

## Instructions for Authors

(Revised June 2026)

### AIMS AND SCOPE

The aims of the *Asia Pacific Journal of Clinical Nutrition* (APJCN) are to publish high quality clinical nutrition relevant research findings which can build the capacity of clinical nutritionists in the region and enhance the practice of human nutrition and related disciplines for health promotion and disease prevention. APJCN will publish original research reports, reviews, short communications and case reports. News, book reviews and other items will also be included. The acceptance criteria for all papers are the quality and originality of the research and its significance to our readership. Except where otherwise stated, manuscripts are peer-reviewed by at least two anonymous reviewers and the Editor. The Editorial Board reserves the right to refuse any material for publication and advises that authors should retain copies of submitted manuscripts and correspondence as material cannot be returned. Final acceptance or rejection rests with the Editorial Board.

### Short Communications about special group or regional diets, nutrition and health

It is the APJCN policy and approach to descriptive studies, which record and monitor special group, local or regional food habits, nutritional status and their health relevance, to provide a short communication option. Studies which may be considered would be well-designed and conducted, with a representative and adequate sample to allow for generalisability to the purported groups studied. Such publications need to satisfy the following criteria: (1) Brevity, with no more than 3 tables or figures to succinctly present foods, nutrients and health (not longer than 3 pages of the Journal including references) (2) Novel and not simply repetitive of what others have done, although documentation of adverse or favourable trends is encouraged (3) Problem-solving in approach.

### Clinical trials

All manuscripts should provide the **clinical trial registration number** (state the reason if not applicable).

### Systematic review and meta-analysis

Systematic reviews should be prospectively registered in either one of the following five registries: (1) PROSPERO, (2) the Registry of Systematic Reviews/Meta-Analyses in Research Registry, (3) INPLASY, which are specific to systematic reviews, and (4) the Open Science Framework Registries and (5) protocols.io.

\***Registry number** should be cited in Methods

\*\***PRISMA checklist 2020** should be provided as a supplementary file

### SUBMISSION OF MANUSCRIPTS

All articles submitted to the journal must comply with these instructions. Failure to do so will result in return of the manuscript and possible delay in publication. Manuscripts should be written so that they are intelligible to the professional reader who is not a specialist in the particular field. Where contributions are judged as acceptable for publication on the basis of scientific content, the Editor or the Publisher reserve the right to modify typescripts to eliminate ambiguity and repetition and improve communication between author and reader. If extensive alterations are required, the manuscript will be returned to the author for revision. Authors are advised to have their manuscripts reviewed by a scientific colleague who is fluent in English so that the manuscripts will conform to English usage and grammar.

### Attribution of Authorship

The editors and readership need reassurance that the scholarship required of a scientific paper in APJCN has been duly executed and recognized by the stated authorship.

Authors should have regard to the following steps and contributions ordinarily required to develop, execute and report a scientific project (specify in the **Title page**):

- Conception and design
- Doing the field, experimental, clinical, data collection or compilation work, provided there is also a scholarly input during the process
- Data analysis and interpretation
- Preparation of draft manuscript, doing revisions or providing critique
- Overall and/or sectional scientific management

If the contributions are of a more technical or secretarial nature than intellectual or scholarly, they can be acknowledged as a final footnote to the paper in the usual way. However, this note should be brief and represent significant input without which the work would not have materialized.

APJCN acknowledges only one corresponding author. The corresponding author assumes contractual responsibility for all arrangements between the Journal and the authors while all authors remain collectively responsible for the scientific integrity of the paper. However, in certain circumstances where two corresponding authors are needed, kindly provide a written agreement between the two proposed corresponding authors which declares joint academic, legal and financial responsibility for any APJCN publication by them.

Authors must provide their **affiliated email addresses** when submitting their manuscript. Universal or generic email addresses (e.g., Gmail, Yahoo, Outlook, Hotmail, 163, 126, etc.) are not accepted.

