

AMA Manual of Style

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Reporting Rates and Ratios

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Use the virgule construction for rates when placed in parentheses (eg, 1/2) but never in running text. A colon is used for ratios (eg, 1:2). Rates should use the decimal format when the denominator is understood to be 100; otherwise, the denominator should be specified. Of all individuals exposed, children were affected at a rate of 0.05. The infant mortality rate was 3 per 10 000 live births. Not: The infant mortality rate was 3/10 000 live births. |

Percentages

Stephen J. Lurie and Margaret A. Winker

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The term percent derives from the Latin per centum, meaning by the hundred, or in, to, or for every hundred. The term percent and the symbol % should be used with specific numbers. Percentage is a more general term for any number or amount that can be stated as a percent. Percentile is defined as the value on a scale of 100 that indicates the percentage of the distribution that is equal to or below it. Ten percent of the work remained to be done. Heart disease was present in a small percentage of the participants. (But: Five percent of the

Reporting Proportions and Percentages

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Whenever possible, proportions and percentages should be accompanied by the actual numerator (n) and denominator (d) from which they were derived. The numerator and denominator should be expressed as “n of d,” not by the virgule construction “n/d,” which could imply that the numbers were computed in an arithmetic operation. Death occurred in 6 of 200 patients. Not: Death occurred in 6/200 patients. For clarity, when a numerator and denominator are accompanied by a resulting proportion or percentage, the proportion or

percentage should not intervene between the numerator and denominator. Death occurred in 6 of 200 patients (3%). Death occurred in 3%

Decimals

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The decimal form should be used when a fraction is given with an abbreviated unit of measure (eg, 0.5 g, 2.7 mm) to reflect the precision of the measurement (eg, 38.0 kg should not be rounded to 38 kg if the scale was accurate to tenths of a kilogram). (See also , Units of Measure, Use of Numerals With Units, Decimal Format.) The patient was receiving gentamicin sulfate, 3.5 mg/kg, every 8 hours. Her serum gentamicin level reached a peak of 5.8 µg/mL and a trough of 0.7 µg/mL after the third dose. Place a zero before the decimal point in numbers less than

Roman Numerals

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Use roman numerals with proper names (eg, Henry Ford III). Note that no comma is used before the numeral. However, arabic numerals should be used as designators in all other cases (eg, round 2, Table , year 5; see also , Capitalization, Designators) unless roman numerals are part of formally established nomenclature (see , Nomenclature). Use roman numerals for cancer stages and arabic numerals for cancer grades (see also , Nomenclature, Cancer). In pedigree charts, use roman numerals to indicate generations and arabic numerals to indicate families or individual family members (see also Pedigrees in , Visual Presentation of Data,