Instructions to Authors

Aims and Scope

The Journal of Physical Fitness and Sports Medicine (JPFSM) is an Open Access, international journal that publishes peer-reviewed articles on modern physical fitness and sports medicine. The journal publishes Regular Articles, Short Communications, Case Reports, Study Profiles, Reviews, Short Reviews, Letters to the Editor, and Proceedings.

JPFSM’s scope includes physical fitness, sports medicine, exercise physiology and metabolism, muscle biology, biomechanics, bone homeostasis, training sciences, aging and stress responses, health sciences, circadian biology, rehabilitation, and other interdisciplinary sciences.

As the official peer-reviewed journal of the Japanese Society of Physical Fitness and Sports Medicine, JPFSM serves an ever-growing role in the support of the physical fitness and sports medicine community, especially in Asia. The journal employs rigorous peer review of manuscripts to ensure the highest scientific, publishing and ethical standards for our broad audience of researchers, clinicians, policy makers and others physical fitness professionals.

Manuscript Types

The journal welcomes 7 manuscript types, all of which are subject to peer review.

Regular Articles: Original research undertaken by the author(s) which is novel and significant. Regular Articles should be 6,500 words or less.

Short Communications: Original research undertaken by the author(s), which is more preliminary or has more limited outcomes, than that for Regular Articles. They must be of general or special interest. Short Communications may also contain interesting, potentially significant observations, or negative results that are of narrow scope. Short Communications should be 2,400 words or less.

Case Reports: Brief reports of rare examples or medical cases without precedent, but not hypothesis testing. These articles should be 2,400 words or less.
**Study Profiles**: Study Profiles describe the details of the design, rationale, methods and analyses, baseline data (if applicable), and outcomes to date (if applicable) of clinical trials or cohort studies. Study Profiles provide more information than the trial registry or the methods section of a Regular Article and aim to aid in the prevention of unnecessary duplication of research and increase transparency. Therefore, preference is given to studies with an extended follow-up or implementation periods. Study Profiles should be 6,500 words or less, and must conform to the relevant reporting guidelines listed in the EQUATOR NETWORK (https://www.equator-network.org/), such as the SPIRIT Statement (Standard Protocol Items: Recommendations for Interventional Trials) (http://www.spirit-statement.org/).

**Reviews**: Reviews present novel or unique overviews of recent or important developments in the field. Reviews must be insightful and must address the question(s) of interest using appropriate and fully presented evidence; exhaustive general summaries will not be published. Reviews are usually commissioned by the Editors, however the journal welcomes proposals of 400-800 words, which should be emailed to the Editorial Office. Reviews should be 6,500 words or less.

**Short Reviews**: Short articles that are overviews of recent research from an author’s own laboratory, which should be 2,400 words or less. Short reviews are also commissioned by the Editors, however the journal welcomes proposals of 400-800 words, which should be emailed to the Editorial Office.

**Letters to the Editor**: Constructive comments and questions on regular articles, reviews, and other articles published in the journal. An opportunity will be provided for rebuttal to the authors in question. Responses from the authors, together with the names of authors and names of those submitting questions or comments, will be published. Instead of using the Editorial Manager online submission system, Letters to the Editor should be emailed to the Editorial Office as an attached PDF. (hj-tairyoku@turuin.co.jp)

**Proceedings**: Short summaries of in-progress or completed primary studies that have been presented at the General Sessions of the Annual Meeting of the Japanese Society of Physical Fitness and Sports Medicine (JSPF), but have not yet been published in a journal. Proceedings articles (up to 1,800 characters) are published in Issue 6 of the journal each year.

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*JPFSM* upholds the highest standards in scholarly publishing.

Before submitting a manuscript to the journal, authors must ensure that they have read and complied with the journal’s policies. The journal reserves the right to reject without review, or retract, any manuscript that the Editor-in-Chief believes may not comply with these policies.

The responsibilities of the journal’s authors, editors, reviewers and publisher regarding research and publication ethics are described in full below.

Submission to the journal implies that the manuscript has not been previously published (in part or in whole, in any language), is not in press, and is not under consideration for publication elsewhere.
Authors must inform the editors if any related manuscripts are under consideration, in press or published elsewhere. The availability of a manuscript on a publicly accessible preprint server does not constitute prior publication (see ‘Preprints’).

If authors choose to submit their manuscript elsewhere before a final decision has been made on its suitability for publication in JPFSM, they should first withdraw it from the journal.

**Submission**

JPFSM welcomes manuscript submissions from authors based anywhere in the world.

Submission of a manuscript to the journal implies that all authors: have approved it, warrant it is factual, have agreed to its submission, and have the right to publish it.

