy, Quality and patient Safety, Preterm Birth
Federica Bellussi, Thomas Jefferson University, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, United States of America
Prenatal diagnosis, Intrapartum Ultrasound, Maternal Fetal Medicine, Nutrition in pregnancy
Suneet P. Chauhan, The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston John P and Katherine G McGovern Medical School, Houston, Texas, United States of America
Abnormal fetal growth, Shoulder dystocia / neonatal brachial plexus palsy, Cesarean delivery, Amniotic fluid assessment

Tsungai Chipato, University of Zimbabwe, Harare, Zimbabwe
HIV in pregnancy, Hypertension in pregnancy, Prenatal diagnosis, Fetal ultrasound, Diabetes in pregnancy

Lorraine Dugoff, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, United States of America
Reproductive genetics, Prenatal diagnosis, Fetal ultrasound, Hypertension in pregnancy, Translational obstetrics

Tullio Ghi, Prof, University of Parma, Parma, Italy
Prenatal diagnosis, Fetal growth disorders/Preeclampsia, Labor and delivery, Intrapartum surveillance, Intrapartum ultrasound

Judette Louis, University of South Florida, Tampa, Florida, United States of America
Obstructive sleep apnea, Maternal morbidity, Maternal mortality, Pregnancy as a window to cardiovascular health

Jack Ludmir, Thomas Jefferson University, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, United States of America
Cervical function in pregnancy, Preeclampsia, Vulnerable populations, Global clinical trials

Dhanya Mackeen, Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine Division of Maternal-Fetal Medicine, Mechanicville, Pennsylvania, United States of America
Labor & Delivery, Clinical obstetrics, Maternal-Fetal Medicine, Clinical trial design, Gestational weight gain and obesity, Diabetes in pregnancy

Jennifer Judy McIntosh, Medical College of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, United States of America
Maternal Fetal Medicine, Obstetrics, Prematurity, Cervical insufficiency, Preterm Labor, Preeclampsia and Hypertensive disorders of pregnancy, Hematologic Disorders of Pregnancy, Basic and Translational Obstetric/MFM research

Mohamed Momtaz, Cairo University Kasr Alainy Faculty of Medicine, Cairo, Egypt
Prenatal Ultrasound, High risk Obstetrics, Fetal Medicine and Surgery

Katsufumi Otsuki, Showa University Koto Toyosu Hospital, Koto-Ku, Japan
Prediction and Prevention of preterm birth, Labor, Delivery, Clinical obstetrics, Maternal-Fetal Medicine, Cervical insufficiency, Clinical trial design

Mario Palermo, University of Buenos Aires, Buenos Aires, Argentina
Obstetrics, Gynecology, Perinatology, Fetal Medicine and ultrasonography

Uma M. Reddy, Yale University Department of Obstetrics Gynecology and Reproductive Sciences, New Haven, Connecticut, United States of America
Clinical trials, Perinatal epidemiology, Stillbirth, Preterm birth, Neonatal outcomes, Racial disparity in pregnancy outcomes, Labor management, Maternal morbidity and gestational diabetes

Stephen Rulisa, University of Rwanda, Butare, Rwanda
Gabriele Saccone, University of Naples Federico II, School of Medicine, Department of Neuroscience, Reproductive Sciences and Dentistry, Napoli, Italy
Fetal malformation, Preterm birth, Infection in pregnancy, Meta-analysis / statistics, Autoimmune disease

Walfrido Sumpaico, Manila Central University, National Capital Region, Philippines
Preeclampsia, Early Pregnancy Loss, Preterm Labor, Normal and Abnormal Labor, Postpartum Hemorrhage

Jorge Tolosa, Oregon Health & Science University, Portland, Oregon, United States of America
Hypertension in pregnancy, Preterm birth, Post partum hemorrhage, Ultrasound, Environmental exposures in pregnancy, Global Health.

Erika F. Werner, Women and Infants Hospital of Rhode Island, Providence, Rhode Island, United States of America
Diabetes in pregnancy, Preeclampsia, Operative Deliveries, Labor & Delivery, Postpartum Care, Cost effectiveness

Blair Wylie, Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Division of Maternal-Fetal Medicine, Boston, Massachusetts, United States of America
Global health, Reproductive Environmental Health, Epidemiology, Obstetric infectious disease

Social Media Committee

Chair
Daniele Di Mascio, University of Rome La Sapienza, Roma, Italy

Social Media Committee
Leen Alhafez, Thomas Jefferson University Hospital, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, United States of America
Martina Ayad, The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston, Houston, Texas, United States of America
Jaime Bastian, University of California Berkeley, Berkeley, California, United States of America
Nathan Blue, The University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah, United States of America
Noelle Breslin, Columbia University, New York, New York, United States of America
Luigi Carbone, University of Naples Federico II, Via Cintia, Naples, Italy
Georgios Doulaveris, Albert Einstein College of Medicine, Montefiore Medical Center, Bronx, New York, United States of America
Vicki Greenberg, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut, United States of America
Vanita D. Jain, Christiana Care Health System Delaware Center for Maternal Fetal Medicine, Newark, Delaware, United States of America
Gabrielle Kattan, East Carolina University, Greenville, North Carolina, United States of America
Shilpi Mehta-Lee, New York University Grossman School of Medicine, New York, New York, United States of America
Sarah Pachtman, Northwell Health, New Hyde Park, New York, United States of America
Jeffrey Sperling, Kaiser Permanente Central Valley, Modesto, California, United States of America
Tiffany Tonismae, Johns Hopkins All Children’s Hospital, Saint Petersburg, Florida, United States of America
Jessica Young, Ascension St. Vincent Women’s Hospital OB-GYN Residency, Saint Louis, Missouri, United States of America
GUIDE FOR AUTHORS

ARTICLE TYPES

A. ORIGINAL RESEARCH

Original Research manuscripts are limited to 3000 words of main text, must include all items listed under 'Article Structure' as described in this document, including a Title Page, Condensation, Short Title, AJOG at a Glance, and Keywords, and organized as follows:

Structured Abstract - up to 500 words (250-word minimum) with the following required headings:

1. **Background**: an explanation of the basis for the study.
2. **Objective(s)**: the purpose of the study (hypothesis being tested)
3. **Study Design**: the setting for the study, subjects (number and type), treatment or intervention, and type(s) of statistical analysis used
4. **Results**: the outcome(s) of the study and, if appropriate, their statistical significance
5. **Conclusion(s)**: overall significance of the results

Main Text - must be organized into sections and identified with the following headings:

**Introduction**: State concisely the study's purpose and rationale. Present only the background, supported by a limited number of pertinent references necessary for the reader to understand why the study was conducted. Do not include study data or conclusions.

**Materials and Methods**: Describe briefly, but in sufficient detail to permit others to replicate the study, its plan, patients, experimental animals or other species, materials, and controls; methods and procedures; and statistical method(s) employed. Institutional Review Board (IRB) issues are to be addressed here as stated under "Human and nonhuman experimentation" in the Editorial Policies section above. If the study was exempt from IRB approval, provide an explanation in this section.

**Results**: This section includes detailed findings and must cite, in numerical order, all tables and/or figures, which should supplement, not reiterate, the text. Emphasize only the most important observations. Reserve any comparisons with others' observations for the Comment section (see below)

**Structured Discussion/Comment**: Do not repeat the details of data presented under Results or present any new data here. Required headings include:

1. **Principal Findings** - a brief statement of the principal findings, limiting claims to those strictly supported by the data, avoiding speculation and overgeneralization. Give equal emphasis to positive and negative findings of equal scientific merit.
2. **Results** - in the context of what is known, i.e. discuss prior similar studies
3. **Clinical Implications** - the meaning of the study; eg, hypothesized mechanisms that might explain the outcomes observed and/or the implications for clinicians or policy makers. Indicate whether additional research is required before the information can be confidently used in clinical settings.
4. **Research Implications** - Unanswered questions; proposals for future research.
5. **Strengths and Limitations** - Strengths and weaknesses of the study, both intrinsically and in relation to other studies, particularly any differences in results.
6. **Conclusions**

Additional subheadings - may be included by the authors if appropriate and will facilitate reading.
Examples of a structured discussion can be found in the following papers:


See below for other details for requirements for randomized controlled trials.

