



Types of Articles Quiz – Answers

by Laura King, MA, ELS

Directions: Effective written communication requires the author to consider the intended message and audience and use a form appropriate to both. Medical journal articles fit into one of the following main types: reports of original data; review articles; descriptive articles; consensus statements and clinical practice guidelines; articles of opinion; correspondence; reviews of books, journals, and other media; and other types (those items that do not fit any of the other major categories). Read the following sentences and indicate in which type of article those sentences are most likely to appear. Consult chapter 1 (p 3-6) of the *AMA Manual of Style* for guidance.

1. We studied a cohort of 150 patients 65 years or older with recently diagnosed atrial fibrillation to determine the patterns of use of warfarin and the risk of subsequent stroke among older men and women.

- a. **report of original data**
- b. review article
- c. clinical practice guideline
- d. article of opinion

Editor's Note: *Published reports of original research are the backbone of medical and scientific communications. Journals often categorize reports of original data as Original Articles or Contributions, Original Communications, or Original Reports, section headings that emphasize the new findings such articles intend to communicate (§1.1, Reports of Original Data, p 3 in print).*

2. We searched PubMed (January 1, 1976, through April 30, 2011), EMBASE (January 1, 1985, through April 30, 2011), and the Cochrane Library (January 1, 1987, through April 30, 2011) using common keywords related to ω 3 fatty acids and cardiovascular disease.

- a. report of original data
- b. **review article**
- c. consensus statement
- d. other

Editor's Note: *Review articles collate and summarize the available information about a particular topic, in contrast to reports of original data. Review articles have great practical importance because clinicians often use them as guides for clinical decisions. This use highlights the importance of ensuring that reviews are systematic, include all relevant data, and are not overly influenced by the opinions and biases of the authors. Thus, review articles should specify the methods used to search for, select, synthesize, and summarize the information (§1.2, Review Articles, p 3-4 in print; see also §20.4, Study Design and Statistics, Meta-analysis, p 847-848).*

3. Sigmund Lustgarten died on January 22, 1911, at his home in New York City at the age of 53 years.

- a. report of original data
- b. descriptive article
- c. article of opinion
- d. **other**

Editor's Note: *Journals publish other items and articles that do not fit into any of the major categories. Examples include personal reflections and essays (eg, *A Piece of My Mind* in JAMA), news articles, poetry, obituaries, reports on conferences, and articles based on clinical photographs (§1.8, Other Types of Articles, p 5-6 in print).*



4. An American Foundation for Suicide Prevention planning group invited 15 experts on the subject to evaluate the state of knowledge about physician depression and suicide and barriers to treatment.

- a. report of original data
- b. consensus statement**
- c. article of opinion
- d. correspondence

Editor's Note: Governmental and private organizations (eg, American Foundation for Suicide Prevention) often develop recommendations for the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of various disorders. These recommendations regarding appropriate clinical decisions are usually made by a group of experts after they assess the available evidence. Recommendations may be published as consensus statements developed at a conference or as clinical practice guidelines (sometimes called practice parameters) developed over time. In either case, publication of the recommendations should identify the sponsor and the participating experts, explain how the participants were selected, describe the evidence that supports the recommendations, and explain the process for achieving consensus in reaching the conclusions. Structured abstracts can be helpful in summarizing this information (§1.4, Consensus Statements and Clinical Practice Guidelines, p 4 in print).

5. We believe evidence-based medicine promises to eliminate both intentional bias and the frequent misimpressions born of a physician's limited personal experience.

- a. report of original data
- b. descriptive article
- c. consensus statement
- d. article of opinion**

Editor's Note: Editorials are short essays that usually reflect the views of the editor or the policies of the journal. Editorials may be written by the editor, a member of the editorial staff or editorial board, or an invited author. Editorials may comment on an article in the same issue of the journal, providing additional context and opinion regarding its implications, or may deal with a separate topic of interest to the journal's readers or editors (§1.5, Articles of Opinion, p 4-5 in print).

6. In last month's issue of your journal, Smith et al reported that purple urine is a symptom of urinary tract infection; however, purple urine can be a phenomenon that is related to factors other than urinary catheters or their bags.

- a. descriptive article
- b. consensus statement
- c. correspondence**
- d. review of books, journals, and other media

Editor's Note: Published correspondence usually comments on an article previously published in the same journal, and replies from the authors of the article can make for lively and useful exchanges. Indeed, providing published responses to questions and criticisms is part of the responsibility of authorship. Letters should focus on the scientific, clinical, or ethical issues raised by the original article and should not include ad hominem attacks on the authors. Often 1 or 2 letters are chosen for publication as being representative of the responses to a particular article (§1.6, Correspondence, p 5 in print).

7. Using a meta-analysis, we investigated the efficacy of eicosapentaenoic acid and docosahexaenoic acid in the secondary prevention of cardiovascular disease.

- a. review article**
- b. consensus statement
- c. clinical practice guideline
- d. article of opinion

Editor's Note: Review articles collate and summarize the available information about a particular topic. Some reviews use meta-analysis, a statistical technique that combines quantitative results from independent studies (§1.2, Review Articles, p 3-4 in print; see also §20.4, Study Design and Statistics, Meta-analysis, p 847-848).



8. This third edition of *Fracture Management for Primary Care*, published 8 years after the second, has been enhanced while maintaining its basic framework.

- a. descriptive article
- b. article of opinion
- c. correspondence
- d. review of books, journals, and other media**

Editor's Note: *Readers of reviews of books, journals, and other media seek both an overview of the product and an assessment of its quality relative to similar works. Thus, these reviews usually include description and opinion, both of which may extend to broader issues raised by the work. There is often considerable room for individual style and expression in these critiques, but supporting evidence for the reviewer's praise or criticism is essential (§1.7, Reviews of Books, Journals, and Other Media, p 5 in print).*

9. In this article, we described a 22-month-old boy with no family history of retinoblastoma who had bilateral retinoblastoma.

- a. descriptive article**
- b. consensus statement
- c. article of opinion
- d. other

Editor's Note: *Descriptions, summaries, or observations that lack the systematic rigor of original research or systematic reviews may be published as Case Reports (for patient descriptions), Clinical Observations, Special Articles, or Special Communications. To merit publication, such articles should make novel observations that can stimulate research or should provide useful information about topics of particular interest to a journal's readership (§1.3, Descriptive Articles, p 4 in print).*

10. This article outlines the new American Cancer Society process for creating trustworthy cancer screening guidelines.

- a. report of original data
- b. descriptive article
- c. clinical practice guideline**
- d. article of opinion

Editor's Note: *See the Editor's Note for question 4.*

