INSTRUCTIONS FOR AUTHORS

1. Scope and Policy of the Journal

Journal of Medical Biochemistry (J Med Biochem) is the official journal of the Society of Medical Biochemists of Serbia with international peer-review. The Journal publishes original scientific and specialized articles on all aspects of clinical and medical biochemistry, molecular medicine, hematology, immunology, microbiology, virology, genetic epidemiology, drug measurement, evaluation of diagnostic markers, new reagents and laboratory equipment, reference materials, reference values, laboratory organization, automation and quality control, clinical metrology and all related scientific disciplines where chemistry, biochemistry, molecular biology and immunology are dealing with the study of normal and pathologic processes in human beings. All manuscripts are reviewed and, after final decision, are classified in the following categories: a) personal view, b) review articles, c) original papers, d) professional papers, e) preliminary reports, and f) reviews of scientific meetings. There are also different reports and news, book reviews, reports on the activity of the Society of Medical Biochemists of Serbia, EFLM, IFCC and other related organizations, letters to the editor, and information about innovations, new reagents and instruments in the field of clinical chemistry.

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An accompanying letter, signed by all authors, must provide assurance that the paper, in whole or in part, is not under consideration by another journal or publication source, and will not be submitted elsewhere unless and until it is declared unacceptable for publication by this journal. Together with the manuscript, authors are required to submit scanned copy of signed original of
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Each manuscript should be accompanied by a cover letter containing a brief statement describing the novelty and importance of the work submitted.

All manuscripts are peer reviewed by at least two independent reviewers. All manuscripts submitted to the Journal of Medical Biochemistry are checked using CrossCheck iThenticate plagiarism detection system for duplicate and unattributed content.

In case of any technical problems, please contact Snežana Jovičić, Managing Editor for Journal of Medical Biochemistry (jmedbio.managing.editor@gmail.com).

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All elements of an article (a), (b), and (c) above, critical to its main conclusions, must be attributable to at least one author. A paper with corporate (collective) authorship must specify the key persons who were responsible for the article; others who contributed to the work should be recognized or acknowledged separately. The Editors may require authors to justify the assignment of authorship.

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Papers are independently reviewed by at least two reviewers selected by the Editors as double-blind peer review. Reviews and original manuscripts are judged by the Editor-in-Chief who decides either to accept (without or with minor modifications), to return to the author for revision, or to reject the manuscript. If reviewers disagree, the Editor-in-Chief may ask for a third independent judgment. After completion of the reviewing process, the Editorial Office sends an appropriate letter to the authors together with the anonymized reviews and editorial comments for the author’s consideration. Usually, decisions are reached within four weeks from the submission date. When papers are accepted subject to revision, the revised manuscript must be returned within approx. one month. Revised articles are re-evaluated by the Editor-in-Chief who decides to accept or to submit to a second review. It is the aim of the Journal to publish papers within six months after their receipt by the Editor-in-Chief.

The authors will receive first proofs for correction.

5. Preparation of Manuscripts

The complete manuscript, including enclosures should be prepared according to instructions given in this section. Manuscripts must be written in clear and concise English language. The manuscript should be written in the third person avoiding the passive voice. Please have your text proofread by an native English speaker before you submit it for consideration. Either British or American spelling is acceptable. At the proofreading stage, changes other than correction of printer’s errors will be charged to the authors.

Type the manuscript (including table legends, figure legends and references) double-spaced using 12 font size on one page of A4 or 81/2×11” paper. Number the pages consecutively (with the title page being page 1) and leave 2.5 cm margins on all sides. Avoid footnotes in the text, use parentheses instead. Papers and reviews should usually occupy no more than eight printed pages; short communications, case reports and letters to the editor should not exceed four printed pages. Each full page of printed text corresponds to approximately 1400 words. Allow space for tables and illustrations within the page limit.

Manuscripts should be prepared in accordance with the guidelines below and should be sent online at http://aseestant.ceon.rs/index.php/jomb/. The electronic copy of the manuscript should be saved as a Word for Windows (.doc) or Rich Text Format (.rtf) file. Manuscripts must be submitted using double line-spaced, unjustified text throughout, with headings and subheadings in bold case (not underlined). Press ENTER only at the end of a paragraph, list entry or heading.

