



Guide to Manuscript Preparation

1. About the Journal

The **Nigerian Medical Journal (NMJ)** is the official publication of the **Nigerian Medical Association (NMA)**. It is a **peer-reviewed, open access journal** that publishes high-quality research and scholarly works across medicine, dentistry, public health, nursing, and the allied health sciences.

The NMJ provides an international platform for disseminating research that advances healthcare practice and policy, with special emphasis on health issues of **regional and global relevance**. The journal is **indexed in major biomedical databases** and welcomes submissions from authors worldwide.

2. Open Access Policy and Article Processing Charge (APC)

The NMJ operates under a **full open access model**, ensuring that all published content is freely available to readers immediately upon publication.

To support the cost of open access publishing, an **Article Processing Charge (APC)** of **USD 150 (or equivalent in Naira)** applies **only upon acceptance**.

There are **no submission fees**.

Requests for **APC waivers or discounts** may be considered for authors from low-income institutions or regions, subject to editorial discretion.

3. Manuscript Categories and Word Limits

Category	Abstract (words)	Main Text (words)	References (max)	Tables/Figures (max)
Original Article	250 (structured)	3,000–3,500	30	6
Review Article	250 (unstructured)	4,000–6,000	60	6
Short Communication	150 (unstructured)	1,500	15	2
Case Report	150 (unstructured)	2,000	15	3
Editorial/Commentary	None	1,000	10	1
Letter to the Editor	None	800	10	1

Each manuscript type must conform to the prescribed structure, reference limits, and word count.

Overly lengthy submissions may be returned for revision before peer review.

4. Manuscript Preparation

4.1 Title Page

The title page should include:

- Full title (concise, informative, ≤20 words)
- Short running title (≤50 characters)
- Full names of all authors (surname followed by initials)
- Institutional affiliations (department, institution, city, and country)
- Corresponding author's name, postal address, email, and phone number
- ORCID iD (if available)
- Word count, number of tables/figures
- Declaration of funding, conflicts of interest, and ethical approval (if applicable)

4.2 Abstract and Keywords

For Original and Review Articles, authors should provide a structured abstract not exceeding 250 words, organized under the subheadings: *Background*, *Aim*, *Methods*, *Results*, and *Conclusion*. Case Reports and Short Communications should include an unstructured abstract of no more than 150 words. Additionally, 3–6 keywords should be provided, preferably using MeSH terms, and abbreviations should be avoided in both the title and abstract.

4.3 Main Text

The main body of the manuscript should follow the IMRaD format: Introduction, Methods, Results, and Discussion. Authors should use SI units consistently and define all abbreviations at first mention. Statistical methods must be clearly described, including the software used and significance levels (e.g., $p < 0.05$), and confidence intervals and effect sizes should be reported where relevant.

4.4 Tables, Figures, and Illustrations

All tables and figures should be numbered consecutively in the order of their appearance, each accompanied by a brief and descriptive title and legend. Data presented in tables should not be repeated in the text. Figures must be submitted at a minimum resolution of 300 dpi in JPEG or TIFF format, and all images must ensure patient confidentiality by excluding any identifiable features.

4.5 References (Vancouver Style)

The NMJ follows the **Vancouver referencing style**.

References should be numbered consecutively in the order they appear in the text and cited using **superscript Arabic numerals**.

Examples:

1. Ismail A, Muhammad AR, Gezawa ID. Carotid intima-media thickness and flow-mediated dilation in adults with diabetes. *Niger J Clin Pract.* 2024;27(3):245–252.
2. WHO. Global report on diabetes. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2021.
3. Page MJ, McKenzie JE, Bossuyt PM, et al. The PRISMA 2020 statement: an updated guideline for reporting systematic reviews. *BMJ.* 2021;372:n71.

5. Ethical Considerations

All studies involving human participants must comply with the Declaration of Helsinki (2013 revision). The name of the institutional ethics committee that approved the study, along with the approval number and date, should be clearly stated in the Methods section. Written informed consent must be obtained from all participants, or a thumbprint for those who are illiterate.

