Guidelines for authors

*Alternative Therapies in Health and Medicine* is an international scientific forum for the dissemination of peer-reviewed information indexed in the National Library of Medicine to healthcare professionals regarding the use of complementary and alternative therapies in promoting health and healing.

**Writing for Alternative Therapies in Health and Medicine**

The editors of *Alternative Therapies in Health and Medicine* invite authors to submit original papers for consideration. Papers most likely to be published are those that pass peer review and present authoritative information on the integration of complementary and alternative therapies with conventional medical practices in preventing and treating disease, healing illness, and promoting health. We do not use material that has been published elsewhere, either in print or electronically (“on the Web”), except as noted in Permissions, later in this document.

Our readers are for the most part physicians and healthcare providers and not the general public. In submitting a manuscript to ATHM, please consider this audience. One way to determine if your paper has succeeded is to show your draft to members of the medical community whose area of expertise is discussed in your paper. If they have difficulty understanding your paper, so, in all probability, will the ATHM staff.

**Where to send manuscripts and queries**

*Alternative Therapies in Health and Medicine*
InnoVision Communications
169 Saxony Road, Suite 104
Encinitas, CA 92024
Attention: David Riley, MD

Phone: (760) 633-3910  -  Fax: (760) 633-3918
E-mail: alternative.therapies@innerdoorway.com
Alternative Therapies in Health and Medicine

Subject Matter

For purposes of this publication, alternative therapies in health and medicine include, but are not limited to, the following topics:

- Acupuncture/Acupressure
- Anthroposophy
- Aromatherapy
- Ayurveda
- Bioelectromagnetic therapy
- Biofeedback
- Botanical medicine
- Chiropractic
- Craniosacral therapies
- Creative therapies (including art, dance, drama, and music)
- Diet/Nutrition/Nutritional supplements
- Environmental medicine
- Five Element Chinese Medicine
- Health promotion
- Homeopathy
- Hypnotherapy
- Imagery
- Indigenous medical practices
- Literature reviews, systematic reviews and meta-analyses
- Massage
- Meditation
- Medical Acupuncture
- Mind-body therapies (including behavioral and educational aspects)
- Naturopathy
- Nonlocal therapies
- Osteopathic medicine
- Qigong
- Psychoneuroimmunology
- Psychotherapy
- Reflexology
- Reiki
- Relaxation/stress reduction
- Spiritual/transpersonal healing/prayer
- Tibetan medicine
- Traditional Chinese Medicine
- Yoga
Types of Manuscripts to Submit

*Alternative Therapies in Health and Medicine* publishes 7 types of articles:

1. **Original Research** – Manuscripts usually contain between 3000 and 7000 words and are accepted for consideration with the understanding that they have not been published or submitted elsewhere. They are subject to blinded peer review; that is, authors and reviewers are not identified by name during the review process. Original research includes randomized, controlled trials; outcome studies; intervention studies; cost-effectiveness analyses; case-control series; and surveys with high response rates. Each manuscript should begin with an abstract that includes a hypothesis or objective, study methods, the interventions being evaluated, the main outcome measures, and the main results. The body of the manuscript should cover this material in greater detail and include a discussion section as well as references.

2. **Brief Reports** – These articles—usually pilot studies, brief evaluations, and reviews—must be unique, first-time reports with a typical length of 750 to 1600 words (approximately 9 typed, double-spaced pages) with no more than 3 tables and/or figures and 15 references. Brief Reports are subject to blinded peer-review in the same manner as original research manuscripts. Authors should follow all requirements for longer manuscripts when submitting Brief Reports, including the understanding that they have not been published or submitted elsewhere.

3. **Review articles/Systematic reviews/Meta-analyses** – Systematic assessments of medical literature and data sources (including meta-analyses) pertaining to clinical topics as well as overviews of complementary and alternative therapeutic systems will be considered. All articles and data sources reviewed should include information about the specific type of intervention or study. Articles used in a review should be selected systematically and evaluated by a process discussed in the manuscript. Manuscripts usually contain between 3000 and 7000 words and are accepted for consideration with the understanding that they have not been published or submitted elsewhere.