Full length papers and technical reports should have Title Page, Summary, Keywords, List of Abbreviations, Introduction, Materials and Methods, Results, Discussion, Acknowledgements, if available, References, Tables and Figure legends.

Short communications and case reports should be subdivided into Summary, Keywords, List of Abbreviations, and a single section of main text without headings. Experimental procedures should be described in legends to figures or footnotes to tables. Acknowledgements and References should be presented as in full length papers.

Letters to the editor are arranged like short communications but without a Summary.

Title page

The title page should include:

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3. Full name, mailing address, fax phone number and e-mail address of the corresponding author to whom communications should be sent is typed at the bottom.
4. Running title containing 50 characters or less in length.

Summary, Keywords and a list of non-standard abbreviations
The second page of the manuscript should contain Summary, Keywords and a list of non-standard abbreviations used in text, figures, tables, and figure and table legends.

A summary should be short and clear, typed on a separate sheet, and should contain no more than 250 words. It must be comprehensible to readers before they have read the paper. Reference citations must not appear in the abstract, abbreviations should be avoided.

The second page of the manuscript should contain Summary, Keywords and a list of non-standard abbreviations used in text, figures, tables, and figure and table legends.

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Introduction should be clear, pointing to the essence of the problem and the purpose of the study. References related to the problem discussed in the manuscript should be cited. Do not include data or conclusions from the work being reported.

Materials and Methods
The experimental part should include a description of materials and methods used. If methods are widely known, they should not be described, but only references indicated. If the article deals with a new method or modified method, full description should follow. Methods used in statistical analyses should be indicated. Identify accurately all materials, substances, drugs and chemicals used.

Ethics. When reporting experiments on human subjects, manuscripts must include assurance that informed consent was obtained and that the study was performed in conformance with the Declaration of Helsinki ethical guidelines (http://ohsr.od.nih.gov/helsinki.php) as reflected in a priori approval by the local institution's, regional or national, human research review committee. Do not use patients' names, initials, or hospital numbers, especially in any illustrative material. When reporting experiments on animals, indicate whether the national law on the care and use of laboratory animals was followed. Articles which do not give assurance of compliance with these principles will be rejected.

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Results should be precise and clear, statistically processed and expressed according to the International System of Units (SI). Present in logical sequence the data generated using, as appropriate, tables and figures without duplication. Indicate the nature of data reduction and statistical procedures employed with appropriate references.

Discussion
Results should be discussed and compared to reference results. Conclusions should be drawn on the basis of these comparisons. Indicate the conclusions that may be drawn and place them in the context of a critical appraisal of previous work. Do not repeat in detail data or other material given in the introduction or the results section. Link the conclusions with the goals of the study, but avoid unqualified statements and conclusions not completely supported by your data. Distinguish clearly new information from previous finding, and speculation from fact. Problems arising out of the study may be identified, and relevant hypotheses may be generated.

Acknowledgements
Acknowledgements should be placed at the end of the text. Indicate financial support, gifts, technical assistance, and advice. Names of the funding organizations should be written in full. Obtain written permission from those acknowledged by name.

Units of measurement
The units of measurement when possible must belong to the International System of Units (SI) or be non-SI units accepted for use with the SI (e.g. days, litre). (http://www.bipm.fr/3_SI/si.html)

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Submit tables on separate pages and number them consecutively using Roman numerals. Provide a short descriptive title, column headings, and (if necessary) footnotes to make each table self-explanatory. Refer to tables in the text as Table I, etc. Use Table I, etc. in the table legends. Please indicate in the manuscript the approximate position of each table.

Figures
Illustrations will be reduced in size to fit, whenever possible, the width of a single column, i.e. 80 mm, or a double column, i.e. 168 mm. Ideally, single column figures should be submitted with a width of 100 mm, double column figures with a width of 210 mm. Lettering in all figures within the article should be uniform in style, preferably a sans serif typeface, and of sufficient size, so that it is readable at the final size of approximately 2 mm.

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Provide figure legends on separate pages. Explain all symbols used in the figures. Remember to use the same abbreviations as in text.

