

# Instructions for Authors

(Last Update in July, 2023)

## AIMS AND SCOPE

Annals of Laboratory Medicine (Ann Lab Med) is a high-quality journal of laboratory medicine, publishing cutting-edge articles by focusing on translational laboratory medicine studies. The journal welcomes contributions in the field of laboratory medicine related to the etiology, diagnosis, and management of diseases that are scientific, original, ethical, and academically significant. The journal emphasizes articles that focus on the development and evaluation of novel analytical methodologies that are applicable to the clinical laboratory.

## GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

1. The manuscripts should be written in English. Brief Communications are intended for the presentation of brief observations that do not warrant full length papers, but have sufficient originality and utility to be considered for publication. The information must be presented in sufficient detail so that readers can understand and appreciate the material presented. Brief communications undergo the same review process as full-length papers and are not published sooner than the full-length papers. The manuscripts are classified according to the following 8 specific areas, and the author should state the appropriate area of interest in their manuscripts. However, the associate editor of each field may request to the author to change the area of interest and resubmit the manuscript, if necessary.

### Topics

- Diagnostic Hematology
- Clinical Chemistry
- Clinical Microbiology
- Diagnostic Immunology
- Transfusion and Cell Therapy
- Diagnostic Genetics
- Laboratory Informatics
- General Laboratory Medicine

### Article formats

- Original Article
- Review Article (Invited Only)
- Guideline
- Brief Communication
- Opinion
- Letter to the Editor
- Editorials

2. **Ethical considerations:** For the policies on the research and publication ethics such as plagiarism/duplicate publication/research misconduct, Ann Lab Med adheres to the “Code of Conduct and Best Practice Guidelines for Journal Editors (<https://publicationethics.org/resources/code-conduct>), previously published as “Guidelines on Good Publication Practice”. Experiments conducted on human subjects should be performed according to the Declaration of Helsinki (<https://www.wma.net/what-we-do/medical-ethics/declaration-of-helsinki/>) and approved by the Research Ethics Committee or the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of the institution where the experiment was performed. Written informed consent should be obtained from all subjects, when necessary. In the case of an animal study, it should be mentioned that the experimental processes such as breeding and the use of laboratory animals were approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the institution where the experiment was performed or that these processes complied with the rules of the Research Ethics Committee of the institution or National Institutes for Health (NIH) Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals (National Research Council. 2011. Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals, <https://doi.org/10.17226/12910>). The authors should retain the raw data of the experiment and study for at least a year after the publication of the paper and should present these data if required by the editorial board.
3. **Clinical Trial Data Sharing Plan:** As of July 1, 2018, manuscripts that report the results of clinical trials must contain a data sharing statement that indicates the following:
  - whether individual deidentified participant data (including data dictionaries) will be shared
  - what data in particular will be shared
  - whether additional, related documents will be available (e.g. study protocol, statistical analysis plan, etc.)
  - when the data will become available and for how long
  - by what access criteria data will be shared (including with whom, for what types of analyses, and by what mechanism)Also clinical trials that begin enrolling participants on or after January 1, 2019 must include a data sharing plan in the trial’s registration. This is an effort of adherence to the ICMJE policy and further information regarding this policy can be found at <http://www.icmje.org/recommendations/browse/publishing-and-editorial-issues/clinical-trial-registration.html>.
4. **Duplicate Publication:** The manuscripts are accepted only on the understanding that they have not been published elsewhere. The manuscripts published in this journal cannot be submitted for publication elsewhere. If the author(s) wishes a duplicate or a secondary publica-

