GUIDE FOR AUTHORS

INTRODUCTION
Apunts. Sports Medicine, a publication by Consell Català de l'Esport (Catalan Sports Council), is a scientific journal dedicated to sports medicine. Apunts is focused, on the one hand, on the impact of high sports performance on men and women and, especially, in the study of team sports and muscle, tendon, and ligament injuries. On the other hand, on the behavior to follow while practicing sport or physical activity during illnesses or in certain situations. The journal regularly includes original articles on Applied Research, Clinical Cases, Editorial articles or Comments, Consensus Articles, Reviews and Letters to the Editor. All of which undergo an anonymous external peer review process.

Types of article

Editorials
With some exceptions, these will be commissioned by the Editorial Committee on a current topic, which may or may not refer to an article published in the same issue of Apunts. Sports Medicine. They usually consist of 800-1000 words with a maximum of 15 literature references. A single author is preferred.

Originals
Original articles must follow the format of, Introduction, Material and methods, Results, and Discussion. The maximum length of the text will be approximately 3,500 words, and up to 6 figures or tables will be accepted. It is essential to include a structured abstract, only in English, with not more than 250 words in length. Three to 6 keywords will be included after the abstract. If the original article is a clinical trial, Apunts. Sports Medicine recommends that all the authors register it in a public access electronic register, in accordance with the recommendations of the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE, http://www.icmje.org/faq.pdf). In this respect, all clinical trials are defined as those research projects that prospectively assign human subjects to a determined intervention or group to study the cause-effect relationship between the intervention and the clinical result. The researchers who conduct a randomised prospective study should consult the latest version of the CONSORT (Consolidated Standards of Reporting Trials) (http://www.consort-statement.org/) criteria and include a flow-chart of the type recommended by CONSORT, detailing the distribution of the subjects under study during the running of the same. Randomised, prospective studies should be clearly identified in the title and in the abstract of the article. Likewise, it must include the register number and the register name in the last line of the abstract. Trials may be registered in any of the following registers (or in others that comply with the ICMJE regulations):

a) Clinical Trials: http://www.clinicaltrials.gov/
b) ISRCTN Register: http://www.controlled-trials.com/isrctn/
c) Netherlands Trial Register: http://www.trialregister.nl/trialreg/index.asp
d) UMIN Clinical Trials Registry: http://www.umin.ac.jp/ctr
Reviews
Apunts. Sports Medicine will give special priority to those review works that focus on current topics. The maximum length of the text will be approximately 4,500 words, and up to 6 figures and tables will be allowed. It is essential to include a non-structured abstract, only in English, which is no longer than 150 words. Three to 6 keywords will be included after the abstract. If the authors carry out a systematic review of the literature on a topic or a meta-analysis, they should adhere to the recommendations proposed by QUOROM (Quality of Reporting of Meta-analyses) (Moher D, Cook DJ, Eastwood S, Olkin I, Rennie D, Stroup DF, for the QUOROM Group. Improving the quality of reports of meta-analyses of randomised controlled trials: the QUOROM statement. Lancet. 1999;354:1896-900) (www.consort-statement.org/QUOROM.pdf).

Special Articles
This section will include articles related to Sports Medicine, which due to their characteristics cannot be considered for the Originals or Reviews sections. The text length will be approximately 4500 words and up to 6 figures and tables will be allowed. It is essential to include a non-structured abstract, in Spanish or Catalan and English, which is no longer than 150 words. Three to 6 keywords will be included after the abstract.

Clinical Cases
Clinical Cases will be the description of one or more clinical experience cases that will show little known facts of part or all of the phenomenon in its application to sport. Case studies may be included in which new, exceptional aspects are described or which add important assessments. The maximum length will be approximately 900 words and must be structured into the following sections: Introduction, Presentation of the case, and Discussion. Two figures and two tables will be accepted. The bibliography must not exceed 15 references. It will include a non-structured abstract, only in English, which is no longer than 150 words. Three to 6 keywords will be included after the abstract.

Letters to the Editor
The Editorial Committee encourages readers to submit objections or comments related to articles recently published in the Journal and, in some cases, on important articles published in other journals. This correspondence must contain interesting ideas and comments and must always be supported by scientific data and a maximum of ten literature references. Whenever possible the reply letter from the authors of the article commented on will be published at the same time. It will contain a maximum of 450 words. There will be a maximum number of four authors.