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Summary

The number and source of data must be stated and conclusions which have a statistical basis must be substantiated by inclusion of pertinent descriptive statistics [mean or median, standard deviation (SD) or interquartile range, percentage coefficient of variation (%CV), 95% confidence limits, regression equations, etc.].

Methods

Experimental design, subject selection and randomization procedures should be described and analytical precision quoted when appropriate. The hypotheses to be tested by a statistical procedure must be stated and where appropriate power calculations for the sample size used should be given (it is recommended that the power is >80%). In case-control studies, clearly define how cases and controls were selected and what matching has taken place.

Statistical tests should be described but need not be referenced unless they are unusual or are applied in a non-standard way. Computer software used should be referenced.

If the paper is reporting the results of a diagnostic trial read the STARD statement (1) and for a clinical trial read the CONSORT statement (2) to improve the quality of your report.

Results

Unnecessary precision, particularly in tables, should be avoided. Rounded figures are easier to compare and extra decimal places are rarely important. Descriptive statistics require an additional digit to those used for the raw data. Percentages should not be expressed to more than one decimal place and not be used at all for small samples.

Normally distributed data should be described using a mean, SD and/or %CV and expressed as mean (SD) or mean ± SD. When data are not normally distributed, following demonstration by tests such as the Shapiro-Wilk test (3), then medians and interquartile ranges should be used in place of mean and SD. Skewed data can often be normalized by logarithmic transformation or a power transformation. The statistical analysis and calculation of summary statistics should be carried out on the transformed data and the summary statistics transformed back to the original scale for presentation. If a logarithmic scale is used, then graphs should display non-transformed data on a logarithmic scale.

Graphs showing data of comparable magnitude should be of similar size and design. All individual points should be displayed where possible by displacing overlapping points. Error bars showing the standard error of the mean (SEM) or interquartile range, as appropriate, can be used to aid the interpretation of data.

The results of significance tests such as Student’s and chi-squared should be presented with descriptive statistics, degrees of freedom (if appropriate) and probability P. The validity of any assumptions should be checked (e.g. conventional t-tests assume a normal distribution and equal variance for each set of data). For 2 × 2 contingency table analysis by the chi-squared test the continuity correction must be applied, and for small expected frequencies Fisher’s Exact Test used.

P values should be reported in full in 1 or 2 significant figures. Describing P values as > 0.05 or NS (not significant) should be avoided. If the results are highly significant and the calculated P value from the computer is e.g. 0.000, then the use of P < 0.0005 is acceptable. Confidence intervals should be stated, particularly for non-significant results.

The conventional use of statistical significance is P ≤ 0.005. If a different significance level needs to be used, then the reasons for this must be clearly stated in the statistical method section.

Discussion

Statistical significance should not be equated to importance and P values should not be compared between different statistical tests. Association should not be interpreted as causation without additional evidence.

Problem Areas

Multiple comparisons can produce spurious and misleading significance values. The primary hypothesis should always be clearly stated, and associations detected by retrospective analysis should be interpreted with caution. Whenever possible a single overall statistical test should be applied first e.g. ANOVA. If this is not significant, then multiple comparisons must not be applied. If it is significant then some form of multiple range test can be applied. If a single overall test is not possible, then multiple comparisons must use a Bonferroni type significance level.

With paired data the differences between individual pairs of data and the variability of the differences are more important than the individual values. Graphical representation should also show the difference between individual pairs, e.g. by plotted lines joining the paired data points.

Standard regression analysis requires data points to be independent (repeated measurements are not independent). The independent variable should be measurements without significant error, e.g. age or time, and the points should be evenly distributed over the range and
have no outliers (this can be easily examined with a scatter plot). These requirements are rarely satisfied with biological data.

Method comparison using regression and correlation coefficients is inappropriate and should be performed using Altman and Bland difference plots (4). If a standard scatter plot and regression line are thought to be useful they can be given along with the Altman – Bland plot. Remember, if two methods are supposed to be measuring the same thing, then it is extremely likely they will be correlated so that a statistical tool correlation not tell you anything new.

If you are carrying out complicated statistical analyses, e.g. multivariate analysis, ROC analysis etc., then it is recommended that you seek advice from a statistician.

References