Translational Science

Translational science is typically presented in the form of an original research manuscript; however, the only type of non-clinical research considered must be translational in nature and contain biological implications for obstetrics and gynecology. Basic science without direct clinical relevance will not be considered; please see Editorial Policies for examples.

B. REVIEW ARTICLES

Systematic Reviews

Each article in this category provides a comprehensive and exhaustive systematic review of the literature related to the topic, collating all relevant evidence meeting pre-specified eligibility criteria. Systematic reviews may not be combined with other manuscript types.

Systematic reviews must include a clearly stated set of objectives with reproducible methodology, a systematic search, eligibility criteria for selecting studies, assessment of study quality (risk of bias), an assessment of the validity of the findings and systematic synthesis of these findings. Meta-analysis, the use of statistical techniques to combine and summarize results across studies, may or may not be contained within a systematic review.

Authors must adhere to the PRISMA and MOOSE guidelines (for guidance see Editorial Policies).

Systematic Review manuscripts are limited to 5000 words of main text, must include all items listed under 'Article structure;' including a Title page, Condensation, Short Title, AJOG at a Glance, and Keywords. Organize the manuscript text as follows:

Title: The title should identify the report as systematic review or meta-analysis.

Abstract: Include a structured abstract containing no more than 350 words in accordance with PRISMA guidelines, and with the following headings:

Objective Data sources (including years searched) Study eligibility criteria (study design, populations, and interventions [if applicable]) Study appraisal and synthesis methods Results Conclusions

Main text: Headings and subheadings in the main text MUST be included in the main text and should include the following: Subheadings may be modified to best represent the specific report, please retain the main headings.
Introduction (rationale, explain impetus for Review) Objective(s) Methods Eligibility criteria, information sources, search strategy Study selection Data extraction Assessment of risk of bias Data synthesis Results Study selection Study characteristics Risk of bias of included studies Synthesis of results Comment Main findings Strengths and limitations Comparison with existing literature Conclusions and Implications

See below for other details for requirements for meta-analyses of randomized controlled trials.

**Expert Reviews**

These articles provide concise reviews on a topic in which the author has significant expertise. The manuscript should be comprehensive and balanced, but not exhaustive. Expert Reviews must be evidence based but may include some expert opinion and recommendations. The goal is to provide a concise update on the state of the art and guidelines for clinical care.

Expert Reviews are limited to 3500 words of main text, must include all items listed under 'Article Structure,' including a Title Page, Condensation, Short Title, and Keywords, and include an unstructured Abstract (1 paragraph, no categories) of no more than 350 words.

Subheadings to separate and identify sections of text should be unique to the topic; the 4 prescribed subheadings required for research articles do not apply. To prevent such subheadings from occupying many lines on a page, they should be as short as possible, not exceeding approximately 6 words, and preferably 1 to 4 words.

**C. BRIEF ARTICLE TYPES**

**Editorial**

Editorials are solicited or written by the journal editors, offer an extended comment or analysis of an article published in AJOG MFM. Editorials are not intended to reiterate the related article, but to comment on the general message, the scientific merit, how the article compares to other similar published information, and the potential impact and/or importance of the topic.

Editorials are solicited or written by the journal editors
Maximum words: 1,500, but less than 1,000 preferred
Maximum of one (1) figure or table
Maximum of five (5) references
no condensation or abstract.

**Clinical Perspective**

Clinical perspective articles present practice-related topics which are timely and pertinent to women's health in a brief and accessible style. The article should be well-balanced and based on a critical analysis of the literature.
Maximum words: 1,000, but less than 750 preferred
Maximum: one (1) figure or table, optional
Maximum references: five (5) references
Unstructured abstract (1 paragraph, no subheadings) of 50 to 150 words, and as many alphabetized key words or short phrases as needed for indexing.

Text: Subheadings to separate and identify sections of the text should be unique to the topic; the 4 prescribed categories required for research articles do not apply. To prevent such subheadings from occupying too many lines on a page, they should be as short as possible, not to exceed approximately 6 words, and preferably 1 to 4 words.

**Personal Perspective**

Personal perspective articles share a unique viewpoint, experience, or personal interpretation of women's health care related topics. The article is intended to share a scholarly, professional perspective.
Maximum words: 1,000, but less than 750 preferred
Maximum: one (1) figure or table optional
Maximum references: five (5) references
No Abstract, include as many alphabetized key words or short phrases as needed for indexing.

Text: Subheadings to separate and identify sections of the text should be unique to the topic; the 4 prescribed categories required for research articles do not apply. To prevent such subheadings from occupying too many lines on a page, they should be as short as possible, not to exceed approximately 6 words, and preferably 1 to 4 words.

**Video Articles**

Video articles are intended to visually contribute new information to the existing literature. The article may present original data and new findings, provide a scholarly review of a subject, or demonstrate a high-quality instruction or application of a procedure, or part of a procedure. The video must contribute information beyond the accompanying text. Videos should NOT be a series of text only slides. Video articles are peer reviewed, citable, and indexed.

Format: Video articles should be formatted similar to the structured abstract guidelines for original research and divided into 4 sections: Objective, Study Design, Results, and Conclusion. Submit the title page, abstract, and references as the "Manuscript." Headings may be modified to best represent the report. The start of the video should include the title, list all authors, and an AJOG MFM footnote. Label files - All submitted files should be properly labelled so that they directly relate to the file's content. This will ensure that the files are fully searchable by users. Still Image - Choose a relevant frame from the video which represents the content of the video. This will be used as an image that ScienceDirect users can click on to start playback of the video.
1. Length: No more than 5 minutes
2. Voiceover is acceptable, but no other accompanying music. Narration must be in English.
3. The start of the video should include the title of the video, the author name and affiliation, and an AJOG MFM footnote.
4. Any patient identification must be masked or removed.
5. A Patient Consent must be obtained.
6. Please include acknowledgements as needed.
7. File formats: WMV, AVI, MOV, or MP4
8. File resolutions: Your video files should be in HD 1080P.
9. Maximum file size is 100 MB (after conversion to video format i.e. .mp4)
10. Videos with text-only slides will not be considered.
11. Videos with commercial messages will not be considered.

D. LETTERS

**Research Letter**

Research letters, not linked to items published in AJOG MFM, briefly summarize the results of original data. It is preferred that original research reports which can be succinctly summarized be submitted as a Research letter. Editors may invite authors to submit a research letter in lieu of a full-length paper when appropriate.

Research letters are scientific publications and generally undergo peer review. Authors must meet all of the same editorial requirements outlined in this document (including research conduct, IRB approval, data integrity, data retention, etc.).

Research letters should be formatted similar to the structured abstract guidelines for original research and divided into 4 sections: Objective, Study Design, Results, and Conclusion. Research letters do not include an abstract or condensation. Maximum words: less than 750 words

Maximum of one (1) figure and one (1) table; or two (2) of any of these

Maximum of five (5) references

**Letters to Editor**

Letters to the Editor offer readers an opportunity to comment on or address a specific question regarding an article published in this journal within the last 6 issues. The letter should be formatted so that the author(s) of the published article may contribute a response. Letters to the Editor are published with either a reply from the original author(s) or the statement "Reply Declined."
Letters to the Editor may not include unpublished data, all information must be fully citable and listed as supporting reference (typically Letters to the Editor are not peer reviewed). Personal ideas, experiences, or unpublished cases/reports should be submitted in the form of a new paper.