### Covering letter

Papers are accepted for publication in the journal on the understanding that the content has not been published or submitted for publication elsewhere; a statement indicating the paper's originality should be included. This must be part of the covering letter. Authors must also state that the protocol for the research project has been approved by a suitably constituted Ethics Committee of the institution within which the work was undertaken and that it conforms to the provisions of the Declaration of Helsinki in 1995 (as revised in Edinburgh 2000). All investigations on human subjects must include a statement that the subject gave informed consent and patient anonymity should be preserved. Any experiments involving animals must be demonstrated to be ethically acceptable and where relevant conform to National Guidelines for animal usage in research. Details of at least 4 potential referees.

### Submission

The manuscript and other required documents including a completed Copyright Assignment Form and a list of four potential referees (see below) should be uploaded through the APJCN web-site: [apjcn.qdu.edu.cn](http://apjcn.qdu.edu.cn)

#### Professor Duo Li

Editor-in-Chief

Asia Pacific Journal of Clinical Nutrition

Once the manuscript has reached our Editor, normally the corresponding author will be informed by email within a week. When the review process (between 1 and 4 months) is completed, we will send by email a note of acceptance or non-acceptance for publication of the manuscript.

### Copyright

Papers accepted for publication become copyright of Qingdao University and authors are asked to provide a transfer of copyright form, which can be downloaded from the Journal's website. In signing the transfer of copyright, it is assumed that authors have obtained permission to use any copyrighted or previously published material. All authors must read and agree to the conditions outlined in the Copyright Assignment Form, and must sign the Form or agree that the corresponding author can sign on their behalf. Articles cannot be processed until a signed Copyright Assignment Form has been received. This should be emailed to Journal House of Qingdao University at [apjcn\\_press@qdu.edu.cn](mailto:apjcn_press@qdu.edu.cn)

### Potential referees

Authors are required to provide at least 4 potential referees, with affiliations and addresses, including email addresses. At least two of the referees should work or reside in a country other than that of the authors, and none should come from any of the authors' own institutions. We do not necessarily use your recommended referees. The onus is on all authors of a submission to ensure that selected referees are not in a conflict of interest likely to result in an un-objective peer review report.

### Scientific English standard

Manuscripts should be written in fluent scientific English. Authors who are unsure about the fluency as well as quality of scientific English are encouraged to send their manuscripts to a native English professional for proofreading or editing.

## PREPARATION OF THE MANUSCRIPT

Format your manuscript for ISO A4 (212 x 297 mm) with margins of 2.5 cm; use double-spacing and Times New Roman 12-point font size throughout by computer software WORD. **The abstract and text pages should have line numbers in the left margin.** All pages should be numbered consecutively in the top right-hand corner, beginning with the title page. Indent new paragraphs. Turn the hyphenation option off, including only those hyphens that are essential to the meaning.

\*Template on manuscript preparation is available at the APJCN website ([apjcn.qdu.edu.cn](http://apjcn.qdu.edu.cn)) for reference.

### Style

APJCN uses US/ UK spelling and authors should therefore follow the latest edition of the Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary/Concise Oxford Dictionary. Please indicate your preference and use one or the other exclusively. If you do not specify, by default UK spelling will be used. A Guide for Medical and Scientific Editors and Authors (Royal Society of Medicine Press, London). Abbreviations should be used sparingly and only where they ease the reader's task by reducing repetition of long, technical terms. Initially use the word in full, followed by the abbreviation in parentheses. Thereafter use the abbreviation. At the first mention of a chemical substance, give the generic name only. Trade names should not be used. Drugs should be referred to by their generic names, rather than brand names.

For vitamins, notation use is B-2, B-2, B-3, B-6 and B-12 not B<sub>1</sub>, B<sub>2</sub>, B<sub>3</sub>, B<sub>6</sub> and B<sub>12</sub>. "Fetal" is more etymologically correct than "Foetal".

Note style for probability:  $p < 0.01$ , with a lower case letter  $p$ . Avoid reporting an excessive number of digits beyond the decimal for estimates. They may alternatively be reported as less than some specified value (eg,  $p < 0.05$  or  $p < 0.001$ ).

