

**How to prepare a paper for  
presentation: Uniform  
requirements for manuscripts  
submitted to medical journals**

C. BLAKE GILKS MD FRCPC

Dept of Pathology, University of British  
Columbia

# Why?

- Highly educational – become an expert!
- Career advancement/options
- Interact with others who share your interest
- It's fun!!!



# Where to start?

- Read – general and specific reading of journals is key
- Only through reading journals can you gain an appreciation for where new information comes from -> how you might contribute to knowledge generation

# Preparatory steps

- **Choose a problem that is of interest to you**
- **Go to the literature to see if it has already been addressed**
- **IF NOT:**
  - Approach a mentor – discuss your idea
  - Write a ½-1 page proposal of the work you plan
  - Apply for ethics board approval
  - Secure the funding (if needed)
  - Do your study!

# Record keeping

- Design your data collection forms e.g. in excel
- Try it as a pilot on a couple cases
- Collect data on your case series
- Analyze your data:
  - Hypothesis testing - you do analyses that you stated in your study proposal
  - Hypothesis generating – any other analyses you perform
  - Back up data and keep records for at least 5 years

# Title

- A title that states your finding is preferable to a title that states what you did.
- An example: *p53 Immunostaining Pattern Correlates with Prognosis in Vulvar Squamous Cell Carcinoma*

# Authors

- Authorship must be discussed earlier, before work starts
- The author order may change as some individuals do more of the work than was originally anticipated
- Participants must have contributed significantly to the project and satisfy the Vancouver criteria, otherwise an acknowledgement is appropriate



# Abstract

- Create a structured abstract (background, methods, results, conclusions)
- Don't worry about length (it will be easier to see what is most important and cut other elements, if everything is included in the first draft)
- Cut background and methods section preferentially, when the time comes to reduce size

# Introduction

- Decide what single issue will be discussed in each paragraph
- You are only allowed 2-5 paragraphs
- The Introduction should summarize current knowledge (briefly) and frame the research question being asked

# Materials and Methods

- Provide enough information that others will be able to reproduce your study
- You may need to use figures or tables, supplemental information, or make reference to previous publications in which more methodological detail is provided, in order to keep this section sufficiently succinct

# Results

- Your figures (and accompanying figure legends) and tables showing your data must be integrated with your text so that readers can easily understand it
- Remember: a neutral presentation of the data, with NO DISCUSSION. The assumption is that readers can interpret your results themselves and don't need it explained to them
- Only in the Discussion session will you reflect on the meaning/significance of the results and draw conclusions

# Discussion

- Each paragraph (there are typically 5-7 paragraphs) will have a single discussion point, and these should be known before you start to write
- Do not simply restate the results
- Do accurately reflect the literature relevant to your study
- The penultimate paragraph is often used to acknowledge weaknesses of the study, but this is not always done
- The final paragraph is a clear statement of your conclusions

# References

- Cite all relevant literature
- It is acceptable to cite the most recent paper, if it cites earlier literature adequately
- Do not plagiarize!
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**GOOD LUCK!!**