Contact details for submission
Please, submit your article via https://www.editorialmanager.com/APUNTS/

Language
Apunts. Sports Medicine accepts articles only in English. However, the article can be sent in Spanish or Catalan while the article is being reviewed, but, once accepted, the author must send it in English, and the article in the original language (Spanish or Catalan) will be included at the end of the article as “Additional Material” in pdf with Word format.

Articles published in Apunts. Sports Medicine are summarised and indexed in Emerging Sources Citation Index (ESCI), Scopus, ScienceDirect, Heracles, EMBASE/Excerpta Medica, EMCARE, Dialnet, IBECS, E-revist@s, Sportdiscus and Latindex.
Submission checklist

You can use this list to carry out a final check of your submission before you send it to the journal for review. Please check the relevant section in this Guide for Authors for more details.

Ensure that the following items are present:

First page:

- One author has been designated as the corresponding author with contact details (postal address, E-mail address).
- All necessary files have been uploaded.

Anonymous manuscript:

- Include keywords.
- All figures (include relevant captions).
- All tables (including titles, description, footnotes).
- Ensure all figure and table citations in the text match the files provided.
- Indicate clearly if color should be used for any figures in print.

Further considerations:

- The manuscript has been 'spell checked' and 'grammar checked'.
- All references mentioned in the Reference List are cited in the text, and vice versa.
- Permission has been obtained for use of copyrighted material from other sources (including the Internet).
- A competing interests statement is provided, even if the authors have no competing interests to declare.
- Journal policies detailed in this guide have been reviewed.
- Referee suggestions and contact details provided, based on journal requirements.

For further information, visit our Publishing Support Center.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Ethics in publishing

Please see our information pages on Ethics in publishing and Ethical guidelines for journal publication.

Studies in humans and animals

If the work involves the use of human subjects, the author should ensure that the work described has been carried out in accordance with The Code of Ethics of the World Medical Association (Declaration of Helsinki) for experiments involving humans. The manuscript should be in line with the Recommendations for the Conduct, Reporting, Editing and Publication of Scholarly Work in Medical Journals and aim for the inclusion of representative human populations (sex, age and ethnicity) as per those recommendations. The terms sex and gender should be used correctly.

Authors should include a statement in the manuscript that informed consent was obtained for experimentation with human subjects. The privacy rights of human subjects must always be observed.
All animal experiments should comply with the ARRIVE guidelines and should be carried out in accordance with the U.K. Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act, 1986 and associated guidelines, EU Directive 2010/63/EU for animal experiments, or the National Institutes of Health guide for the care and use of Laboratory animals (NIH Publications No. 8023, revised 1978) and the authors should clearly indicate in the manuscript that such guidelines have been followed. The sex of animals must be indicated, and where appropriate, the influence (or association) of sex on the results of the study.

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Studies on patients or volunteers require ethics committee approval and informed consent, which should be documented in the paper. Appropriate consents, permissions and releases must be obtained where an author wishes to include case details or other personal information or images of patients and any other individuals in an Elsevier publication. Written consents must be retained by the author but copies should not be provided to the journal. Only if specifically requested by the journal in exceptional circumstances (for example if a legal issue arises) the author must provide copies of the consents or evidence that such consents have been obtained. For more information, please review the Elsevier Policy on the Use of Images or Personal Information of Patients or other Individuals. Unless you have written permission from the patient (or, where applicable, the next of kin), the personal details of any patient included in any part of the article and in any supplementary materials (including all illustrations and videos) must be removed before submission.

**Declaration of interest**

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**Declaration of generative AI in scientific writing**

The below guidance only refers to the writing process, and not to the use of AI tools to analyse and draw insights from data as part of the research process.

Where authors use generative artificial intelligence (AI) and AI-assisted technologies in the writing process, authors should only use these technologies to improve readability and language. Applying the technology should be done with human oversight and control, and authors should carefully review and edit the result, as AI can generate authoritative-sounding output that can be incorrect, incomplete or biased. AI and AI-assisted technologies should not be listed as an author or co-author, or be cited as an author. Authorship implies responsibilities and tasks that can only be attributed to and performed by humans, as outlined in Elsevier’s AI policy for authors.

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Submission of an article implies that the work described has not been published previously (except in the form of an abstract or as part of a published lecture or academic thesis, see 'Multiple, redundant or concurrent publication' section of our ethics policy for more information), that it is not under consideration for publication elsewhere, that its publication is approved by all authors and tacitly or explicitly by the responsible authorities where the work was carried out, and that, if accepted, it will not be published elsewhere in the same form, in English or in any other language, including electronically without the written consent of the copyright-holder. To verify originality, your article may be checked by the originality detection service Crossref Similarity Check.

