

READ THE MANUSCRIPT

- Read the abstract before accepting the invitation. Do you know the topic well? Does the paper have merit based on brief assessment? You should decline the review if you are not confident with the topic or if you will be unable to complete the review within 2 weeks.
- Assess the hypothesis and the methods? Are they sound?
- Are the conclusions valid? For case reports, is the diagnosis definitive?
- Consider the overall presentation of the manuscript. Is the expression clear and easy to follow? Is there unnecessary detail that could be cut? Is it too long or too short? Would the presentation benefit from an image, table, or figure?
- Most importantly, does the case have a valuable teaching point to make it worthy of publication? Would it help a physician in practice?

CHECK THE PUBLISHED LITERATURE

- Similar studies/cases published in the preceding 5 years
- Concerns of plagiarism
- Studies/cases that may not be referenced but should be
- Appropriate use of the literature for discussion and/or conclusions

RECOMMEND A REASONABLE DECISION

Confidential Comments to the Editors

- Speak plainly and emphatically; it's ok to recommend rejection.
- Do not recapitulate what you have written to the authors.

Comments to the Authors

- Start with a few sentences outlining the case report and conclusions drawn. Describe what you think the case report adds in terms of understanding the management or workup of a disease process. Identify strengths and weaknesses of the paper.
- Break the remainder of your comments into major and minor comments.
- Suggest changes that would help the authors improve the paper.
- List unanswered questions that came to mind while reading the paper.
- If appropriate comment on problematic grammar and expression, but do not limit your review to this.
- A review should be to be concise but thorough. Experts have recommended that a review be between 50 and 750 words.
- Do not express your decision to accept, revise, or reject in comments to the authors; this can be expressed in comments to the editors.

RECOMMEND A REASONABLE DECISION

- **Accept** means the manuscript is perfect as-is, allowing for minor copyediting before publication. This is rare of first drafts but possible.
- **Minor Revision** means the manuscript should most likely be accepted after the authors make a limited number of surface changes, including minor clarifications, improved images/figures/tables, expression improvements, etc.
- **Major Revision** means the manuscript should most likely be accepted after the authors make substantial changes, including restructuring the manuscript, expanding or clarifying the methods, adjusting the conclusions, or expanding or reducing the discussion.
- **Reject and Resubmit** means the manuscript could be accepted if certain major issues are addressed, but such changes may not be possible and/or still may not make the manuscript acceptable. This includes requests for additional subjects or data, complete revision of statistical methods or conclusions, or removing/adding large portions of the manuscript. The editorial board may reject the revision if the requirements are not met.
- **Reject** means that the manuscript is not valid, novel, ethical, comprehensible, and/or otherwise worthy of publication

COMPLETE THE REVIEW ON TIME

- Be concise but thorough. We recommend that a review be more than 50, but less than 750 words.
- Make note of the requested due date and stick to it, or alert the editorial office if you will be late. Communication is generally rewarded with flexibility.

WATCH OUT FOR PLAGIARISM

- If you have concerns about plagiarism, explain your findings in the confidential comments to the editorial board. Journals take plagiarism very seriously, and COPE guidelines for investigating and addressing suspected or proven plagiarism will be followed.