Letters to the Editor must include an original title, a title page, no more than 400 words, either 1 table or 1 figure may be permitted, and 1 to 4 references. At least one of the references must cite the related article published in this journal. Letters do not include a condensation or abstract. Letters are subject to minor editorial alterations, and may be shortened without author approval.

Reply

Authors are invited to reply to a Letter to the Editor which relates an article he/she has published in this journal within the last 6 issues. Replies may not include unpublished data, all information must be citable and listed as supporting reference, as replies typically do not undergo peer review.

A reply must include an original title, a title page, include no more than 400 words, and maximum of 4 references. At least one of the references must cite the related article published in this journal. Replies do not include a condensation or abstract. Replies are subject to minor editorial alterations, and may be shortened without author approval.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Editorial Policies
Queries about submission requirements may be addressed to the managing editor:

Stacy Bolzenius • ajogmfm.sb@gmail.com
Phone 614-537-2801

Submission Policies
Authors must submit all elements of their manuscripts online at www.editorialmanager.com/AJOGMFM. Hard-copy submissions will NOT be considered or returned. The online system automatically converts source files to a single PDF file of the article, which is used in the peer-review process. Please note that even though manuscript source files are converted to PDF files upon submission, the original source files are required (i.e. word document of the paper). All correspondence, including notification of editorial decisions, and requests for revision takes place via email.

All policies of AJOG MFM, including those related to Conflicts of Interest, Inappropriate Acts, and IRB approval; apply to all submitted articles, including those whose results were presented at professional society meetings.

Double-Blind Peer Review Process
AJOG MFM follows a double-blind peer review process. The identity of the author(s) is concealed from the reviewer(s), and vice versa. This requires that the Title page and manuscript be submitted separately.

Title page, with author name(s), affiliation(s), conflict of interest statement, presentation line, acknowledgements, etc. (see essential title page information). Blinded manuscript, with the manuscript title, condensation, AJOG at a glance, keywords, abstract, main body of the paper, references, tables, figures, etc.). It is important to ensure that no author details appear in the blinded manuscript.

Peer Review Description
The following summary describes the peer review process for this journal:

Identity transparency: Double anonymized
Reviewer interacts with: Editor
Review information published: None
Post publication commenting: None

By using standard terminology we aim to help make the peer review process for articles and journals more transparent, and enable the community to better assess and compare peer review practices between different journals. More information is available here.
Suggested Reviewers
Optional: Upon submission, authors may provide the names, institution, and email addresses of 2-3 potential reviewers for editorial consideration. Suggested reviewers may include anyone knowledgeable in the area of study presented. Reviewers should not be mentors or former colleagues, and ideally should not be in the same city as the author (unless there is no person with the needed expertise outside of this city).

Previous AJOG submission or another journal (not accepted/unpublished)
There are two types of submissions previously considered by AJOG or another Journal.

1) Invited AJOG MFM Submission: An author is invited to submit to AJOG MFM, or an offer has been made to directly transfer the paper to AJOG MFM for consideration. IMPORTANT: Invited submissions, require ALL of the following documents upon submission to AJOG MFM; this assists the Editors in expediting the submission, and in some cases, if adequately revised the submission may not require another external peer review.
1. RESPONSE TO REVIEWER AND EDITOR COMMENTS - Please respond to the reviewer and editor comments as described below. Regrettably, if incomplete the revision cannot be considered. HEADINGS (Reviewer #, Point #) and BULLETS (A, B, C, and D) are REQUIRED.
   REVIEWER 1, POINT 1
   A. Point made by the reviewer/editor.
   B. Reply to the reviewer/editor (by the authors) - you may agree or disagree with the comment - if you disagree, it is necessary to explain the reasons and provide evidence in the form of references, if necessary, in support of your point; otherwise, the reader may question the same point raised by the reviewer.
   C. Provide the specific page and line on which any changes were made.
   D. Provide the textual change in quotations.
   REVIEWER 1, POINT 2 (follow same A, B, C, D format)
   EDITOR COMMENT, POINT 1 (follow same A, B, C, D format)
2. TRACK CHANGES, EDITED MANUSCRIPT - Submit a copy of the revised manuscript using the "track changes" feature on Microsoft Word or, if this feature is unavailable, underline all changes.
3. REVISED MANUSCRIPT - Submit a clean, non-edited final version of the revised paper.

2. Voluntary Submission: We welcome all submissions; an invitation is not required. The cover letter should include a notation that the paper previously considered by AJOG or another Journal and is a voluntary submission. The manuscript does not need to be revised prior to submission with detailed answers to AJOG Reviewers. Once the submission is evaluated at AJOG MFM, the editors may request response to AJOG reviewers, and additional reviews and information.

Editorial Decisions
Submitted manuscripts are screened by the editorial board and final decisions are made by the Journal Editors. Some papers are declined immediately, without external peer review.

Appeals Policy
An author may appeal an editorial decision within 30 days of receipt of the decision to decline a manuscript for publication. The editor's decision may be appealed only if the decision to decline involved a serious mistake, and not merely a judgment call that could have gone either way. Only one appeal is permitted per manuscript, and decisions on appeals are final. New submissions take precedence for the editors over appeals. The basis for an appeal must be set forth clearly and fully in writing by the corresponding author.

The formal letter of appeal should be sent to the Managing Editor, who will forward the written appeal to the appropriate person(s). A formal appeal will only be considered if the letter clearly states why the decision to decline is mistaken, and specific responses to any reviewer comments that seem to have contributed to the decision of `decline to publish', are provided.

AJOG MFM is able to accept a relatively small percentage of submissions; regrettably, some good quality papers, with favorable peer review comments are declined. Appeals or requests for additional reviews will not be considered for such papers with accurate reviews.
Open Access
Please visit our Open Access page (https://www.elsevier.com/journals/american-journal-of-obstetrics-and-gynecology-mfm/2589-9333/open-access) for more information.

Submission declaration
Submission of an article implies that the work described has not been published previously (except in the form of an abstract, a published lecture or academic thesis, or as an electronic preprint, see https://www.elsevier.com/postingpolicy and 'Multiple, redundant or concurrent publication' for more information), that it is not under consideration for publication elsewhere, that its publication is approved by all authors and tacitly or explicitly by the responsible authorities where the work was carried out, and that, if accepted, it will not be published elsewhere in the same form, in English or in any other language, including electronically without the written consent of the copyright-holder. All submissions are subject to review with iThenticate Professional Plagiarism Prevention http://www.ithenticate.com.

Previous publication
If a report by any or all of the same author(s) has previously been published or is currently under preparation that deals with the same subjects, animals, or laboratory experiments, and deals with a similar subject as the submitted manuscript, the author(s) are to inform the editors in a cover letter about the similarities and differences of the reports. The editors may request that you upload such reports before further review. This requirement also applies to manuscripts in which subjects, animals, laboratory experiments, or data have been added to those reported previously. Please ensure that the final manuscript includes references for pertinent articles published prior to the publication of the AJOG MFM paper.

Scientific misconduct
Allegations of scientific misconduct and breaches of the ethical conduct of research will be assessed by the Editors and referred to the sponsoring Institution for review, inquiry, and/or investigation, and disposition. Examples of inappropriate acts include but are not limited to: fabrication, falsification, plagiarism, repetitive publication, obfuscation of significant research results, violating requirements for experimentation with human subjects or animals, failing to comply with authorship requirements and failing to report significant conflicts of interest. Honest mistakes and differences of opinion about experimental design or interpretation of results do not represent inappropriate acts. AJOG MFM will make decisions about retraction of published work or other actions (such as sanctions) based upon evaluation of the information provided by the Institution and other information available to the Journal. Authors will be asked to identify the sponsoring Institution(s) which is responsible for the integrity of the scientific work and compliance with the regulations to protect human subjects and animals from research risk(s). When the research is sponsored from multiple Institutions, authors will be asked to identify the Institution which will take the lead in handling a potential allegation. If the sponsoring Institution does not have a policy to deal with allegations of scientific misconduct or noncompliance with regulatory issues referred to above, the matter may be referred to a Committee appointed by the Editors.