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**Sex and gender reporting**
**Reporting guidance**
For research involving or pertaining to humans, animals or eukaryotic cells, investigators should
integrate sex and gender-based analyses (SGBA) into their research design according to funder/sponsor requirements and best practices within a field. Authors should address the sex and/or gender dimensions of their research in their article. In cases where they cannot, they should discuss this as a limitation to their research's generalizability. Importantly, authors should explicitly state what definitions of sex and/or gender they are applying to enhance the precision, rigor and reproducibility of their research and to avoid ambiguity or conflation of terms and the constructs to which they refer (see Definitions section below). Authors can refer to the Sex and Gender Equity in Research (SAGER) guidelines and the SAGER guidelines checklist. These offer systematic approaches to the use and editorial review of sex and gender information in study design, data analysis, outcome reporting and research interpretation - however, please note there is no single, universally agreed-upon set of guidelines for defining sex and gender.

Definitions
Sex generally refers to a set of biological attributes that are associated with physical and physiological features (e.g., chromosomal genotype, hormonal levels, internal and external anatomy). A binary sex categorization (male/female) is usually designated at birth ("sex assigned at birth"), most often based solely on the visible external anatomy of a newborn. Gender generally refers to socially constructed roles, behaviors, and identities of women, men and gender-diverse people that occur in a historical and cultural context and may vary across societies and over time. Gender influences how people view themselves and each other, how they behave and interact and how power is distributed in society. Sex and gender are often incorrectly portrayed as binary (female/male or woman/man) and unchanging whereas these constructs actually exist along a spectrum and include additional sex categorizations and gender identities such as people who are intersex/have differences of sex development (DSD) or identify as non-binary. Moreover, the terms "sex" and "gender" can be ambiguous—thus it is important for authors to define the manner in which they are used. In addition to this definition guidance and the SAGER guidelines, the S resources on this page offer further insight around sex and gender in research studies.

Authorship
All authors should have made substantial contributions to all of the following: (1) the conception and design of the study, or acquisition of data, or analysis and interpretation of data, (2) drafting the article or revising it critically for important intellectual content, (3) final approval of the version to be submitted.

Changes to authorship
Authors are expected to consider carefully the list and order of authors before submitting their manuscript and provide the definitive list of authors at the time of the original submission. Any addition, deletion or rearrangement of author names in the authorship list should be made only before the manuscript has been accepted and only if approved by the journal Editor. To request such a change, the Editor must receive the following from the corresponding author: (a) the reason for the change in author list and (b) written confirmation (e-mail, letter) from all authors that they agree with the addition, removal or rearrangement. In the case of addition or removal of authors, this includes confirmation from the author being added or removed. Only in exceptional circumstances will the Editor consider the addition, deletion or rearrangement of authors after the manuscript has been accepted. While the Editor considers the request, publication of the manuscript will be suspended. If the manuscript has already been published in an online issue, any requests approved by the Editor will result in a corrigendum.
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Reporting clinical trials
Randomized controlled trials should be presented according to the CONSORT guidelines. At manuscript submission, authors must provide the CONSORT checklist accompanied by a flow diagram that illustrates the progress of patients through the trial, including recruitment, enrollment, randomization, withdrawal and completion, and a detailed description of the randomization procedure. The CONSORT checklist and template flow diagram are available online.

Registration of clinical trials
Registration in a public trials registry is a condition for publication of clinical trials in this journal in accordance with International Committee of Medical Journal Editors recommendations. Trials must register at or before the onset of patient enrolment. The clinical trial registration number should be included at the end of the abstract of the article. A clinical trial is defined as any research study that prospectively assigns human participants or groups of humans to one or more health-related interventions to evaluate the effects of health outcomes. Health-related interventions include any intervention used to modify a biomedical or health-related outcome (for example drugs, surgical procedures, devices, behavioural treatments, dietary interventions, and process-of-care changes). Health outcomes include any biomedical or health-related measures obtained in patients or participants, including pharmacokinetic measures and adverse events. Purely observational studies (those in which the assignment of the medical intervention is not at the discretion of the investigator) will not require registration.

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**PREPARATION**

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to all of the journal's usual procedures, with peer review handled independently of the relevant editor and their research groups. More information on types of peer review.