## Parts of the manuscript

Present your manuscript in the following order: (1) title page, (2) abstract and keywords, (3) text, (4) acknowledgements, (5) conflict of interest and funding disclosure, (6) references, (7) figure legends, (8) tables (each table complete with title and footnotes) and (9) figures. Footnotes to the text are not allowed and any such material should be incorporated into the text as parenthetical matter. Save and submit the above materials in **one** single Word file only.

Please do not use “level” when “concentration” is intended; or “life style” when “personal behaviour” is meant. Prefer “men” and “women” to “male” and “female”.

## Title page

The title page should contain (1) the title of the paper, which should be short, informative and contain the major key words, (2) a short running title (less than 50 characters, including spaces), (3) the full name (given name, middle initial, if any, and family name in that order) of each author along with principal qualification, email address and individual contribution (4) the addresses of the institutions at which the work was carried out together with (5) the full postal and email, and alternate email (to ensure email contact at all times) address, plus facsimile and telephone numbers, of the author to whom correspondence about the manuscript, proofs and requests for offprint should be sent.

**Note:** Names and principal qualification of authors should be presented as follow:

John Doe PhD<sup>1</sup>, Mary Jane MSc<sup>2</sup>

\*Corresponding authors should provide their **institution email** and not their personal email

## Abstract and key words

The abstract should be structured with Background and Objectives, Methods and Study Design, Results, and Conclusions in 250 words or less. The abstract should not contain abbreviations or references. Five key words should be supplied below the abstract.

## Graphical abstract

Authors must submit a Graphical Abstract in addition to the convention written Abstract as it provides readers with a general understanding of the study and helps capture readership. Graphical abstracts should be concise and submitted as a figure included in the manuscript. Similar to any figures submitted to APJCN, the graphical abstract should be high resolution (300 dpi or higher).

## Text

Authors should use subheadings to divide the sections of their manuscript:

INTRODUCTION, MATERIALS AND METHODS, RESULTS, DISCUSSION, ACKNOWLEDGMENTS, REFERENCES.

Numerical results and *p* values should be presented in text, tables and figures with no more than **3 significant figures**, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Examples would be:

52.37 kg → 52.4 kg

523.4 kg → 523 kg

Authors can make a case that their methodology requires further exception to these guidelines.

## Research ethics and informed consent

**Ethical approval number** should also be stated in the manuscript along with a statement in regards to the informed consent of participants in all trials.

\*A copy of the ethical approval certificate/letter should be included as a supplementary file

## Acknowledgements

Technical assistance and advice may be acknowledged in this section.

## Disclosure on the Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)-assisted Technologies

In accordance with COPE's position on AI tools and ICMJE's authorship criteria, AI chatbots including ChatGPT, DeepSeek and other similar tools cannot be listed or cited as an author or co-author of a paper.

When AI-assisted technologies are used solely for language proofreading, authors are not required to declare their use. However, they must carefully review and edit the output and ensure that the final manuscript is free of plagiarism.

If any AI-assisted technologies are involved in data collection or analysis, or in creation of images or graphical elements, their use must be explicitly disclosed in this section.

Authors bear full responsibility of the content of the manuscript, including any sections generated with the assistance of AI technologies, and are therefore accountable for any violations of publication ethics.

## Conflict of Interest and Funding Disclosure

Authors should declare any financial support or relationships that may pose a conflict of interest. The source of financial grants and other funding should be acknowledged, including a frank declaration of the authors' industrial links and affiliations.

\*Include ID/number of the grant or funding received

## References

*APJCN* uses the Vancouver system for referencing. In the text, references should be cited using superscript Arabic numerals, after comma or full stop, in the order in which they appear, eg 'There is increasing recognition of antecedents of chronic disease like diabetes and cardiovascular disease in early life.<sup>1,2</sup> If cited only in tables or figure legends, number them according to the first identification of the table or figure in the text. In the reference list, the references should be numbered and listed in order of appearance in the text. Cite the names of all authors when an article has 1-6 authors. If there are more than 6 authors, cite only the names of the first three authors then followed by 'et al'. The issue number should be omitted if there is continuous pagination throughout a volume. Names of journals should be abbreviated in the style used in Index Medicus. Reference to unpublished data and personal communications should appear in the text only.