If authors do not reply by the suggested deadline to AJOG MFM Editorial inquiries, a statement of 'under investigation' may be posted to accompany the manuscript. If the manuscript regards a randomized trial, any journal which might have published a meta-analysis including this trial may be contacted. If a randomized trial has been retracted or is under investigation by another journal, and AJOG MFM has published a meta-analysis including such trial, the authors of the AJOG MFM meta-analysis will be contacted to amend the meta-analysis to exclude this trial. Other actions may be taken as listed in Cochrane Pregnancy and Childbirth Group.

Human and nonhuman experimentation
Authors must follow the ethical standards for human experimentation established in the Declaration of Helsinki (World Medical Association Declaration of Helsinki: recommendations guiding physicians in biomedical research involving human subjects. JAMA 1997;277:925-6). The editors assume that a manuscript emanating from an institution is submitted with the approval of the requisite authority. The authors of reports of human experimentation that require local institutional approval must have obtained this approval before the experiment was started; upon request of the Journal editors, the author(s) must provide copies of the appropriate documentation. Institutional approval must be
indicated in the Materials and Methods section of the submitted manuscript. If the study is exempt from Institutional Review Board approval, an explanation must be provided under Materials and Methods.

For reports of experiments on nonhuman animals or other species, authors must state under materials and methods that the guidelines for the care and use of the animals approved by the local institution were followed. The type(s) of nonhuman animals or other species used in an investigation must be named in the title, abstract, key words, and materials and methods sections of the manuscript.

For images in which the identity of the patient is potentially identifiable, authors must have obtained written permission from the patient(s) on whom the report is based. The author is responsible for filing this in a secure location. The scope of the consent should allow the author to explicitly disclose the information to Elsevier and for Elsevier to republish the information in print and electronic format including journal web and social media sites. Authors must attest to having obtained written consent in the manuscript and must be prepared to provide this documentation upon the editors' request.

All research studies, including those involving patients, patient records, research participants or databases, require ethics committee approval (or documented exemption from the Human Subjects Committee) and informed consent (or documented waiver of consent), both of which must be documented in the paper. Studies on patients, patient records, or volunteers require ethics committee approval and informed consent, both of which must be documented in the paper.

**Trial and research guidelines**
Authors must adhere to the following guidelines when formulating the study.

- **Randomized controlled trial.**
  1. Registration with clinicaltrials.gov (or other registered authority), prior to enrollment. On the AJOG MFM Editorial Management software, as well as in the Methods include the: 1) Date of registration, 2) Date of initial participant enrollment, 3) Clinical trial identification number, and 4) URL of the registration site.

  2. Proof or ethical approval and informed consent. On the AJOG MFM Editorial Management software, as well as in the Methods, include the: Statement of ethical approval with name of approving committee, date of approval, and statement of informed consent.


  4. Data sharing statement. On the AJOG MFM Editorial Management software, as well as in the Methods, include a statement that the authors are willing to share the data of the study upon request of the Editors.

  In addition, after submission, AJOG MFM may request the protocol, and any other clarification regarding the authenticity of the data, as for example done by the Cochrane Pregnancy and Childbirth Group

- **Systematic review and meta-analysis of randomized controlled trials**
2. PROSPERO registration. On the AJOG MFM Editorial Management software, as well as in the Methods, include a statement regarding PROSPERO registration (include date registered and registration number).

3. In addition, AJOG MFM suggests that a separate analysis be submitted excluding randomized controlled trials with these characteristics:

- Lack of prospective (before enrollment of first patient) registration, if published >=2010
- No ethical approval and consent
- Suspicious data integrity, as per Cochrane Pregnancy and Childbirth Group criteria.

Details on why the randomization trial suspicion is raised should be described in details in the text. This separate analysis based on best quality randomized trials should be the main analysis of the manuscript.


- Authors are required to include PROSPERO registration (include date registered and registration number on title page)


- **Health economics.** In addition to the general instructions for authors and other guidelines applicable to the study reported in a submitted manuscript (eg, CONSORT guidelines for a randomized controlled trial; see above), authors of health economics manuscripts should consider certain issues specific to such studies and address them in the manuscript and/or submission letter. The checklist specific to this topic must be completed and included with the general submission checklist. https://www.elsevier.com/__data/promis_misc/ajoghealth.pdf

**Translational Science**

The only type of non-clinical research considered must be translational in nature and contain biological implications for obstetrics and gynecology. Additionally, the direct clinical relevance of every submission is considered when an editorial decision is made. Basic science without direct clinical relevance will not be considered.

As many definitions of basic and translational science abound, please see the following translational science examples to assist you in differentiating study types. If uncertain, authors may email an abstract to either editorial office with an inquiry as to whether or not the submission is encouraged; however, this does not guarantee acceptance.

**Translational science examples**
Ectopic Pregnancy Clinical Study: an observational cohort study which shows that patients with a subnormal increase in hCG maternal serum concentration are at increased risk for ectopic pregnancy. [Encouraged submission] Translational Science (bench to bedside): proteomic analysis of maternal plasma shows differentially-expressed proteins in patients with ectopic vs. normal pregnancy. Or, an experiment in which the fallopian tubes are ligated in pregnant animals and hCG determinations are measured in maternal serum. [Encouraged submission]

Translational Science (bedside to community): analysis of techniques to enhance the adoption of best practices in caring for women with ectopic pregnancy [Encouraged submission] Basic Science: a description of the glycosylation of protein structure of hCG (even if it is based on the purification of hCG from patients with ectopic pregnancies). [DISCOURAGED submission]

Preterm birth Clinical Study: an observational study in which a particular biomarker measured in the mid-trimester increases or decreases the risk for spontaneous preterm labor and delivery. [Encouraged submission] Translational Science: the transcriptome, proteome, genome, or metabolome of patients who subsequently have spontaneous preterm labor and delivery. [Encouraged submission] Basic Science: protein sequence of a particular biomarker. [DISCOURAGED submission]

Authors, Contributors, Disclosure Policies

Every author must provide a signed Statement of Authorship form upon submission. This requirement applies to all article types including, but not limited to: editorials, sketches, letters, and replies.


Each author named in the byline must qualify by having participated actively and sufficiently in the study reported. The basis for inclusion consists of 2 factors: 1) substantial contributions to (a) the concept and design or analysis and interpretation of data and (b) the author’s having drafted the manuscript or revised it critically for important intellectual content; and 2) approval by each author of the version of the manuscript submitted. All conditions (1a, 1b, and 2) must be met. Others contributing substantively to the work, including participants in collaborative trials and persons involved solely in data collection, should be recognized separately in the Acknowledgment(s) section. The corresponding author must confirm that all bylined authors fulfilled all conditions described here.

Authorship by individuals employed by industry

AJOG MFM values high-quality primary original research reports of industry-sponsored trials and requires appropriate attribution of authors, which may include individuals directly employed by industry (that is, companies producing drugs, devices, tests, equipment or companies with an interest in the topic of the article). However, as of October 1, 2015, AJOG will no longer consider authorship by individuals directly employed by industry for the following categories of manuscripts: Expert review, Systematic review. An individual is considered employed by industry if at least 25% of anticipated annual income is derived from a single manufacturer (as defined above). Individuals not employed by industry may submit manuscripts in these areas with the understanding that the AJOG financial disclosure policy is strictly adhered to.