**Originality**

Submission to the journal implies that the manuscript is original work. The journal may use Similarity Check plagiarism software (provided by Crossref and powered by iThenticate) to screen manuscripts for unoriginal content. By submitting a manuscript to the journal, authors agree to this screening. Any manuscript with an unacceptable level of unoriginal material may be rejected or retracted at the Editors’ discretion.

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A manuscript can be approved for secondary publication if it meets the conditions of the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) recommendations, and the Editor-in-Chief acknowledges its necessity as a secondary publication. If secondary publication of a manuscript is desired, please submit to the Editorial Office a summary of the manuscript content and a reason for the necessity of secondary publication. A manuscript submitted for secondary publication will be reviewed in the same manner as other manuscripts not previously published.

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When assessing the novelty of a manuscript submitted to the journal, the editors will not be influenced by other manuscripts that are posted on community-recognized preprint servers after the date of submission to JPFSM (or after the date of posting on a preprint server, if the manuscript is submitted to the journal within 4 months).

**Authorship**

Submission to the journal implies that all authors have seen and approved the author list. Changes to the author list after manuscript submission – such as the insertion or removal of
author names, or a rearrangement of author order – must be approved by all authors and the editor.

The contributions of all authors must be described at submission based on the International Committee of Medical Journal of Editors (ICMJE) recommendations as follows:

1) Substantial contribution to the conception or design of the work, or the acquisition, analysis, or interpretation of data for the work.
2) Drafting the work or critically revising it for important intellectual content.
3) Final approval of the version to be published.
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Experiments describing work with the human genome should be conducted according to the Japanese Government’s “Ethical Guidelines for Human Genome/ Gene Analysis Research”.

Furthermore, work in relevant manuscripts must have received approval from the appropriate Institutional Ethics Committee (IEC) prior to being undertaken. The ‘Materials and Methods’ section must include the relevant ethics statements and specify: the study was carried out in accordance with the appropriate guidelines, and the name of the approving institutional review board or equivalent committee(s) with the approval number.

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The journal adheres to the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) policy on Clinical Trials Registration, which recommends that all clinical trials are registered in a public trials registry at or before the time of first patient enrollment as a condition of consideration for publication. Manuscripts describing clinical trials must include the registration number of the trial and the name of the trial registry.

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The journal requires authors to follow the EQUATOR Network’s Reporting Guidelines for health research. Study types include, but are not limited to, randomized trials, observational studies, systematic reviews, case reports, qualitative research, diagnostic and prognostic studies, economic evaluations, animal pre-clinical studies and study protocols.

Author competing interests and conflicts of interest

In the interests of transparency, the journal requires all authors to declare any competing or conflicts of interest in relation to their submitted manuscript. A conflict of interest exists when there are actual, perceived or potential circumstances that could influence an author’s ability to conduct or report research impartially. Potential conflicts include (but are not limited to) competing commercial or financial interests, commercial affiliations, consulting roles, or ownership of stock or equity.

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When submitting a manuscript, authors must declare a conflict of interests (COI) in accordance with the JSPFSM guidelines. In the event the guidelines are partially applicable, the relevant portion(s) should be described in the “Declaration of Conflict of Interest by Self-report.” (Form 1) and uploaded upon first submission of the manuscript.

Authors should declare any conflicts of interest after the Conflict of Interest section as described in the ‘Manuscript Preparation’ section below.

Confidentiality

The journal maintains the confidentiality of all unpublished manuscripts. By submitting their manuscript to the journal, the authors warrant that they will keep all correspondence about their manuscript (from the Editorial Office, editors and reviewers) strictly confidential.

Self-archiving (Green Open Access) policy

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Peer Review Process

Editorial and peer review process

The journal uses single-blind peer review. When a manuscript is submitted to the journal, it is screened by the Editorial Office for the basic technical requirements. It is then assigned to the Editor-in-Chief, who performs an initial screening. Manuscripts that do not fit the technical requirements, journal’s scope or are not deemed suitable for publication are rejected without review. Proceedings summaries are screened for suitability, but not sent to peer reviewers. The remaining manuscripts are assigned to an Editor who assigns two reviewers to assess each manuscript. Reviewers are selected based on their expertise, reputation and previous experience as peer reviewers. The deadline for submission of the reviewers’ reports varies by article type.

Upon receipt of the two reviewers’ reports, the Editor makes the first decision on the manuscript. If the decision is to request revision of the manuscript, authors have 2 months to resubmit their revised manuscript. Revised manuscripts submitted after this deadline may be treated as new submissions. The Editor may send revised manuscripts to peer reviewers for their feedback or may use his or her own judgement to assess how closely the authors have followed the Editor’s and the reviewers’ comments on the original manuscript.

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**Reviewer selection, timing and suggestions**

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Reviewers are invited within 2 weeks of an article being submitted. Reviewers are asked to submit their first review within 2 weeks of accepting the invitation to review. Reviewers who anticipate any delays should inform the Editorial Office as soon as possible.