### Journal article

1. Zarrin R, Ibiebele TI, Marks GC. Development and validity assessment of a diet quality index for Australians. *Asia Pac J Clin Nutr.* 2013; 22:177-87. doi: 10.6133/apjcn.2013.22.2.15.
2. Weiss R, Dziura J, Burgert TS, et al. Obesity and the metabolic syndrome in children and adolescents. *N Engl J Med.* 2004;350:2362-74. doi: 10.1056/Nejmoa031049.

### Book

3. Fildes VA. *Breasts, bottles, and babies. A history of infant feeding.* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press; 1986.

### Chapter in a Book

4. Willett W. The use of biomarkers in nutritional epidemiology. In: Kok F, Veer P, editors. *Biomarkers of dietary exposure.* London: Smith-Gordon; 1991. pp. 9-14.

### Internet linkage

5. Mahowald ML. Overview of the evaluation and management of gout and hyperuricemia. *Rheumatology & Musculoskeletal Medicine for Primary Care, Gout.* 2004/10/8 [cited 2005/5/12]; Available from: <http://www.rheumatology.org/publications/primarycare/number4/hrh0021498.asp>
6. Talukder A, Haselow NJ, Osei AK, et al. Homestead food production model contributes to improved household food security and nutrition status of young children and women in poor populations. Lessons learned from scaling-up programs in Asia (Bangladesh, Cambodia, Nepal and Philippines). 2000/2/17 [cited 2012/8/6]; Available from: <http://factsreports.revues.org/404>

## Tables

Tables should be self-contained and complement, but not duplicate, information contained in the text. Each table must be formatted by using the table feature in WORD and presented as a separate file with a comprehensive but concise heading. Tables should be numbered consecutively in Arabic numerals in the sequence in which they are mentioned in the text. Use a single top rule, a single rule below the headings, and a single bottom rule. Do not use rules within the table body. Column headings should be clearly delineated, with straddle rules over pertinent columns to indicate subcategories. Column headings should be brief, with units of measurement in parentheses; all abbreviations should be defined in footnotes. Footnote symbols: †, ‡, §, ¶, ††, should be used (in that order) and \*, \*\*, \*\*\* should be reserved for *p* values. The table and its legend/footnotes should be understandable without reference to the text. All lettering/numbers used in tables should be font style 'Times New Roman' and font size 8.5 or 9.

## Figures

All illustrations (line drawings, bar charts and photographs) are classified as figures. Figures should be cited in consecutive order in the text. Figures should be sized to fit within the column (85 mm), intermediate (114 mm) or the full text width (177 mm). Line figures or bar chart figures should be drawn in a computer graphics package (e.g. EXCEL, Sigma Plot, SPSS etc.). All lettering used in figures should be font style 'Times New Roman' and font size 9.

**Important:** All figures must be electronically inserted at the end of the manuscript. Photographs should be supplied as 300 dpi or more, black and white photographic prints and must be unmounted. Individual photographs forming a composite figure should be of equal contrast, to facilitate printing, and should be accurately squared. Photographs need to be cropped sufficiently to prevent any subject being recognized, or an eye bar used; otherwise, written permission to publish must be obtained. Colour photographs should be submitted digitally with the pixel characteristics of good quality, for on-line publication. Where hard copy colour is required, a charge of RMB ¥ 5,000 for the first three colour figures and RMB ¥ 2,500 for each extra colour figure thereafter will be charged to the author.

**Figure legends:** Legends should be self-explanatory and typed on a separate sheet. The legend should incorporate definitions of any symbols used and all abbreviations and units of measurement should be explained so that the figure and its legend is understandable without reference to the text. (Provide a letter stating copyright authorisation if figures have been reproduced from another source.)