4. **Hypotheses** – Critical assessments of alternative therapies discussing potential mechanisms of action and implications for the practice of medicine and the integration of complementary and alternative therapies into the healthcare delivery system are encouraged. Manuscripts usually contain between 3000 and 7000 words and are accepted for consideration with the understanding that they have not been published or submitted elsewhere.

5. **Case Reports** – This is a regularly featured column meant to highlight the clinical applications of alternative or integrative therapies as they are implemented in patient care. Preference will be given to cases in which diagnosis, treatment, and outcomes are clearly defined. Length of Case Reports vary; you may discuss this with one of our editors.

6. **Letters to the Editor** – Letters discussing a recent *Alternative Therapies in Health and Medicine* article are welcome. Letters should be received within 6 weeks of the article's publication. They should not exceed 750 words of text and 10 references.
7. Research Letters – Letters discussing anecdotal clinical outcomes or informal case series, most commonly practice based, are welcome at *Alternative Therapies in Health and Medicine*. Research letters may be, but are not required to be, related to articles published in *Alternative Therapies in Health and Medicine*. They should not exceed 750 words of text and 10 references.
**Authorship**

Disputes over authorship, and multiauthorship in particular, are better resolved early on, preferably before a study begins. We now ask authors to specify their individual contributions and publish this information.

**Submitting Manuscripts**

You may submit your manuscripts electronically or by post. Use only one method except for tables and figures as noted in the Checklist for Authors.

If submitting your manuscript by e-mail, send to alternative.therapies@innerdoorway.com. Include your mailing address, telephone, and fax numbers in your e-mail message as well as an electronic version (Microsoft Word preferred) of each item listed in the checklist. Tables and figures should be included as attachments if possible and sent by post to avoid errors in electronic transmission.

If submitting your manuscript by post, include the number of copies requested of each document listed in the Checklist for Authors. Include a self-addressed, stamped envelope (SASE) if you want us to return your materials. Send your manuscripts to the following address:

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Attention: David Riley, MD
How *Alternative Therapies in Health and Medicine* Handles Your Paper

**Duration** – Time from receipt of initial submission to final editorial decision takes an average of three to six months.

**Acknowledgement** – Unsolicited submissions are usually acknowledged, along with a reference number, within 1 week of receipt in our office. The reference number should be used in all future communications with *Alternative Therapies in Health and Medicine*. We cannot accept responsibility for lost or mislaid manuscripts. Keep originals in your possession. Authors should include a self-addressed, stamped envelope (SASE) with the manuscript (including sufficient postage) if they would like it returned. Letters to the Editor and general correspondence are not acknowledged.

**Peer Review** – All submissions designated as Original Research or Brief Reports are subject to blinded peer review. Your paper will first be read by one of the journal’s editorial staff for validity, originality, and significance of the work presented. Our acceptance rate is low; an important feature of our selection process is that many papers are turned away on the basis of in-house evaluation alone. That decision will be communicated quickly. Positive in-house reviews by the editorial staff are followed by peer review. If the manuscript is sent out for peer review, you will be informed by the editor managing your manuscript. Reviews are blinded; that is, authors and reviewers are not identified by name during the review process. After the manuscript has been reviewed, you will be informed whether it has been accepted for publication, rejected, or requires revision. If reviews are favorable and there is editorial consensus, the next step may be to consult a methodologist if there are statistical or methodological questions. Occasionally we will ask authors to recommend one or more potential reviewers when a paper covers cutting-edge topics for which we might not have established reviewers.

**Decision** – Revisions may be requested for submissions that survive the previous review stages. This does not constitute acceptance for publication, but is an invitation to strengthen your paper for further scrutiny. After revision, your paper may again be subjected to a full peer review, usually by the same referees. The reviewers’ comments must be answered or rebutted, both in the text of the manuscript and in a separate accompanying letter to facilitate the review of your revised manuscript. Some of the comments will be technical and some, substantive; all should be addressed.

**Final Decision** – You will be notified via either mail, electronic mail, fax, or by telephone regarding the final decision about your submission.

**Accepted Submissions** – At the time your paper is accepted for publication, you may refer to it as being "in press." Your paper will be transmitted to the publishing office and you will be asked to provide a copy either on diskette or by electronic transmission. No publication date will be set at this time; galley proofs will be sent to you for approval and you will be notified when a publication date has been established.
Format and Other Details

**Manuscript Content** – Your manuscript should be formatted according to the Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals (http://www.icmje.org/). You may also find the Consolidated Standards of Reporting Trials (CONSORT) statement helpful for describing a randomized, controlled trial (http://www.consort-statement.org/).

