CDA JOURNAL – INSTRUCTIONS FOR AUTHORS - 2026

Thank you for choosing to submit your paper to the Journal of the California Dental Association. Please take the time to read and follow these instructions as closely as possible to ensure your paper meets the Journal's requirements. Adhering to the instructions will help your paper move smoothly through the submission, peer review, production, and publication processes. See complete guidelines below for preparing and submitting your manuscript.

ABOUT THE JOURNAL

The CDA Journal is a Gold Open Access publication. With Gold Open Access, all articles published by the Journal are immediately, permanently and freely available to all readers. Article processing charges are underwritten by the California Dental Association, and authors pay no APCs, submission fees or other costs to have their work published by the Journal.

The Journal strongly encourages authors to use plain language in writing their manuscripts to help make published research more accessible and understandable to a broader audience.

ARTICLE TYPES – DESCRIPTION & WORD COUNT

The Journal publishes the following article types (word counts include abstract, plain language summary, knowledge transfer statement and references):

-Letter to the Editor

A concise, focused communication intended to address specific issues, provide commentary or offer insights related to previously published articles or current topics in dentistry and oral health. Letters are subject to editorial review and potential peer review at the discretion of the Journal's editor-in-chief.
Word count: 500 + five (5) references

-Discussion

An article that presents an author's perspective or analysis on a topic, drawing on existing research and not presenting new data. The structure of a discussion article should include a summary of key findings, contextualization placing the findings within the broader context of existing literature, unexpected results and limitations of the study.
Word count: 3,000-5,000

-Research

An article reporting on primary research with a clearly outlined research question. Results, conclusion and discussion should directly relate to and answer that specific question. Research studies must be well-designed and follow sound methodology. Studies that make predictions based on inadequate sample sizes or have inappropriate statistical analyses or high risk of bias will not be accepted. While authors may note research requiring further investigation with a larger sample size, weak associations in small samples cannot support predictions beyond that sample. Word count: 3,000-5,000

-Review (Literature/Systematic)

An article that provides a comprehensive overview of the current state of knowledge on a topic by synthesizing and analyzing existing research literature, typically without presenting the author's personal perspective. Reviews should focus on trends, issues and new programs or innovations and should NOT consist of a general review of topics more suitable for a textbook. Word count: 3,000-5,000.

- A systematic review follows a structured and pre-defined protocol to answer a specific research question with a high level of evidence. The methodology includes comprehensive search strategy, clear inclusion and exclusion criteria and a rigorous process for assessing the quality of included studies.

-A literature review (sometimes called a narrative review) provides an overview of the existing knowledge on a broad topic. The methodology is more flexible and less structured, can include a wide range of sources and may not follow a specific protocol. Less emphasis is placed on documenting the search process and evaluating the existing research methodology and criteria for including studies.

-Case Report & Case Study

Both article types share detailed clinical experiences that can generate new hypotheses in dental research and must contain novel, unpublished results. Word count: 1,000-2,000

- A case report is a detailed account of the treatment and follow-up of a dental condition identified in a patient or several patients, often focusing on unique or rare conditions, novel treatments or techniques and unexpected outcomes.
- A case study involves an in-depth analysis of a particular dental issue within its real-world context and can cover comprehensive patient histories, interdisciplinary approaches and long-term follow-up.

SUBMITTING YOUR PAPER

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Please note that the Journal uses the Crossref Similarity Check System to screen papers for unoriginal material. By submitting your paper to the Journal, you agree to this screening process. Please follow the formatting and style guidelines for preparing and submitting your manuscript.for preparing and submitting your manuscript.

FORMATTING & STYLE

Structure your submissions according to Journal guidelines and include the elements (sections) required for each article type. Paper must be structured in the order presented below and include each section subhead. If a section does not apply to your paper, insert "Not Applicable" under that subhead.

STYLE
All submissions must use American English.

- Format your paper in a Microsoft Word document. PDFs will not be accepted.
- 12 pt, Times New Roman
- Double line spacing
- Margins at least 2.5 cm (1 inch)
- References – AMA Citation | Quick Guide & Examples
- Figures, tables and images can be saved and submitted in a separate Word document or added to the end of your manuscript. Submit no more than six (6) combined.

Journal Style Preferences

- aesthetic, not esthetic
- bite mark, not bitemark
- C.E. (continuing education)
- Capitalize only proper nouns and formal names – Do not capitalize stand-alone common nouns, dental or medical specialties, job titles (unless preceding the person's name), etc. When in doubt, don't capitalize!
- credentials - Only academic credentials in author bylines; no society, fellowship or other credentials please.
- four-digit numbers – add comma 1,234
- health care, not healthcare
- journal titles – Do not italicize except as needed in references.

- numbers – Spell out zero through nine; use numerals for numbers 10 and higher; use numerals for all ages.
- pay off, not payoff
- prefixes – Do not use hyphens with most prefixes including anti, co, out, over, mid (except when followed by a figure), mini, mega, micro, multi, non, post, pre, re, semi.
- preventive, not preventative

Editor's Tips

Ensure your paper is well written with proper use of grammar, spelling, punctuation, sentence structure, organization and consistency. Before submitting, proofread your manuscript at least twice, check for inconsistencies and formatting errors, and run grammar and spell-check. If your manuscript does not meet CDA Journal standards of writing and presentation, it may be rejected or returned to you for revision.