## Abbreviations

*The following abbreviations are accepted without definition by APJCN*

ANCOVA (analysis of covariance)  
ANOVA (analysis of variance)  
BMI (body mass index)  
BMR (basal metabolic rate)  
CHD (coronary heart disease)  
CI (confidence interval)  
CVD (cardiovascular disease)  
df (degrees of freedom)  
DHA (docosahexaenoic acid)  
DNA (deoxyribonucleic acid)  
DRIs (dietary reference intakes)  
EDTA (ethylenediamine tetra-acetic acid)  
ELISA (enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay)  
EPA (eicosapentaenoic acid)  
FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization) (except when used as an author)  
FFQ (food-frequency questionnaire)  
GC (gas chromatography)  
Hb (haemoglobin)  
HDL (high-density lipoprotein)  
HIV (human immunodeficiency virus)  
HPLC (high-performance liquid chromatography)  
IHD (ischaemic heart disease)  
LDL (low-density lipoprotein)  
MRI (magnetic resonance imaging)  
MUFA (monounsaturated fatty acids)  
NS (not significant)  
OR (odds ratio)  
PCR (polymerase chain reaction)  
PUFA (polyunsaturated fatty acids)  
RDA (recommended dietary allowance)  
RER (respiratory exchange ratio)  
RIA (radioimmunoassay)  
RMR (resting metabolic rate)  
RNA, mRNA etc. ribonucleic acid, messenger RNA etc.  
SFA (saturated fatty acids)  
SNP (single nucleotide polymorphism)  
UN (United Nations) (except when used as an author)  
UNICEF (United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund)  
UV (ultra violet)  
VLDL (very-low-density lipoprotein)  
WHO (World Health Organization) (except when used as an author)

## UPLOADING MANUSCRIPTS

Authors should upload their manuscripts and all required documents to [apjcn.qdu.edu.cn](http://apjcn.qdu.edu.cn). The entire article (including tables and figures) should be supplied. The following instructions should be adhered to:

- *It is essential that the final, revised version of the accepted manuscript is identical.*
- *Do not use the carriage return (enter) at the end of lines within a paragraph.*
- *Specify any special characters used to represent non-keyboard characters.*
- *Take care not to use l (ell) for I (one) or O (capital o) for 0 (zero).*
- *Use a tab, not spaces, to separate data points in tables.*
- *If you use a table editor function, ensure that each data point is contained within a unique cell, i.e. do not use returns within cells.*
- *Digital figures must be supplied as high-resolution output (>300 dpi).*

## Supplementary files

All supplementary tables and figures (if available) should be prepared as **one** word document, similar to the format for tables and figures in the main text.

Other supplementary files include:

- Ethical approval certificate/letter
- PRISMA 2020 checklist
- Editing certificate

## **PROOFS, OFFPRINTS AND CHARGES FOR PAPERS**

(Please see **PAYMENT FORM** for payment options).

### **Publication fee**

\*For papers submitted from July 1<sup>st</sup> 2023, the publication fee will be RMB ¥6,000, payable on acceptance.

### **Proofs**

Proofs will be sent via email as a WORD file formatted in *APJCN* style with 'tracking' activated so that all changes made to the manuscript by the author are clearly visible. Please also highlight all changes in yellow to ensure all edits are picked up. The edited proofs must be emailed *within 5 days of receipt*. Alterations to the text and figures (other than the essential correction of errors) are unacceptable at proof stage and authors may be charged for excessive alterations. Authors should therefore supply an email address to which proofs can be emailed. If absent, authors should arrange for a colleague to access their email, retrieve the emailed manuscript and check and return them to the publisher on their behalf.

### **Offprints**

Free offprints are not provided to authors

Charges: 50 offprints - RMB ¥1,200 for 1-5 pages, RMB ¥1,500 for >5 pages; 100 offprints - RMB ¥1,600, 1-5 pages, RMB ¥2,000 for >5 pages

### ***APJCN* online**

All papers are available free-of-charge; Journal abstracts and full papers are available on-line free-of-charge via the website ([apjcn.qdu.edu.cn](http://apjcn.qdu.edu.cn)).