

## ETHICAL CONDUCT

The ethical standards outlined here are based on the guidelines of the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE, <http://publicationethics.org>). According to these guidelines, it is mandatory that all parties involved in the process of publishing scientific papers (Editor-in-Chief, Associate Editors, Authors, Reviewers, Sponsors, if any, and the Publisher) agree on and comply with the standards of ethical behaviour.

### Responsibility of the Journal Editor-in-Chief

#### Fairness

Manuscripts submitted to the journal are evaluated for their intellectual content regardless of the Author's ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, citizenship, or political beliefs.

#### Confidentiality

The Editor-in-Chief, Associate Editors, and editorial staff should not disclose any information about manuscripts submitted to the journal to any persons other than: corresponding authors, reviewers, potential reviewers, other editorial consultants, publisher.

#### Publication decisions

The Editor-in-Chief has the responsibility to decide which of the submitted articles shall be published. The Editor-in-Chief may be guided in his/her decisions by the policies of the journal's Editorial Board and may be bound by legal requirements such as libel, copyright infringement, and plagiarism. The Editor-in-Chief may consult with Associate Editors or Reviewers on decisions about which papers shall be published.

The Editor-in-Chief and the Editorial Board should maintain the integrity of the experimental data, prevent commercial interest from compromising intellectual and ethical standards, and should be prepared to publish corrections, clarifications, retractions and apologies whenever necessary. The Editor-in-Chief is committed to ensuring that any commercial revenues from advertising, reprinting or other sources do not affect or influence editorial decisions.

#### Disclosure and conflicts of interest

Unpublished material contained in manuscripts submitted to the journal should not be used by the Editor-in-Chief for personal purposes without the express written consent of the Author(s). Original information or ideas that are acquired as a consequence of the review process are to be kept confidential and not used for personal advantage.

## Fairness of reviews

The Editor-in-Chief is committed to ensuring that the review process is fair and appropriate. The Editor-in-Chief should refrain from evaluating manuscripts in which conflicts of interest are identified, whether arising from collaborative or competitive relationships or affiliations with Authors, companies, or institutions involved in the submitted studies. In such case the Editor-in-Chief shall ask others (e.g., associate Editors) to assess the manuscript on his/her behalf.

## Possible conflicts of interest

The Editor-in-Chief requires all Authors of submitted papers to disclose any significant interests that may conflict with the results of the submitted study and should be willing to publish corrections if conflicts of interest are disclosed after the publication of the paper. Whenever necessary, further appropriate action should be taken, such as retraction or expression of doubt. The Editor-in-Chief is committed to complying with the COPE Guidelines for Retracting Articles, when deciding to publish retractions or corrections of articles published in the journal *Biochimica Clinica*.

## Involvement and cooperation in scientific research

The Editor-in-Chief is committed to maintaining the integrity of published data, publishing corrections and retractions when necessary, and pursuing suspected or alleged misconduct involving studies or scientific publications. The Editor-in-Chief will also persecute misconduct during review and/or editorial processes. The Editor-in-Chief will act in a reasonably efficacious manner when he/she becomes aware of ethical issues regarding a manuscript submitted to the journal or a previously published work.

## Responsibility of Reviewers

### Contribution to editorial decisions

The review process is intended to support the Editor-in-Chief and the Editorial Board in making editorial decisions and should, if necessary and when possible, help the Author to improve the manuscript. The Editorial Office is the means of communication.

### Timeliness

Selected Reviewers who do not feel qualified to review a scientific paper, or who anticipate that they will not be able to review it in the required time frame, should make this known as soon as possible to the Editor-in-Chief or the Associate Editor in charge of the manuscript, so that other Reviewers can be contacted.

## Confidentiality

Manuscripts received for review should be treated as confidential; they should not be shown to, or discussed with, anyone else unless authorised by the Editor-in-Chief or the Associate Editor in charge of the manuscript.

## Standards of objectivity

Reviews should be conducted objectively. Personal criticism is unacceptable. Reviewers should express their views clearly and with adequate supporting arguments.

## Acknowledgement of sources

Reviewers are expected to point out any relevant reference to previously published studies which was omitted by the Authors. Any statement relating to a previously published observation, inference or reasoning should be accompanied by the relevant citation. The Reviewer further agrees to draw the attention of the Editor-in-Chief

to any substantial similarity or any overlap between the manuscript under consideration and any other published data of which he/she is personally aware.

## Disclosure and Conflict of Interest

Confidential information or original ideas that come to light during the review process should be kept confidential and should not be used for personal advantage. Reviewers should not evaluate manuscripts in which they have conflicts of interest arising from competitive or collaborative relationships, or from contacts or connections with Authors, companies or institutions related to the paper submitted.

## Responsibility of the Author

### Standards for paper presentation

Authors submitting original research should present a detailed account of their work, as well as an objective discussion of its significance. Relevant data should be presented accurately in the manuscript. The paper should contain sufficient detail and references to allow others to replicate the work. Fraudulent or deliberately inaccurate claims constitute unethical behaviour and are unacceptable.

## Originality and plagiarism

Authors should guarantee the total originality of their work and if they have used the data and/or statements of others, they should ensure that these have been mentioned and adequately credited.

## Double, redundant or conflicting publication

The Author should not submit manuscripts describing the same research to more than one journal or major publisher. Submitting the same manuscript to more than one journal for publication constitutes unethical behaviour and is unacceptable.

## Acknowledgement of sources

The work of others should always be properly acknowledged. Authors should also acknowledge publications that were instrumental in the conception of the study.

## Authorship of the manuscript

Authors of a manuscript are those who have made significant contributions to the design, execution, or interpretation of the study. All those who have made a *significant contribution* should be included in the list of Authors as co-authors. Other individuals, if any, who have contributed to important aspects of the research project, are to be mentioned in the Acknowledgements section. The Corresponding Author should ensure that the list of co-authors contains *all and only those* who can be identified as such according to the definition above. The Corresponding Author should also ensure that *all co-authors have seen and approved* the final version of the paper and agree that it should be submitted for publication.

## Hazards to humans and animals

Authors should clearly indicate in the manuscript if their study involves the use of chemicals, procedures, or equipment that may pose uncommon hazards.

## Disclosure and conflict of interest

All Authors and co-authors should disclose any financial or other substantial conflicts of interest that may have affected the results of the study or their interpretation. All sources of financial support for the project should be disclosed.

## Errors in previously published papers

Upon discovering a significant error or even an inaccuracy in a paper he/she has already published, the Author has the obligation to promptly make this known to the Editor-in-Chief of the journal and to cooperate in publishing an appropriate *errata corrige*.

## Ratification by the Publisher

In the event of alleged or proven unethical behaviour, fraudulent publication or plagiarism, the Publisher, in close cooperation with the Editor-in-Chief and the Editorial Board, will take appropriate measures to clarify the situation and possibly correct the article in question. Such measures include the timely publication of an *errata corrige* or, in the most serious cases, the retraction of the paper.

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