- tion, for example, for the readers of a different language, the author must obtain approval from the Editor-in-Chief of both the first and second journals. Further, the conditions specified in the Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals <http://www.icmje.org> (updated December 2017) should be met, such as insertion of a comment as a footnote in the title page of the second journal stating the primary reference and the duplicate nature of the paper.
- 5. Authorship:** Only those who have made significant contributions to the preparation and publication of the manuscript are eligible for authorship and should take responsibility for the same. All authors should meet following four conditions recommended by ICMJE (<http://www.icmje.org>). 1) substantial contributions to conception and design, acquisition of data, or analysis and interpretation of data; AND 2) drafting the article or revising it critically for important intellectual content; AND 3) final approval of the version to be published; AND 4) agreement to be accountable for all aspects of the work in ensuring that questions related to the accuracy or integrity of any part of the work are appropriately investigated and resolved. Each author should sign electronically the Authorship Responsibility and Copyright Transfer Agreement Form attesting that he or she fulfills the authorship criteria before or after acceptance for publication. Authors are required to identify their contributions to the work described at the title page of the manuscript.
  - 6. Disclosure of conflict of interest:** Each author is responsible for disclosing to the Publisher all potential conflicts of interest regarding the manuscript and whether the author regards them as actual conflicts of interest. In particular, funding support (grant) information, if applicable, should be provided with both 'funding agency' and 'grant number'. Corresponding author should sign electronically a statement disclosing any conflict of interest on behalf of all author(s) at the time of submission. Each author also should sign electronically a statement disclosing any conflict of interest at the journal website after acceptance of the manuscript.
  - 7. Personal data and protection of privacy:** Information provided during manuscript submission progress will be used for providing services that we offer. ALM is committed to protecting personal data and privacy, and should anyone have concern over this issue, please refer to our privacy policy page. For studies using personal data and any other third-party resources (e.g. social media, webpage and etc.) should be collected and used according to each Terms and Conditions of the source also with appropriate permissions. Please remember to acknowledge those data sources clearly within your manuscript.
  - 8. Video Summaries:** Audio-visual content can be a great way to share the take-home message of scientific research with a broad audience. ALM offers a video service for authors that will drive the impact of their research paper. Video Summaries will help authors showcase the focal points of their research as easy-to-understand synopses using professional voiceover, graphics, and animation. ALM will publish online the custom-produced videos alongside the published paper as part of the Table of Content and also a video gallery on the journal website. Authors will also receive a support kit that contains the video script, audio file, a slide deck for use in presentations, and tips on how to promote your video summary for maximum visibility. ALM encourages authors to share the video among your social and professional network and increase the interest in your published paper. All charges are paid for by the author.  
Order: <http://www.annlabmed.org/video/index.html>  
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  - 9. Plagiarism policy and Permission request for copyrighted materials:** Not only text but any part of the manuscript, including tables and figures from another publication without permission or copyright attribution may constitute plagiarism. Please note that authors' reuse of their previous work without attribution can be considered as self-plagiarism. NIH Office of Research Integrity publication (Roig, Miguel. "Avoiding plagiarism, self-plagiarism, and other questionable writing practices: A guide to ethical writing." (2006)) may guide authors with concerns regarding possible research misconduct. The editorial office processes submitted manuscripts through software-based plagiarism recognition before distributing to associate editors for peer-review.  
Any form of reproduction from copyrighted material requires obtained permission from the copyright holder in advance. Copyrighted materials include not only text but also figures, tables, illustrations, charts, and photographs. Certain materials such as public domain work or open access content may not require permission, however should be properly acknowledged to its source. Acknowledgement should be made as a foot note or a legend (e.g. "Reprinted from Ann Lab Med. Year;Vol:Page with permission" or "Revised schema from Ann Lab Med. Year;Vol:Page with permission"). To obtain permission to use copyrighted materials published by ALM, refer here for further instructions.
  - 10. Reporting Sex and Gender**  
The term sex and gender should be used in accordance with the Sex and Gender Equity in Research (SAGER) guidelines. This includes the correct use of the terms sex (when reporting biological factors) and gender (when reporting identity, psychosocial, or cultural factors) and separate reporting and interpretation of the data by sex and gender. If sex and/or gender information are not reported or an exclusive population was involved (i.e., prostate cancer or ovarian cancer), this should be explained.
- ## PREPARATION OF MANUSCRIPTS
1. The manuscript must be typewritten double-spaced using a 12-point font size (Times New Roman) on A4-sized paper using Microsoft (MS) Word. Manuscripts should follow the guidelines for length restrictions,

## Instruction for Authors

abstract, reference, table and figure, supplemental data limits according to their manuscript type as outlined in the table below:

Type of manuscript	Word limit (excluding reference, table and figure)	Abstract (S: structured U: unstructured)	Maximum number of references	Total number of Tables/Figures	Supplemental data permitted
Review/Guideline	No limit	250 (S or U)	No limit	No limit	Yes
Original Article	3,500	250 (S)	40	6	Yes
Brief Communication	1,500	200 (U)	20	3	Yes
Opinion	1,500	No	15	2	No
Letter to the Editor	750	No	10	2	No

Section headings should not be used in the body of the Brief Communications, and the methods, results, and discussion should be combined in a single section. Methods should be described in the text, neither in the table footnotes, nor in the figure legends in the case of Brief Communications. Acknowledgments should be presented similar to that in full-length papers. Insert the page number in series at the bottom of each page in manuscript file.

Opinion articles are submissions that present the personal view of the author(s) on a specific topic or a formal expression by an expert of the author(s) judgment or advice. Section headings should not be used in the body of the Opinion articles.

## 2. Cover letter and title page:

- 1) **Cover letter:** The cover letter file should contain a brief description of the novelty and importance of the work.
- 2) **Title page:** In title page, describe the type of manuscript, the specific area, title, institutional affiliation(s), name and Open Researcher and Contributor ID (ORCID) of the author(s), the corresponding author's information (complete address, and e-mail address). If the authors are affiliated to different institutions, their names and affiliations should be stated the superscripts (1, 2, 3, etc) starting from the first author. Only the highest degree or title should be mentioned after the name, such as M.D., Ph.D., M.S., M.T., etc. We permit only one co-first author and/or one co-corresponding author, if necessary. A running title should be added if the title exceeds 50 characters in English, including spaces.

## 3. Manuscript file should include the following in the given order:

- 1) **Abstract:** Abstract is not required in the case of Letters to the Editor. In case of original article, the abstract should be written in English, in 250 words or less, and include the subheadings Background, Methods, Results, and Conclusions. Each subheading should be summarized in 1 paragraph. Select 3 to 10 key words in English and insert them below the abstract. For Brief Communications, the abstract is limited to 200 words in a single paragraph without the subheadings. The key words are to be adjusted to the Medical Subject Heading (MeSH) of Index Medicus (<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/mesh/MBrowser.html>).

- 2) **Introduction:** Research hypothesis and specific aim should be described briefly.
- 3) **Methods:** Statistical methods should be described, if any.
- 4) **Results:** This section should be presented logically using text, tables and figures. Excessive repetition of table or figure contents should be avoided.
- 5) **Discussion:** The content in either the introduction or the results should not be repeated.
- 6) **Author(s)' disclosure of potential conflict of interest:** All potential conflicts of interests should be disclosed.

The following statement in its example format is required for Disclosure of conflict of interest. Include any additional information regarding the manuscript (i.e. sources of support, consulting fee or honorarium, support for travel to meetings for the study or other purposes, fee for participation in review activities such as data monitoring boards, payment for writing the manuscript, provision of writing assistance or equipment, board membership, patents, royalties, monetary interests in the products studied, consultantships, stocks, etc.) accordingly.

*Acknowledgments:* General acknowledgements are described if applicable.

*Author contributions:* Individual names are printed by last name and initials.

**[Example]** Kim SH contributed to the conception and design of the study; Jang JH and Kim SH were involved in clinical evaluation; Choi EH and Kim HY interpreted the results; Yun JW performed the statistical analysis; Yoon J drafted the manuscript; and Kim SH supervised the study. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

*Conflict of interest:* Declaration or None declared

*Research funding:* Declaration or None declared

- 7) **References:** References in the order of citation within the text should be numbered sequentially using parentheses and brackets. Refer only to the most pertinent literature and indicate 40 references at the most in case of original article. Not more than 20 references should be inserted for Brief Communications and 10 for Letter to the Editor.
- 8) **Tables and Figures:** Each table and figure should be written concisely, and the content of the tables and figures should not overlap. Photographs should be clear. Submit colored and black and white photographs to print colored and black and white photographs, respectively. Files containing the figures can be uploaded via the online manuscript submission system in Joint Photographic Experts Group (JPEG) or Graphics Interchange Format (GIF) file formats. Tagged Image File Format (TIFF) or bitmap (BMP) files can be uploaded for the accepted manuscript. The print resolution should be 300 dots per inch (dpi) or more. If figure(s) are to be delivered via postal service, each figures should have a separate label on the reverse side, indicating the figure numbers, name of the author, an

arrow indicating the top, and whether it should be printed in color or not.