When submitting a manuscript to the journal, authors may suggest reviewers that they would like included in or excluded from the peer review process. The Editor may consider these suggestions but is under no obligation to follow them. The selection, invitation and assignment of peer reviewers is at the Editor’s sole discretion.

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It is the journal’s policy to transmit reviewers’ comments to the authors in their original form. However, the journal reserves the right to edit reviewers’ comments, without consulting the reviewers, if they contain offensive language, confidential information or recommendations for publication.

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If a manuscript satisfies the journal’s requirements and represents a significant contribution to the published literature, the Editor may recommend acceptance for publication in the journal.

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- within the subject area of the journal’s scope
- novel and original
- descriptions of technically rigorous research
- of high interest to the journal’s audience
- important additions to the field.

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As the journal owner, the JSPFSM has granted the journal’s Editorial Board complete and sole responsibility for all editorial decisions. The JSPFSM will not become involved in editorial decisions, except in cases of a fundamental breakdown of process.

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Authors who believe that an editorial decision has been made in error may lodge an appeal with the Editorial Office. Appeals are only considered if the authors provide detailed evidence of a
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A conflict of interest exists when there are actual, perceived or potential circumstances that could influence an editor’s or reviewer’s ability to act impartially when assessing a manuscript. Such circumstances might include having a personal or professional relationship with an author, working on the same topic or in direct competition with an author, having a financial stake in the work or its publication, or having seen previous versions of the manuscript.

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Manuscript Preparation

Required Submission Form

A completed ‘Required Submission Form’ must be uploaded with the manuscript as a cover letter.

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The title page (page 1) should start with the type of manuscript (Regular Article, Short Communication, Review, etc.), the title, name(s) of the author(s), affiliation(s), mailing address(es), number of tables and figures, a brief running title (70 characters or less). The corresponding author's e-mail address should be included in the title page. An asterisk (*) should be added to the right of the corresponding author’s name.

The Abstract (page 2) should clearly express the basic content of the paper in a single paragraph and should include the problem addressed, experimental approach, main results and findings, and conclusions. Abstracts must not exceed 250 words for all article types. Avoid using specific abbreviations. If it is essential to refer to a previous publication, omit the article title (e.g. Maekawa, S., Endo, S., and Sakai, H. (2015). Sci. Journal., 14: 10–15).

Three to six descriptive keywords should be included after the Abstract, listed in decreasing order of importance. The keywords must be less than 80 characters and independent of each other.

Upon acceptance of an article by the Journal, the abstract will be published on the homepage of the Japanese Society of Physical Fitness and Sports Medicine.

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Title

The title should describe the content of the article briefly but clearly and is important for search purposes by third-party services. Do not use the same main title with numbered minor titles, even for a series of papers by the same authors. Do not use abbreviations in the title, except those used generally in related fields.

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Each abbreviation should be defined in parentheses together with its non-abbreviated term when it first appears in the text (except in the Title and Abstract). Common abbreviations that may be used without any explanation include the list below.

AMP, ADP, ATP, cAMP, cDNA, CoA, DNA, RNA, mRNA, LD50, FAD, FMN, GMP, P450.

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The following units should be used: length (m, cm, mm, µm, nm), mass (kg, g, mg, µg, ng, pg, mol, mmol, µmol, nmol), volume (l, ml, µl), time (s, min, h, d), temperature (°C, K), radiation (Bq, Ci, dpm, Gy, rad), and concentration (M, mM, mol/l, mmol/l, mg/ml, µg/ml, ng/ml, pg/ml, %, %(%v/v), %(%w/v), ppm, ppb).

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Each Original Article should comprise the following main text sections in this order: Introduction, Materials and Methods, Results and Discussion. The Results and Discussion may also be combined as Results and Discussion), Acknowledgments, References. (The Contributions and Conflicts of Interest sections should follow the main text).

Case Reports should be organized as follows: Abstract, Introduction, Case Report, Discussion, References. (The Contributions and Conflicts of Interest sections should follow the References section).

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Acknowledgments

This section should be brief. Authors should list all funding sources for their work in the Acknowledgements section.

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The following are some example statements.
Example 1: AA, BB and CC conceptualized the study design and protocol, and determined the study institutions. DD collected and assembled the data. EE carried out the analysis and interpretation of data. AA drafted the manuscript. All authors have critically reviewed, revised and approved the manuscript.

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Example 3: Conceived and designed the study: AA. Performed the study: BB, CC, DD. Analyzed the data: FF and EE. Interpreted the data: AA and BB. Wrote the paper: AA. All authors approved the final version of the manuscript.

Example 4: AA analyzed and interpreted the patient data regarding hematological disease and transplants. BB performed the histological examination of the kidney, and was a major contributor in writing the manuscript. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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