**Double-blind review**

This journal uses double-anonymized review, which means the identities of the authors are concealed from the reviewers, and vice versa. More information is available on our website. To facilitate this, please include the following separately:

*Title page (with author details):* This should include the title, authors' names affiliations, acknowledgements and any Declaration of Interest statement, and a complete address for the corresponding author including an e-mail address.

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**Use of word processing software**

It is important that the file be saved in the native format of the word processor used. The text should be in single-column format. Keep the layout of the text as simple as possible. Most formatting codes will be removed and replaced on processing the article. In particular, do not use the word processor's options to justify text or to hyphenate words. However, do use bold face, italics, subscripts, superscripts etc. When preparing tables, if you are using a table grid, use only one grid for each individual table and not a grid for each row. If no grid is used, use tabs, not spaces, to align columns. The electronic text should be prepared in a way very similar to that of conventional manuscripts (see also the Guide to Publishing with Elsevier). Note that source files of figures, tables and text graphics will be required whether or not you embed your figures in the text. See also the section on Electronic artwork.

To avoid unnecessary errors you are strongly advised to use the 'spell-check' and 'grammar-check' functions of your word processor.

**Article structure**

**Subdivision - unnumbered sections**

Divide your article into clearly defined sections. Each subsection is given a brief heading. Each heading should appear on its own separate line. Subsections should be used as much as possible when cross-referencing text: refer to the subsection by heading as opposed to simply 'the text'.

**Introduction**

It will be brief and must only provide the necessary explanation in order that the reader can understand the text that follows. It must not contain figures or tables. It must clearly express the aim(s) of the work in the last paragraph.

**Material and methods**

The first paragraph of the material and methods section must mention the design type (experimental, clinical, retrospective, prospective, observational, clinical trial, controlled or not, etc.) and the study setting (multicentre or not, type of centre, etc.). The methods and procedures used must be set out with sufficient detail in order to allow other researchers to reproduce the research. In clinical trials, details will be given of the randomisation method. Furthermore, the method used to calculate sample size must be specified, as well as the main variable of the study and an explanation of its calculation. The methodology used in the
statistical analysis must be explained. Whenever it is intended to publish a very uncommon observation, the literature search method, the keywords used, years covered, and the date of updating must be specified in the text. When experiments on humans are presented, it must indicate whether the procedures that were followed were in accordance with the ethical guidelines of the Committee responsible for human experimentation (institutional or regional) and with the principles of the Helsinki Declaration of 1975, revised in 1983 and available at http://www.wma.net/e/policy/b3.htm. A photocopy of the approval by the corresponding Ethics Committee will be provided. When animal experiments are performed, it must mention whether the European Community guidelines on animal research were followed.

Results
The observations made with the material and methods used are set out, not interpreted. These data will be shown in a logical sequence and may be expressed in detail in the text or with the addition of tables and figures, but the tables and figures data must not be used repeatedly in the text.

Discussion
The authors must express their own opinions on the subject without repeating the data provided in the Introduction and Results in detail. They will highlight here: 1) the significance of the practical application of the results; 2) the considerations on a possible inconsistency of the methodology and the reasons why the results could be valid; 3) the relationship with similar publications and a comparison between the areas of agreement and disagreement, and 4) the indications and directions for future studies, expounding new hypotheses when these are justified, clearly labelling them as such. Emphasis should be made on novel and important aspects of the study and the conclusions they obtained.

Appendices
If there is more than one appendix, they should be identified as A, B, etc. Formulae and equations in appendices should be given separate numbering: Eq. (A.1), Eq. (A.2), etc.; in a subsequent appendix, Eq. (B.1) and so on. Similarly for tables and figures: Table A.1; Fig. A.1, etc.

Essential title page information
• Title. Concise and informative. Titles are often used in information-retrieval systems. Avoid abbreviations and formulae where possible.
• Author names and affiliations. Please clearly indicate the given name(s) and family name(s) of each author and check that all names are accurately spelled. You can add your name between parentheses in your own script behind the English transliteration. Present the authors' affiliation addresses (where the actual work was done) below the names. Indicate all affiliations with a lower-case superscript letter immediately after the author's name and in front of the appropriate address. Provide the full postal address of each affiliation, including the country name and, if available, the e-mail address of each author.
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• Present/permanent address. If an author has moved since the work described in the article was done, or was visiting at the time, a 'Present address' (or 'Permanent address') may be
indicated as a footnote to that author's name. The address at which the author actually did the work must be retained as the main, affiliation address. Superscript Arabic numerals are used for such footnotes.