4. Observe the following points when preparing the contents of a manuscript.

1) The name of a person or a place and other proper nouns should be used in the original language and Arabic numerals should be used. Weights and measures should be represented in the metric system and the units should be in the International Standard Unit (SI unit). Indicate liters with a capital L.

2) The name of a microorganism should be spelled out the first mention in the abstract, and original text. The names of the genus can be abbreviated subsequently (example: *E. coli*). However, do not abbreviate the name of the genus if 2 or more genera starting with the same letter are being referred to. Scientific names should always be italicized.

**[Example 1]** To be italicized: *Escherichia coli*, *Papovaviridae*, *Hepadnavirus*, and *Simplex virus*

**[Example 2]** Not be italicized: streptococci, coagulase negative staphylococci, Epstein-Barr virus, hepatitis B virus, and herpes simplex virus

3) The names of the genes, and not the proteins should be italicized: *BCR-ABL* mutations, *HER2* gene, *BCR-ABL* kinase domain, *HER2*-positive.

4) When using English abbreviations, define the abbreviation completely at first mention in the abstract, and original text. Do not use an abbreviation in the title. The terms listed at the end of the Ann Lab Med journal or its website need not be defined.

5) In the case of spacing between words and parentheses or brackets, a space should be inserted when English text or a number is placed before the parentheses.

**[Example 1]** Heparin-induced thrombocytopenia/thrombosis (HITT)

6) For an instrument or equipment, mention the name of its model; manufacturer, city, (state), and country of an instrument or equipment in parentheses. The general name of a reagent should be used. If a trade name is expressed with a general name, it should be placed after it in parentheses. When using a trade name, indicate the manufacturer, city, state, and country in parentheses. Do not use the symbols TM or ® unless necessary. At subsequent mentions after the first, instruments and equipments can be referred to indicating only the manufacturer in parentheses.

**[Example]** Coulter STKS (Coulter Electronics Inc., Hialeah, FL, USA), vancomycin (Sigma Chemical Company, St. Louis, MO, USA)

7) *P* should be uppercase and italicized to indicate statistical significance.

8) In the case of numbers greater than 3 digits, a comma should be inserted after every third digit from right to left (e.g., 5,431, 5,675, and 1,000), but a comma should not be inserted when indicating years (e.g., 1995, 2007).

5. References should be presented in the following style.

1) In the case of articles, mention the names of the authors, title,

name of the journal, year published, volume number, and the first and last page numbers.

List all the authors if the number of authors is less than 7, and list the first 6 authors followed by et al. if the number of authors is 7 or more. If the manuscript has only 2 authors, use “and” and not a comma between their names. Journal names are to be abbreviated in accordance with the style of Index Medicus (<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query.fcgi?db=PubMed>). In the case of a supplementary volume of a journal, record it in parentheses such as 75(S). All the references in other languages should be translated into English.

**[Example 1]** Yang SJ, Shin MG, Kim SH, Cho D, Kee SJ, Shin JH, et al. Usefulness of Track-C (total HCV core antigen) assay in anti-HCV positive patients. *Korean J Lab Med* 2004;24:244-9.

Kim HY. Recent advances of adult stem cell research. *Korean J Lab Med* 2003; 23(S1):S69-73.

**[Example 2]** Sabbath KD, Ball ED, Larcom P, Davis RB, Griffin JD. Heterogeneity of clonogenic cells in acute myeloblastic leukemia. *J Clin Invest* 1985;75:746-53.

2) While referring to books, mention the name of the authors, editor(s), name of the book, edition, place published, publisher, publishing company, published year, and page number. List it up to 2 authors.