Author Contributions

For transparency, we encourage authors to submit an author statement file outlining their individual contributions to the paper using the relevant CRediT roles: Conceptualization; Data curation; Formal analysis; Funding acquisition; Investigation; Methodology; Project administration; Resources; Software; Supervision; Validation; Visualization; Roles/Writing - original draft; Writing - review and editing. Authorship statements should be formatted with the names of authors first and CRediT role(s) following. For more details and an example, please visit https://www.elsevier.com/authors/policies-and-guidelines/credit-author-statement.

Changes to authorship

This policy concerns the addition, deletion, or rearrangement of author names in the authorship of accepted manuscripts:

Before the accepted manuscript is published in an online issue: Requests to add or remove an author, or to rearrange the author names, must be sent to the Journal Manager from the corresponding author of the accepted manuscript and must include: (a) the reason the name should be added or removed, or the author names rearranged, (b) written confirmation (e-mail, fax, letter) from all authors that they agree with the addition, removal or rearrangement, and (c) written confirmation from that author
that he/she meets the criteria for authorship. In the case of addition or removal of authors, this includes confirmation from the author being added or removed. Requests that are not sent by the corresponding author will be forwarded by the Journal Manager to the corresponding author, who must follow the procedure as described above. Note that: (1) Journal Managers will inform the Journal Editors of any such requests and (2) publication of the accepted manuscript in an online issue is suspended until authorship has been agreed.

After the accepted manuscript is published in an online issue: Any requests to add, delete, or rearrange author names will follow the same policies as noted above and require an erratum.

Permissions
Direct quotations, tables, figures, and any other material that has previously appeared in copyrighted material must be accompanied by written permission for their use from the copyright owner and original author(s) along with complete reference information. Photographs of identifiable persons either must be accompanied by signed releases or all recognizable features must be masked.

Author Rights
As an author you (or your employer or institution) have certain rights to reuse your work. More information: https://www.elsevier.com/about/policies/copyright

Copyright
Upon acceptance of an article, authors will be asked to complete a 'Journal Publishing Agreement' (see more information on this). An e-mail will be sent to the corresponding author confirming receipt of the manuscript together with a 'Journal Publishing Agreement' form or a link to the online version of this agreement.

Subscribers may reproduce tables of contents or prepare lists of articles including abstracts for internal circulation within their institutions. Permission of the Publisher is required for resale or distribution outside the institution and for all other derivative works, including compilations and translations. If excerpts from other copyrighted works are included, the author(s) must obtain written permission from the copyright owners and credit the source(s) in the article. Elsevier has preprinted forms for use by authors in these cases.

For gold open access articles: Upon acceptance of an article, authors will be asked to complete a 'License Agreement' (more information). Permitted third party reuse of gold open access articles is determined by the author's choice of user license.

Author rights
As an author you (or your employer or institution) have certain rights to reuse your work. More information.

Preprints
Please note that preprints (https://www.elsevier.com/about/policies/sharing/preprint) can be shared anywhere at any time, in line with Elsevier's sharing policy (https://www.elsevier.com/about/policies/sharing). Sharing your preprints e.g. on a preprint server will not count as prior publication (see 'Multiple, redundant or concurrent publication', https://www.elsevier.com/authors/journal-authors/policies-and-ethics, for more information).

Elsevier supports responsible sharing
Find out how you can share your research published in Elsevier journals.

PREPARATION
The author(s) accept(s) responsibility that the electronic file is complete and accurate upon submission, revision, and acceptance.

Editing services
AJOG publishes manuscripts only in American English. This includes using US spelling, punctuation, quotation marks, and decimal points. AJOG editors strongly encourage contributors whose English is not excellent to have their manuscripts edited by a professional translator or native English speaker before submission. Elsevier offers authors two services to help prepare their manuscripts for submission to an English-language journal.
The first service edits your manuscript already written in English to ensure it is in correct scientific English. This process does not change the content of your manuscript but improves understanding and readability for an English-speaking reader. This process takes less than six business days and the cost of an average manuscript is less than $400. Please visit https://webshop.elsevier.com/language-editing-services/language-editing/pages/howdoesitwork.html for more details and to upload your manuscript.

The second service translates your manuscript from your language (Chinese, Portuguese or Spanish) into either British or American English. This process is carried out by Language experts within your field, and takes less than 11 business days. The average cost is $1,000. Please visit https://webshop.elsevier.com/language-editing-services/language-editing/translationservices/pages/howdoesitwork.html for more details and to upload your manuscript.

Please note that these services are not mandatory for publication in an Elsevier journal. Using these services does not guarantee selection for peer review or acceptance, and you are not obligated to submit your edited manuscript to an Elsevier journal. Visit our customer support site.

Use of word processing software
It is important that the file be saved in the native format of the word processor used. The text should be in single-column format. Keep the layout of the text as simple as possible. Most formatting codes will be removed and replaced. In particular, do not use the word processor’s options to justify text or to hyphenate words. However, do use bold face, italics, subscripts, superscripts etc. When preparing tables, if you are using a table grid, use only one grid for each individual table and not a grid for each row. If no grid is used, use tabs, not spaces, to align columns. The electronic text should be prepared in a way very similar to that of conventional manuscripts (see also the Guide to Publishing with Elsevier: https://www.elsevier.com/guidemepublishing). Note that source files of figures, tables and text graphics will be required whether or not you embed your figures in the text. See also the section on Electronic artwork.

Use of Statistics and Math Formulae
In describing the statistical analyses performed, state which tests were used to evaluate a specific data set. In tables, indicate which statistical test(s) were used to evaluate the data.

Present simple formulae in the line of normal text where possible and use the solidus (/) instead of a horizontal line for small fractional terms, eg, X/Y. In principle, variables are to be presented in italics. Powers of e are often more conveniently denoted by exp. Number consecutively any equations that have to be displayed separately from the text (if referred to explicitly in the text).

Abbreviations, units, proprietary (brand) names, and symbols
Abbreviations should be avoided whenever possible throughout the entire paper and kept to a practical minimum for the ease of reading. Abbreviations are not permitted in the title or abstract. (Upon editor approval, only extremely common abbreviations such as PROM may be permitted). Use only standard abbreviations, the full word or phrase for which an abbreviation stands should precede its first use in the text, with the abbreviation following in parentheses, unless it is a conventional standard unit of measurement.


Generic, chemical, and/or proprietary names of drugs may be used. When a generic or chemical name is used, authors may insert the proprietary name in parentheses after the drug’s first mention in the text (optional). When a proprietary drug name is used, it should be followed parenthetically (at first mention only) by the full name of the manufacturer and the city and state (US) or the city, province (if appropriate), and non-US country in which its main headquarters are located. Proprietary (brand names) are not permitted in the manuscript title.

Do not insert in any part of the paper the symbol for copyright (©), registered trademark (®), or trademark (TM); if included, they will be removed before publication.
Use of Inclusive Language

Inclusive language acknowledges diversity, conveys respect to all people, is sensitive to differences, and promotes equal opportunities. Content should make no assumptions about the beliefs or commitments of any reader; contain nothing which might imply that one individual is superior to another on the grounds of age, gender, race, ethnicity, culture, sexual orientation, disability or health condition; and use inclusive language throughout. Authors should ensure that writing is free from bias, stereotypes, slang, reference to dominant culture and/or cultural assumptions. We advise to seek gender neutrality by using plural nouns ("clinicians, patients/clients") as default/wherever possible to avoid using "he, she," or "he/she." We recommend avoiding the use of descriptors that refer to personal attributes such as age, gender, race, ethnicity, culture, sexual orientation, disability or health condition unless they are relevant and valid. These guidelines are meant as a point of reference to help identify appropriate language but are by no means exhaustive or definitive.