PAGE 1: COVER PAGE – AUTHOR DETAILS

Ensure all authors of your paper meet the Taylor & Francis authorship criteria. Anyone who meets the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors requirements for authorship should be included as a co-author.

Add the full name and affiliation, ORCID numbers and social media handles (Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn) for each author. Identify one author as the corresponding author. Their email address will be displayed in the article PDF and in the online article.

Authors' affiliations are the institutions where the research was conducted. Read more on authorship.

PAGE 2: TITLE OF MANUSCRIPT

Maximum 10 words or 80 characters with spaces.

Titles should be written in plain language, be concise and engaging, and accurately represent the research.

Use bold font and capitalize the first letter of each word with four letters or more.

PAGES 3+: MANUSCRIPT

Your submission must include each section listed below with subheads matching this

provided wording. If a section is not applicable to your paper, insert "Not applicable" under the subhead. Click on each link for details about each section.

IMPORTANT: All research, review, discussion, case study and case report submissions must include a Plain Language Summary and Knowledge Transfer Statement (see guidelines below).

ABSTRACT
All submissions must include an abstract written in plain language and structured as follows according to the article type. Word count: 250

Research & Review articles
Background
Methods
Results
Conclusions
Practical Implications
Keywords

Case Report, Case Study & Discussion articles
Background
Case description
Keywords

[Video Abstract – optional]
Create and submit a video abstract to enhance your research. See details and instructions.

PLAIN LANGUAGE SUMMARY
A plain language summary communicates the significance of scientific research evidence to a broad audience, including patients and professionals in nearby disciplines, in language that is easy to understand and free of complex words and jargon.
Word count: 250. PLS should:

- Be distinct from the abstract and written in language that is easy to understand and free of complex words and jargon. If a scientific term must be used, please provide a brief plain language definition of the term.
- Provide answers to the questions: Why was the study done? What did the researchers do and find? What do the results mean? What is the objective influence on the wider field?
- Keep statements factual and avoid providing opinions or speculation on the study's findings and significance. The PLS must not be misleading in any way.

- Use the active voice rather than the passive voice (for example, "Dr. Smith's team reports several improvements" rather than "Several improvements were reported by Dr. Smith's team").
- Use short, clear sentences and phrase sentences in neutral language, remaining as objective as possible.
- Use person-centered language rather than focusing on the condition/illness or disability.
- Avoid jargon, complex grammatical structures, and abbreviations. If you need to use a technical term or abbreviation, explain it on first mention.

KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER STATEMENT

Research, discussion and case study/case report articles must include a statement explaining in plain language how clinicians can apply the manuscript's findings to their practice and/or how the findings can be applied across the fields of oral health, medicine, public health and advocacy.

BODY OF MANUSCRIPT

Research & Review Articles

- Introduction
- Methods & Materials
- Results
- Discussion
- Conclusion

Case Report, Case Study & Discussion

- Introduction
- Case Report
- Discussion
- Conclusion

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Credit individuals, institutions or organizations that aided in the research or manuscript preparation.

USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE DISCLOSURE

Authors must disclose the use of AI and AI-assisted technologies in the writing process by

adding a statement at the end of their manuscript declaring the full name of the tool used (with version number), how it was used and the reason for use. NOTE: This declaration does not apply to the use of basic tools for checking grammar, spelling, references, etc.

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Supply all details required by your funding and grant-awarding bodies as follows.

-For single agency grants:
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-For multiple agency grants:
"This work was supported by the [Funding Agency #1] under Grant [number xxxx]; [Funding Agency #2] under Grant [number xxxx]; and [Funding Agency #3] under Grant [number xxxx]."

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AUTHOR BIOS

Brief biographies for each author. Word count: 150 per author

REFERENCES

Use AMA citation style. See this reference guide for more details.

FIGURES, TABLES & GRAPHS

Authors may submit no more than a combined total of six (6) figures, tables and graphs for each paper. You may request to submit more than the limit if the additional tables, graphs, and images significantly impact the research.

Acceptable file formats: PS, JPEG or TIFF

-1200 DPI – line art

-600 DPI – grayscale

-300 DPI – color

Clearly label captions for all images, tables and figures. Include credit captions for images and figures used with permission. See How to submit your electronic artwork.

GUIDELINES:

INFORMED CONSENT

If a patient or research participant can be potentially identified in your paper, you must obtain written informed consent from those individuals (or from their parent/guardian, if the participant is not an adult or is unable to give informed consent, or their next of kin if the participant is deceased) to publish their personal information. Additionally, you must include a statement in your manuscript confirming receipt of informed consent.

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When obtaining consent to publish, authors should share the article with the individual (or whoever gave consent on their behalf) so the individual is fully aware of the article's content before it is published.

IRB STATEMENT

All research reported in your paper must be conducted in an ethical and responsible manner and in full compliance with all relevant codes of experimentation and legislation. All original research papers involving humans, animals, plants, biological material,

protected or nonpublic datasets, collections or sites, must include a written statement confirming ethical approval has been obtained from the appropriate local ethics committee or institutional review board.

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Confirm that you complied with all mandatory laboratory health and safety procedures while conducting any experimental work reported in your paper.

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