**[Example 3]** Brecher ME, ed. Technical manual. 14th ed. Bethesda: American Association of Blood Banks, 2002: 485-96.

**[Example 4]** Alberts B, Bray D, et al. eds. Molecular biology of the cell. 3rd ed. New York: Garland Publishing, 1994: 491-9.

**[Example 5]** National Committee for Clinical Laboratory Standards. Performance standards for antimicrobial susceptibility testing. Tenth Informational supplement, M100-S10 (M2). Wayne, PA: National Committee for Clinical Laboratory Standards, 2000.

3) In the case of a book chapter, indicate the name of author of the chapter, title of the chapter, ‘In:’, editors, name of the book, edition, place published, publishing company, published year, and page number.

**[Example 6]** Bylund DJ and Nakamura RM. Organ-specific autoimmune diseases. In: Henry JB, ed. Clinical diagnosis and management by laboratory methods. 20th ed. Philadelphia: WB Saunders, 2001:1000-15.

4) In case of a website: Author, website address, uniform resource locator (URL), and the date of recent update.

**[Example 7]** Mitelman F, Johansson B, and Mertens F (Eds.), Mitelman database of chromosome aberrations in cancer. <http://cgap.nci.nih.gov/Chromosomes/Mitelman> (Updated on Nov 2005).

5) An abstract is not permitted to be cited as a reference. For accepted articles pending publication, those should be cited and described as “in press”. However, the author should have a letter permitting the citation from the author(s). If an author would like to cite a paper that has been submitted but has not been accepted yet, it should be described as an unpublished observation in the

text and also should get a permit letter from the author(s). We do not recommend citing personal communications; however, if cited, identify the person and obtain a letter from the author authorizing the citation. If the author(s) cannot provide the reference paper, this reference can be requested to be deleted from the reference list even after the acceptance of the paper.

6. Tables and Figures should be prepared in accordance with the following guidelines:

- 1) Number the tables and figures according to their order of citation in the text. The heading should be inserted above the tables, but the legends should be located below the figures. Periods should not be used in the headings of tables but are required at the end of figure legends.
- 2) Only the first letter and proper nouns of the headings and legends of tables and figures should be in capital letters.
- 3) Vertical and horizontal lines should be omitted as much as possible. Text in the first column of a table should be aligned to the left. Single letters should be aligned centrally from the second column. If numbers are of the same unit, the decimal point should be the datum point. If there are symbols such as “-” indicating ranges, “±” and × symbols should be the datum point. Numbers with different units should be aligned to the right in all columns. If there are parentheses, the start of the parentheses and the last letter before it should be the datum point.
- 4) Only numbers can be used without parentheses or a period if it represents a case in a table. A heading representing cases should be noted as “No. case” and a heading representing the number of cases should be noted as “N”.
- 5) Explanations below should be in the order of superscripts and abbreviations. There should be a line break between the explanations of each superscript and/or abbreviations.
- 6) The superscript should be placed on the right side of a word and should be used in the following order, “\*<sup>†</sup>, †<sup>‡</sup>, ‡<sup>§</sup>, §<sup>||</sup>, ||<sup>¶</sup>, ¶<sup>\*\*</sup>, \*\*<sup>††</sup>, ††<sup>‡‡</sup>, etc.” The following are examples of using superscript: \*not tested; †*P*<0.05.
- 7) All nonstandard abbreviations should be explained below. Define them as indicated in the following examples.

[Example] Abbreviations: NT, not tested and SAA, severe aplastic anemia

- 8) If a figure is a microphotograph, the staining methods and the magnification should be indicated.
- 9) If a figure comprises 2 or more pictures, each should be explained either separately as “(A), explanation and (B), explanation” or together in parentheses.
- 10) Minimum resolution required for a figure image is 300 dpi with figure file sizes of 80 mm in height and 80 mm in width. Acceptable file formats include BMP, JPG, PSD, TIF, AI, EMF, EPS, WMF, DOC, XLC, PPT and PDF. Expense of reproducing color photographs will be charged to the author(s). The author is responsible for submit-

ting figure files that are of sufficient quality to permit accurate reproduction, and for approving the final color galley proof.