Article structure

Title page - A title page is required for ALL article types. Include the following in sequence:

1) Title - Authors are encouraged to use declarative titles that clearly presents the key message of the paper, is concise as possible (approximately 12 words), and is suitable for indexing purposes. DO NOT INCLUDE Abbreviations, proprietary (brand names), or conclusion statements in the manuscript title.

2) Authors - List authors to be credited (byline), including each author's first name, middle initial, and LAST NAME (surname in all capital letters), with highest academic degrees (honorary degrees are not permitted); city or cities, state(s), province (Canada and Australia), and country or countries other than the United States in which the study was conducted; divisional and/or departmental and institutional affiliations of each author at the time the study was performed; for authors not called "Doctor," indicate Ms. or Mr. (All authors must meet authorship criteria as described under 'Named authors and contributors,' and submit a signed Statement of Authorship form upon submission of the manuscript.) Present/permanent address. If an author has moved since the work described in the article was done, or was visiting at the time, a 'Present address' (or 'Permanent address') may be indicated as a footnote to that author's name. The address at which the author actually did the work must be retained as the main, affiliation address. Superscript Arabic numerals are used for such footnotes.

3) Disclosure - A disclosure statement is required for all submissions. Refer to the Conflict of Interest section of this document for details. List any potential of interest for each author; if no conflict exists; include the statement "The author(s) report(s) no conflict of interest."

4) Funding - List any source(s) of financial support for the research Role of the funding source. You are requested to identify who provided financial support for the conduct of the research and/or preparation of the article and to briefly describe the role of the sponsor(s), if any, in study design; in the collection, analysis and interpretation of data; in the writing of the report; and in the decision to submit the article for publication. If the funding source(s) had no such involvement then this should be stated.

5) Clinical Trial Registration - required for all clinical trials, include the clinical trial identification number and the URL of the registration site.

6) Presentation - If the findings of the paper was (or will be) presented at a meeting, include the name of the meeting and its number (eg, "the 24th Annual Scientific Meeting" or "the 12th annual meeting"), the organization presenting the meeting, the city and state or city and non-US country (for Canada and Australia, include the province) in which the meeting was held, and the month, inclusive dates (not only the date on which the specific presentation was made), and year of the meeting.

7) Disclaimer - if appropriate, such as for authors employed by the Federal Government or Armed Forces.

8) Corresponding Author - The corresponding author's contact information (who will handle correspondence at all stages of submission, revision, publication, and post-publication.) Contact details must be kept up to date by the corresponding author. Include the individual's full name, address, phone number(s), and email address.
9) Word count - Include the word count of both the abstract and the main text at the bottom of the title page. Word counts apply only to the manuscript text (not counting the title page, condensation, acknowledgments, references, tables, figure legends, and figures).

10) Acknowledgment(s) - This section thanks those other than the authors who have made substantive contributions to the manuscript, including participants in collaborative trials and persons providing only data collection or assistance with preparing the paper for submission or publication. Name only those who have made substantive contributions to the study (see "Editorial Policies").

For each person named under Acknowledgments, including science writers, the following information must be provided: name, place of employment, funding source(s), and disclosure of source of compensation, whether financial or in the form of services or complimentary products. All individuals named in this section must consent to such acknowledgment.

Blinded Manuscript
AJOG MFM follows a double-blind peer review process (the identities of the author is concealed from the reviewer, and vice versa); accordingly, the title page and a blinded manuscript must be uploaded individually.

In a separate file from the title page include the manuscript text in the following order:

Manuscript Title
Condensation, Short Title, AJOG at a Glance, and Keywords
Condensation - a 1-sentence condensation of the paper, consisting of no more than 25 words, stating its essential point(s); this sentence, which is subject to copy editing in conformance with Journal style, will appear in the Table of Contents.Short Title: a short version of the article title, for the identification line inserted at the bottom of each published table and figure.AJOG at a Glance: Applies to both Original Research and Systematic Review submissions. This section is limited to no more than 130 words, 1-3 short sentences or phrases in bullet form, briefly describing your study, its significance, and its contribution to the literature. Responses should be listed in bullet form with A., B., and C., headings (not in paragraph form). Include the questions followed by your responses. All responses are subject to minor editorial alterations and/or shortened without the authors' approval, and published on the Journal website. A. Why was this study conducted?

B. What are the key findings?

C. What does this study add to what is already known?

Keywords - Keywords are a pertinent component in making articles more visible and accessible to potential readers and assist in the dissemination of your research. Provide as many alphabetized key words or short phrases as needing for indexing purposes. Approximately 10 terms are recommended, but do not duplicate terms or phrases utilized in the manuscript title as they are automatically included.

Abstract
On the next page supply:

An abstract that provides sufficient detail for the editors, reviewers, and readers to clearly understand the main message of your paper. Abstracts are freely available on search engines such as Scopus?, PubMed?, etc., and is a key component in assessing the quality of an article.

The type(s) of non-human animals or other species used in an investigation must be named in the abstract. If percentages are used, include the numerator/denominator in parenthesis. P-values should be included for claims of statistical significance. Abbreviations and references are NOT permitted in the abstract (structured nor unstructured).

Refer to the Article Types section of this document for the appropriate abstract format. Abbreviations and references are NOT permitted in the abstract (structured nor unstructured). Graphical Abstracts are also recommended to both enhance your paper and facilitate social media promotion of your article. A graphical abstract can be supplied at submission or the revise stage. Details and examples available here. (https://www.elsevier.com/authors/journal-authors/graphical-abstract).
Text
The use of abbreviations should be avoided whenever possible throughout the paper for the ease of reading. The type(s) of non-human animals or other species used in an investigation must be named in the Title, Abstract, and Materials and Methods sections of the manuscript. The editors require that manuscripts be organized into sections with headings as described under the Article types section of this document.

IMPORTANT: Figures are to be uploaded individually and in separate files (one figure per file). DO NOT embed the figure into the manuscript text file, as this compromises the image quality, creating an unpublishable image (see artwork).

Glossary
A glossary of terms should be provided, listing definitions that may not be well known by Obstetricians and Gynecologists, or the general AJOG MFM reader. Abbreviations should be avoided whenever possible.

References
There is no limit on the number of references (unless noted under 'Article Types' of this document) and preference is given to those that cite primary sources rather than review articles.

If any reference is repeated or out of order, the author is responsible for renumbering references as needed prior to submission or resubmission. If any reference(s) are added or deleted during editing, the author is responsible for renumbering all subsequent references, both in citations within the text (and tables and figures) and, correspondingly, in the reference list. For any citations used in tables or figure legends, renumbering should similarly be done there.

Numbering and order
All references are to be numbered sequentially as they fall in the text. For references that are not cited in the main text but only within table(s) or figure(s), begin such numbering after the numbers in the main reference list.

Insert citations in Arabic numerals as superscripts, not in parentheses. If the reference follows a comma or falls at the end of a sentence, the superscript should follow the comma or the period.

Do not include the first author of the cited reference in the text, in parentheses or otherwise, except as part of the text itself (Smith et al found…. or In a study by Smith et al, ....).

Reference style
In general references follow AMA style. For up to 6 authors, list all; for 7 or more authors, list the first 3 + et al.

Examples:

Journal article - Journal names should be abbreviated according to the List of Title Word Abbreviations:

http://www.issn.org/services/online-services/access-to-the-ltwa/.


Book chapter or section

Personal communications; unpublished data
If essential, these may be cited, within parentheses, at an appropriate location in the text, but not as numbered references. Written, signed permission from individual(s) quoted must accompany the manuscript upon submission.
for additional examples see any recent issue of the Journal.