**Ethics** – When human experimentation is being reported, include a statement to confirm that the work was done in accordance with the appropriate institutional review body and carried out with the ethical standards set forth in the Helsinki Declaration of 1975. When laboratory animals are used, there should be a statement that the work was carried out according to the National Research Council's protocol for, or any national law on, the care and use of laboratory animals.

**Abstracts** – Abstracts should be written in the third person. Structured abstracts should contain no more than 250 words; unstructured abstracts should contain no more than 150 words. Abstracts are not required for case reports. In manuscripts reporting original data, use the following abstract subheadings: Context, Objective, Design, Setting, Patients or Other Participants, Intervention(s), Main Outcome Measure(s), and Results. For review manuscripts or meta-analyses, use the following: Objective, Data Sources, Study Selection, Data Extraction, Data Synthesis, and Conclusions.

**References** – Start references on a separate page following the text. Number consecutively in the text by order of appearance. In the text, designate reference numbers either as superscript or on the line in parentheses. (Do not use the footnote function in WordPerfect.) Abbreviate journal titles according to Index Medicus. If in doubt, cite complete journal name. Follow the format and punctuation shown in the following examples. Do not use periods in abbreviations of journal titles. List all authors, but if the number exceeds 6, give the first 3 names followed by "et al."

**Journal article**

**Book chapter**

**Book**

**Tables** – Number and title each table consecutively in the order mentioned in the text. Each column within a table should have a heading. Explain abbreviations in the legend.

**Figures** – Submit 5 sets. On the back of one copy note the figure number, last name of the primary author, and orientation (top/left/right). Include the name of the photographer or illustrator, if applicable. In clinical photographs in which the patient can be recognized, include a release signed by the patient or guardian granting permission to publish the photograph. If permission is not obtained, the photograph will be cropped to ensure anonymity.
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**Proprietary Interest** – Authors with financial or proprietary interest in the subject matter or materials discussed (eg, employment, stock ownership, honoraria, etc) will be asked to submit a statement for publication on the first page of the article.

**Drug Names** – Use full generic names only, including inactive moiety. The trade name of a drug may be cited in parentheses the first time the generic name appears.

**Units of Measurement** – Measurements of length, height, weight, and volume should be reported in metric units or their decimal multiples. Temperatures should be given in degrees Celsius. Blood pressure should be given in millimeters of mercury. All physiologic measurements should be reported in SI (Système International) units.

**Abbreviations and Symbols** – With the exception of standard units of measurements, avoid abbreviations. Do not use abbreviations in the title or abstract. When a large number of abbreviations are being used, list them in a in table.

**Reprints** – Upon publication, authors will receive 2 complimentary copies of the issue in which their article appears. Order forms for reprints will accompany galleys.
Checklist for Authors

Cover letter:

☐ With each manuscript submitted include 3 copies of a cover letter that explains why you think this journal in particular should publish your paper. The paper may be longer than requested; please take this opportunity to say what concessions you might be prepared to make (eg, omission of a table or shortening of the methods).

Copyright transfer:

☐ All authors are required to sign a transfer of copyright agreement. Call 760-633-3910 to obtain a copy of this agreement or obtain a PDF copy from our Web site at http://www.alternative-therapies.com.

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Manuscript:

☐ Five printed copies of your manuscript, including the following:
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  ☐ Title of manuscript
  ☐ Running title
  ☐ Authors' full names in publishing order, with degrees, ranks, credentials, and affiliations
  ☐ Corresponding author’s name, address, and telephone numbers (home and work), fax numbers and e-mail address
  ☐ Institution(s) in which the work was performed
  ☐ Grants or other financial support used for the study
☐ Abstract, double spaced on a separate page, including title, structured abstracts up to 250 words, unstructured up to 150 words
☐ Text, double spaced, starting on a new page, printed on one side of each page only
☐ References (double-spaced starting on a new page and following the format of the most recent version of the American Medical Association Manual of Style—currently the 9th edition)
☐ Tables
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