[Example of Table]

**Table 3.** Bone marrow findings of patients diagnosed with peripheral Tcell lymphoma with bone marrow involvement

No. case	HPH	Tumor cells in aspirates (%)	Infiltration pattern in section	Subtypes*
1	+	5	Interstitial	ALC
2	+	10	Interstitial	US
3	-	<1	Focal	US
4	-	<1	Sinusoidal	AIM

\*based on the revised European-American classification of lymphoid neoplasms (REAL) classification system, proposed from the International Lymphoma Study Group in 1993. Abbreviations: HPH, hemophagocytic histiocytosis; ALC, anaplastic large cell; AIM, angioimmunoblastic; and US, unspecified.

7. Supplemental Data

Figures or tables too large for print, manuscript material that exceeds the limitation for the specific submission type, or appendices should be submitted for online publication only. These files should be marked and uploaded separately as supplemental files during submission and should be referenced within the text as supplemental data (i.e., “See Supplemental Data Table S1”, “See Supplemental Data Figure S1”, etc.). Please assess the necessity of the material before submission, as only essential materials are allowed to be presented as supplemental data.

## SUBMISSION, PEER-REVIEW, EDITING, AND PUBLICATION OF MANUSCRIPTS

1. Every manuscript should be submitted as an electronic file through the following website, [www.annlabmed.org/submission/](http://www.annlabmed.org/submission/) along with the completed “Author’s Checklist” including disclosure of conflict of interest. Each author should upload three separate files: Cover letter, title page and the manuscript file for peer-review excluding the information regarding the authors and their affiliations. Before uploading the manuscript for the first time, the author should create a new account for “the manuscript submission and review system for Ann Lab Med”. Association of ORCID (Open Researcher and Contributor ID) account for all authors is mandatory at the time of manuscript submission.
2. The authors should indicate 3 or more suggested reviewers and non-preferred reviewers, if available, in the online manuscript submission system.
3. Manuscript copyeditor will request to an appropriate associate editor for the relevant area. The associate editor reviews and sends the manuscript to 2 or more appropriate peer-reviewers. On the basis of the comments of the peer reviewers, the associate editor determines whether the article is acceptable or not preliminarily. After the author responds to comments of all reviewers, the (revised) manuscript is sent to the editor-in-chief.



4. Every author can check the status and the results of the review on the submission system. All requests, (revised) manuscripts, and response letters are delivered through this system. All submissions, revisions, or responses are promptly notified to the concerned authors, reviewers, or editors via e-mail.
5. The associate editor(s) can send those manuscripts that require statistical review to a biostatistics expert before acceptance.
6. If a manuscript is accepted for publication, the editor-in-chief will send letter of acceptance to all author(s) by e-mail. Each author should sign “the Copyright Transfer Agreement and Disclosure of Conflict of Interest Form” through the website individually.
7. The final decision and order of publication is the duty of the editor-in-chief. Any manuscript that does not adhere to author’s instructions are subject to revision and supplementation, and will be withheld from publication.
8. Addition or exclusion of any author requires decision from the editor-in-chief after submitting a written request signed duly by all authors.
9. Any errors discovered in the articles after publication should be submitted to the editor-in-chief in writing to be inserted in erratum.

## OTHERS

1. Publication charges will be due on Review/Guideline, Original Article, Brief Communications, and Letter to the Editor. Illustrations that require extraordinary printing processes will be charged to the authors. The corresponding author is charged a fee for digital object identifier (DOI)/ CrossRef. The minimum number of offprints is 50, which will be charged to the corresponding author by KSLM.
2. KSLM holds copyright to every published manuscripts in ALM after each signed Copyright Transfer documents have been submitted.
3. These instructions are based on the Vancouver Form, 5th edition. For any issues not addressed in these instructions, refer to the following materials. <http://www.icmje.org/> International Committee of Medical Journal Editors. Uniform requirements for manuscripts submitted to biomedical journals: Writing and Editing for Biomedical Publication (Updated December 2017).

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