Reference Sources

Abstracts
Abstracts of scientific meetings can be cited; however; once the complete work is published, the article citation is preferred.

Provisional patent applications
Provisional patent applications may not be cited as a reference.

Reference links
Increased discoverability of research and high quality peer review are ensured by online links to the sources cited. In order to allow us to create links to abstracting and indexing services, such as Scopus, CrossRef and PubMed, please ensure that data provided in the references are correct. Please note that incorrect surnames, journal/book titles, publication year and pagination may prevent link creation. When copying references, please be careful as they may already contain errors. Use of the DOI is encouraged.

References in a special issue
Please ensure that the words ‘this issue’ are added to any references in the list (and add any citations in the text) to other articles in the same Special Issue.

Web references
Websites may or may not be appropriate sources for citation; e.g., websites that serve as repositories of genetic information maintained by NIH, NCI, and the National Library of Medicine are acceptable.

As a minimum, the full URL should be given and the date when the reference was last accessed. Any further information, if known (DOI, author names, dates, reference to a source publication, etc.), should also be given. Web references can be listed separately (e.g., after the reference list) under a different heading if desired, or can be included in the reference list.

Data references
This journal encourages you to cite underlying or relevant datasets in your manuscript by citing them in your text and including a data reference in your Reference List. Data references should include the following elements: author name(s), dataset title, data repository, version (where available), year, and global persistent identifier. Add [dataset] immediately before the reference so we can properly identify it as a data reference. The [dataset] identifier will not appear in your published article.

Reference management software
Most Elsevier journals have their reference template available in many of the most popular reference management software products. These include all products that support Citation Style Language styles, such as Mendeley. Using citation plug-ins from these products, authors only need to select the appropriate journal template when preparing their article, after which citations and bibliographies will be automatically formatted in the journal's style. If no template is yet available for this journal, please follow the format of the sample references and citations as shown in this Guide. If you use reference management software, please ensure that you remove all field codes before submitting the electronic manuscript. More information on how to remove field codes from different reference management software.

Appendices
If there is more than one appendix, they should be identified as A, B, etc. Formulae and equations in appendices should be given separate numbering: Eq. (A.1), Eq. (A.2), etc.; in a subsequent appendix, Eq. (B.1) and so on. Similarly for tables and figures: Table A.1; Fig. A.1, etc.

Supplementary data
Elsevier accepts electronic supplementary material to support and enhance your scientific research. Supplementary files offer the author additional possibilities to publish supporting applications, high-resolution images, background datasets, sound clips and more. Supplementary files supplied will be published online alongside the electronic version of your article in Elsevier Web products, including ScienceDirect: http://www.sciencedirect.com. In order to ensure that your submitted material is
directly usable, please provide the data in one of our recommended file formats. Authors should submit the material in electronic format together with the article and supply a concise and descriptive caption for each file. For more detailed instructions please visit our artwork instruction pages at https://www.elsevier.com/artworkinstructions.

**Tables, Figures, Legends, and Captions**

**Tables**
Submit tables at the conclusion of the manuscript, do not place tables in the body of the manuscript text. Create all tables as double-spaced text in Microsoft Word. Any table submitted as a *.jpg, *.tif, or *.pdf file will NOT be considered.

Identify each table with a brief title (as few words as possible; reserve abbreviations for the key) and with an Arabic number (Table 1, Table 2, etc.) in the order in which it is cited in the text. Each column, including the first, must have a heading. Put all explanatory matter in footnotes, including the spelling out of any nonstandard abbreviations used in the table.

For footnote symbols within tables, follow the style and order noted on pages 90-95 of the AMA style guide, 10th edition. For placement, start in the upper left corner and work across, left to right, and down, line by line.

If a table, in whole or in part, was derived from copyrighted material, a footnote at the bottom of the table must credit the original source, cited fully. Any copyrighted material must be accompanied by a letter or completed permission form at the time of manuscript submission.

**Figure legend**

On the final page of the manuscript supply the following for each figure:
The figure number, figure title, and a figure caption (1- or 2-sentence description). Explain any arrowhead, letter, or other symbol used to identify parts of a photograph, drawing, or other illustration. Spell out any abbreviations used. In photomicrographs, explain the internal scale and identify the method of staining, if appropriate. If a figure was previously published by any of the bylined authors or others, insert a statement that permission has been granted and by whom, as well as a full citation of the original publication.

**Figures**
Color is encouraged and there is no charge for the use of color figures. Submit each figure individually (one figure per file). DO NOT copy and paste or embed images into the manuscript text file or in a slide presentation. This compromises image quality making it unpublishable. Preferred image formats are: EPS, TIFF, or JPEG. Number figures sequentially in order as they appear in the text, with Arabic numbers (Figure 1, Figure 2, Figure 3A, etc). Assign to each figure a brief title (containing as few words as possible and reserving abbreviations for the legend).

For further explanation and examples of artwork preparation, see artwork instructions to authors from AJOG’s publisher at https://www.elsevier.com/artwork (click on “Artwork and Multimedia Instructions Interactive PDF”).

**Videos and computer graphics**
Authors are encouraged to submit videos and computer-generated graphics; eg, a slide presentation with or without animation and sound. Although the publisher will not edit any video or computer graphic, the editors and reviewers may suggest changes. Any patient identification must be removed or masked. If music is utilized, appropriate permission is required.

Videos must be compatible with Windows Media Player and submitted in MPEG-1 or MPEG-2 (*.mpg) or QuickTime (*.mov) format. The maximum length of a video or computer graphic is 50 MBs or less per clip. Longer submissions may be divided into smaller clips, each of which should be identified at the beginning of that section; eg, Video Clip 1, Graphic 1. A concise legend for each video clip or computer graphic presentation must be included with the manuscript.

Please supply 'stills' with your files: you can choose any frame from the video or animation or make a separate image. These will be used instead of standard icons and will personalize the link to your video data.
For more detailed instructions please visit our video instruction pages at https://www.elsevier.com/artworkinstructions. Videos and computer graphics accompanying a manuscript that is declined for publication will not be accepted separately. If the manuscript is accepted for publication, the presentation will be in the electronic version of your article, and in Elsevier Web products, including ScienceDirect: http://www.sciencedirect.com.

**Artwork**

**Electronic artwork**

You are urged to visit the electronic artwork site (https://www.elsevier.com/artworkinstructions); some excerpts from the detailed information are given here:

**General points**

- Make sure you use uniform lettering and sizing of your original artwork.
- Embed the used fonts if the application provides that option.
- Aim to use the following fonts in your illustrations: Arial, Courier, Times New Roman, Symbol, or use fonts that look similar.
- Number the illustrations according to their sequence in the text.
- Use a logical naming convention for your artwork files.
- Provide captions to illustrations separately.
- Size the illustrations close to the desired dimensions of the printed version.
- Submit each illustration as a separate file.

**Formats**

EPS (or PDF): Vector drawings, embed all used fonts.
TIFF (or JPEG): Color or grayscale photographs (halftones), keep to a minimum of 300 dpi.
TIFF (or JPEG): Bitmapped (pure black & white pixels) line drawings, keep to a minimum of 1000 dpi.
TIFF (or JPEG): Combinations bitmapped line/half-tone (color or grayscale), keep to a minimum of 500 dpi.

**Please do not:**

- Supply files that are optimized for screen use (e.g., GIF, BMP, PICT, WPG); these typically have a low number of pixels and limited set of colors;
- Supply files that are too low in resolution;
- Submit graphics that are disproportionately large for the content.

**Illustration Services**

Elsevier's WebShop (http://webshop.elsevier.com/illustrationservices) offers Illustration Services to authors preparing to submit a manuscript but concerned about the quality of the images accompanying their article. Elsevier's expert illustrators can produce scientific, technical and medical-style images, as well as a full range of charts, tables and graphs. Image 'polishing' is also available, where our illustrators take your image(s) and improve them to a professional standard. Please visit the website to find out more.