Studies involving animals should conform to institutional and national ethical guidelines for animal research. Authors are also required to disclose any conflicts of interest, funding sources, and acknowledge non-author contributors.

Clinical Trials:

Authors reporting clinical trials whether protocols or completed studies—must include the trial registration number from a recognized registry (e.g., ClinicalTrials.gov, Pan African Clinical Trials Registry, or ISRCTN) in the Methods section.

6. Authorship and Publication Ethics

Authorship must strictly conform to the ICMJE criteria, which require substantial contribution to the study’s conception or design, data collection, or analysis; drafting or critically revising the manuscript; final approval of the version to be published; and accountability for all aspects of the work. The *Nigerian Medical Journal (NMJ)* adheres to the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) guidelines, and any instances of plagiarism, redundant publication, data manipulation, or guest authorship will result in rejection or retraction. Additionally, the use of AI-assisted writing or editing tools must be transparently disclosed in the acknowledgments section.

7. Reporting Guidelines

Authors should follow international reporting standards, including:

Study Type	Reporting Guideline	Reference
Randomized trials	CONSORT	www.consort-statement.org
Observational studies	STROBE	www.strobe-statement.org

Systematic reviews & meta-analyses	PRISMA	www.prisma-statement.org
Case reports	CARE	www.care-statement.org
Diagnostic accuracy studies	STARD	www.stard-statement.org
Qualitative research	COREQ	www.equator-network.org

Authors must upload completed checklists as **supplementary files** during submission.

8. Special Guidance for Review Articles

All **review articles**—including **narrative, scoping, systematic reviews, and meta-analyses** must include a **structured Methods section** describing:

8.1 Review Type and Protocol Registration

- Clearly state the **review type** (e.g., systematic review, meta-analysis, scoping review).
- Systematic reviews and meta-analyses must provide **protocol registration details** with recognized registries such as **PROSPERO, Open Science Framework (OSF), or Cochrane**.
 - *Example:* “The review protocol was registered with PROSPERO (CRD42024567890).”

8.2 Literature Search Strategy

Authors should clearly indicate the databases searched (e.g., PubMed, Scopus, Web of Science, Embase, AJOL, Google Scholar) and provide details of the search strategy, including search terms, Boolean operators, MeSH headings, filters applied, and the timeframe covered. They

should also mention whether reference lists and grey literature sources, such as theses and conference abstracts, were screened during the review process.

8.3 Eligibility Criteria

- Define inclusion and exclusion criteria using the **PICOS** framework.
- State any language or publication status restrictions.

8.4 Study Selection and Data Extraction

- Describe the screening process (titles, abstracts, full texts).
- Indicate whether **two reviewers independently assessed eligibility** and how disagreements were resolved.
- Include a **PRISMA flow diagram** for systematic reviews.

8.5 Quality Appraisal and Data Synthesis

- Identify the tools used for assessing risk of bias (e.g., Cochrane RoB 2.0, Newcastle–Ottawa Scale, JBI Checklists).
- Describe synthesis methods (qualitative or meta-analysis) and statistical models.

Example of Structured Methods Section (Excerpt)

“This systematic review was conducted following PRISMA 2020 guidelines. The protocol was registered with PROSPERO (CRD42024123456). A comprehensive search of PubMed, Scopus, and AJOL was conducted for studies published between 2010 and 2025 using the terms ‘endothelial dysfunction,’ ‘Type 2 diabetes,’ and ‘Nigeria.’ Two reviewers independently screened titles and abstracts; discrepancies were resolved by consensus. Data were extracted

using a standardized form and analyzed using a random-effects model. Study quality was assessed using the JBI checklist.”

9. Submission Process

All manuscripts must be submitted online through the NMJ editorial system:

<https://nigerianmedjournal.org/index.php/nmj/about/submissions>

Before submission:

- Ensure compliance with this guide.
- Proofread carefully for grammar, formatting, and completeness.
- Non-conforming manuscripts may be returned for technical corrections before peer review.

Peer review is **double-blinded**, and editorial decisions are communicated promptly via email.