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Cheryl Iverson

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Abstract

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In this age of electronic data dissemination and retrieval, in which abstracts are typically indexed and freely available, a well-written abstract has become increasingly important in directing readers to articles of potential clinical and research interest. The abstract of a research report summarizes the main points of an article: (1) the study objective or background, (2) the study design and methods, (3) primary results, and (4) principal conclusions. For scientific studies and systematic reviews, narrative expressions, such as “X is described,” “Y is discussed,” “Z is also reviewed,” do not add meaning and should be avoided. Results should be presented

Keywords

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Some medical journals publish a short list (3–10) of keywords at the end of the abstract. These descriptors are provided by the author and are the terms the author believes represent the key topics presented in the article. These may also be used for some journals to categorize manuscripts, to help guide in the selection of peer reviewers, and to assist the journal’s indexer. JAMA and the Archives Journals do not publish keywords. Articles in JAMA and the Archives Journals are indexed by professional indexers by means of, for example, Medical Subject Headings (MeSH) for indexes such as List

Epigraphs

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Parts of a Manuscript, Headings, Subheadings, and Side Headings

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UPDATE: We will discontinue using quotation marks to identify parts of an article, but retain the capitalization; eg, This is discussed in the Methods section (not the “Methods” section). This change was made February 14, 2013. UPDATE: To return to the conventional IMRAD nomenclature, the JAMA Network journals are implementing Discussion rather than Comment as the summary section heading in all article types. This will also alleviate any confusion between the online functionality of leaving comments on an article and the use of Comment as a section heading. This change was implemented April 1, 2013. A consistent pattern of organization

Addenda

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