**Optional Features**

The following are optional features offered by the publisher and DO NOT factor into editorial decisions:

**Graphical abstracts**

A graphical abstract is a single, concise, pictorial and visual summary of the main findings of the article. This could either be the concluding figure from the article or a figure that is specially designed for the purpose, which captures the content of the article for readers at a single glance. Please see examples at: https://www.elsevier.com/authors/journal-authors/graphical-abstract

The graphical abstract should allow readers to quickly gain an understanding of the main takehome message of the paper and is intended to encourage browsing, promote interdisciplinary scholarship, and help readers identify more quickly which papers are most relevant to their research interests.

Authors must provide an image that clearly represents the work described in the paper. A key figure from the original paper, summarizing the content can also be submitted as a graphical abstract. Graphical abstracts should be submitted as a separate file in the submission system by selecting “graphical abstracts” from the drop-down list when uploading files.
Specifications
A graphical abstract should be a one-image file and should visualize one process or make one point clear. For ease of browsing, the graphical abstract should have a clear start and end, preferably "reading" from top to bottom or left to right. Try to reduce distracting and cluttering elements as much as possible.

Image size: Please provide an image with a minimum of 531 x 1328 pixels (hxw) using a minimum resolution of 300 dpi. If you are submitting a larger image then please use the same ratio (200 high x 500 wide). Please note that your image will be scaled proportionally to fit in the available window on ScienceDirect; a 500 by 200 pixel rectangle.

Font: Please use Times, Arial, Courier or Symbol font with a large enough font size as the image will be reduced in size for the Table of Contents to fit a window of 200 pixels high.

File type: preferred file types are TIFF, EPS, PDF or MS Office files.

No additional text, outline or synopsis should be included. Any text or label must be part of the image file. Please do not use unnecessary white space or a heading "graphical abstract? within the image file.

Highlights
Highlights are optional, which increase the discoverability of your article via search engines. They consist of a short collection of bullet points that capture the novel results of your research as well as new methods that were used during the study (if any). Please have a look at the examples here: https://www.elsevier.com/authors/journal-authors/highlights.

Highlights should be submitted in a separate editable file in the online submission system. Please use 'Highlights' in the file name and include 3 to 5 bullet points (maximum 85 characters, including spaces, per bullet point).

Data visualization
Include interactive data visualizations in your publication and let your readers interact and engage more closely with your research. Follow the instructions here to find out about available data visualization options and how to include them with your article.

Research data
This journal encourages and enables you to share data that supports your research publication where appropriate, and enables you to interlink the data with your published articles. Research data refers to the results of observations or experimentation that validate research findings. To facilitate reproducibility and data reuse, this journal also encourages you to share your software, code, models, algorithms, protocols, methods and other useful materials related to the project.

Below are a number of ways in which you can associate data with your article or make a statement about the availability of your data when submitting your manuscript. If you are sharing data in one of these ways, you are encouraged to cite the data in your manuscript and reference list. Please refer to the "References" section for more information about data citation. For more information on depositing, sharing and using research data and other relevant research materials, visit the research data page.

Data linking
If you have made your research data available in a data repository, you can link your article directly to the dataset. Elsevier collaborates with a number of repositories to link articles on ScienceDirect with relevant repositories, giving readers access to underlying data that gives them a better understanding of the research described.

There are different ways to link your datasets to your article. When available, you can directly link your dataset to your article by providing the relevant information in the submission system. For more information, visit the database linking page.

For supported data repositories a repository banner will automatically appear next to your published article on ScienceDirect.
In addition, you can link to relevant data or entities through identifiers within the text of your manuscript, using the following format: Database: xxxx (e.g., TAIR: AT1G01020; CCDC: 734053; PDB: 1XFN).

**Mendeley Data**
This journal supports Mendeley Data, enabling you to deposit any research data (including raw and processed data, video, code, software, algorithms, protocols, and methods) associated with your manuscript in a free-to-use, open access repository. During the submission process, after uploading your manuscript, you will have the opportunity to upload your relevant datasets directly to Mendeley Data. The datasets will be listed and directly accessible to readers next to your published article online.

For more information, visit the Mendeley Data for journals page.

**Data in Brief**
You have the option of converting any or all parts of your supplementary or additional raw data into a data article published in *Data in Brief*. A data article is a new kind of article that ensures that your data are actively reviewed, curated, formatted, indexed, given a DOI and made publicly available to all upon publication (watch this video describing the benefits of publishing your data in Data in Brief). You are encouraged to submit your data article for *Data in Brief* as an additional item directly alongside the revised version of your manuscript. If your research article is accepted, your data article will automatically be transferred over to *Data in Brief* where it will be editorially reviewed, published open access and linked to your research article on ScienceDirect. Please note an open access fee is payable for publication in *Data in Brief*. Full details can be found on the Data in Brief website. Please use this template to write your *Data in Brief* data article.

**Data statement**
To foster transparency, we encourage you to state the availability of your data in your submission. This may be a requirement of your funding body or institution. If your data is unavailable to access or unsuitable to post, you will have the opportunity to indicate why during the submission process, for example by stating that the research data is confidential. The statement will appear with your published article on ScienceDirect. For more information, visit the Data Statement page.

**AFTER ACCEPTANCE**

**Proofs**
One set of page proofs (as PDF files) will be sent by e-mail to the corresponding author (if we do not have an e-mail address then paper proofs will be sent by post) or, a link will be provided in the e-mail so that authors can download the files themselves. Elsevier now provides authors with PDF proofs which can be annotated; for this you will need to download Adobe Reader version 9 (or higher) available free from [http://get.adobe.com/reader](http://get.adobe.com/reader). Instructions on how to annotate PDF files will accompany the proofs (also given online). The exact system requirements are given at the Adobe site: [http://www.adobe.com/products/reader/tech-specs.html](http://www.adobe.com/products/reader/tech-specs.html).

Please use this proof only for checking the typesetting, editing, completeness and correctness of the text, tables and figures. Significant changes to the article as accepted for publication will only be considered at this stage with permission from the Editor. We will do everything possible to get your article published quickly and accurately – please let us have all your corrections within 48 hours. It is important to ensure that all corrections are sent back to us in one communication: please check carefully before replying, as inclusion of any subsequent corrections cannot be guaranteed. Proofreading is solely your responsibility. Note that Elsevier may proceed with the publication of your article if no response is received.

**Use of the Digital Object Identifier**
The Digital Object Identifier (DOI) may be used to cite and link to electronic documents. The DOI consists of a unique alpha-numeric character string which is assigned to a document by the publisher upon the initial electronic publication. The assigned DOI never changes. Therefore, it is an ideal medium for citing a document, particularly 'Articles in press' because they have not yet received their full bibliographic information. Example of a correctly given DOI (in URL format; here an article in the journal *Physics Letters B*):
[http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.physletb.2010.09.059](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.physletb.2010.09.059)

When you use a DOI to create links to documents on the web, the DOIs are guaranteed never to change.
Disclaimer
Statements and opinions published in articles and communications therein are held to be those of the author(s) and not necessarily of the editors or publisher of the Journal. The editors and publisher disclaim any responsibility or liability for such material. Neither the editors nor the publisher guarantees, warrants, or endorses any product or service advertised in the Journal or guarantees any claim made by the manufacturer of such a product or service.

AUTHOR INQUIRIES
Visit the Elsevier Support Center to find the answers you need. Here you will find everything from Frequently Asked Questions to ways to get in touch. You can also check the status of your submitted article or find out when your accepted article will be published.

© Copyright 2018 Elsevier | https://www.elsevier.com