**Structured abstract**

It is one of the fundamental sections of the article, as through this, the basic information of the study is obtained in the bibliographic indexes. In Apunts. Sports Medicine it must contain a maximum of 250 words, and must be structured into four parts: Introduction, which will indicate the aims of the study; Material and methods, which will describe, the patient series, the laboratory materials and other methods used, the nature of the study (randomised, retrospective, experimental, etc.), Results, which will include basic data with numeric values and their statistical significance; and Conclusions, where it will succinctly point out the main conclusions of the study. In Reviews, Special Articles and Clinical Cases, the abstract must not be structured, but must be equally informative on its content. Abbreviations will be avoided in the Abstract. After the abstract, the authors must specify, and identify as such, 3 to 6 keywords that will help to index the article in databases. The terms in the “Medical Subject Headings” (MeSH Terms) of Index Medicus should be used, which can be consulted and downloaded at [http://www.nlm.nih.gov/mesh/](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/mesh/).

**Keywords**

Immediately after the abstract, provide a maximum of 6 keywords, using British spelling and avoiding general and plural terms and multiple concepts (avoid, for example, 'and', 'of'). Be sparing with abbreviations: only abbreviations firmly established in the field may be eligible. These keywords will be used for indexing purposes.

**Abbreviations**

Define abbreviations that are not standard in this field in a footnote to be placed on the first page of the article. Such abbreviations that are unavoidable in the abstract must be defined at their first mention there, as well as in the footnote. Ensure consistency of abbreviations throughout the article.

**Acknowledgements**

Where necessary it will mention the people (whose intellectual contribution does not justify being included as an author), centres or bodies that may have collaborated or supported the carrying out of the work. If there are commercial implications they must also be mentioned in this section.

**Formatting of funding sources**

List funding sources in this standard way to facilitate compliance to funder's requirements:

Funding: This work was supported by the National Institutes of Health [grant numbers xxxx, yyyy]; the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Seattle, WA [grant number zzzz]; and the United States Institutes of Peace [grant number aaaa].

It is not necessary to include detailed descriptions on the program or type of grants and awards. When funding is from a block grant or other resources available to a university, college, or other research institution, submit the name of the institute or organization that provided the funding.

If no funding has been provided for the research, please include the following sentence:
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Follow internationally accepted rules and conventions: use the international system of units (SI). If other units are mentioned, please give their equivalent in SI.

**Artwork**

**Image manipulation**

Whilst it is accepted that authors sometimes need to manipulate images for clarity, manipulation for purposes of deception or fraud will be seen as scientific ethical abuse and will be dealt with accordingly. For graphical images, this journal is applying the following policy: no specific feature within an image may be enhanced, obscured, moved, removed, or introduced. Adjustments of brightness, contrast, or color balance are acceptable if and as long as they do not obscure or eliminate any information present in the original. Nonlinear adjustments (e.g. changes to gamma settings) must be disclosed in the figure legend.

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• Aim to use the following fonts in your illustrations: Arial, Courier, Times New Roman, Symbol, or use fonts that look similar.
• Number the illustrations according to their sequence in the text.
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• Provide captions to illustrations separately.
• Size the illustrations close to the desired dimensions of the published version.
• Submit each illustration as a separate file.
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A detailed [guide on electronic artwork](#) is available.

You are urged to visit this site; some excerpts from the detailed information are given here.

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Regardless of the application used other than Microsoft Office, when your electronic artwork is finalized, please 'Save as' or convert the images to one of the following formats (note the resolution requirements for line drawings, halftones, and line/halftone combinations given below):

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- Supply files that are optimized for screen use (e.g., GIF, BMP, PICT, WPG); these typically have a low number of pixels and limited set of colors;
- Supply files that are too low in resolution;
- Submit graphics that are disproportionately large for the content.

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Ensure that each illustration has a caption. Supply captions separately, not attached to the figure. A caption should comprise a brief title (not on the figure itself) and a description of the illustration. Keep text in the illustrations themselves to a minimum but explain all symbols and abbreviations used.

**Text graphics**

Text graphics may be embedded in the text at the appropriate position. See further under Electronic artwork.

**Tables**

Please submit tables as editable text and not as images. Tables can be placed either next to the relevant text in the article, or on separate page(s) at the end. Number tables consecutively in accordance with their appearance in the text and place any table notes below the table body. Be sparing in the use of tables and ensure that the data presented in them do not duplicate results described elsewhere in the article. Please avoid using vertical rules and shading in table cells.

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