

Geburtshilfe und Frauenheilkunde: Notes to Reviewers

Thank you for agreeing to review for *Geburtshilfe und Frauenheilkunde*. Peer review is a critical element of scholarly publication, and one of the major cornerstones of the scientific process. Peer review serves two key functions:

- It acts as a filter by ensuring that research is properly verified before publication.
- It improves the quality of research and of publications by working out the key points and correcting unintended errors. *This is especially important to us and you will be asked to make recommendations to the authors at the end of your review.*

Your expertise is greatly appreciated and valued by us: Please be aware that your review and your recommendations will contribute to the final decision made by the Editor. Please base your review on the points and questions below.

1 Originality/Scientific Merit

Is the article sufficiently novel and interesting to warrant publication? Does it add to the canon of knowledge? Does the article adhere to the journal's standards? Is the research question/the case presented an important one?

2 Manuscript Structure

Is the paper clearly laid out, are all the key elements present: abstract, introduction, materials and methods, results, conclusions? Please consider all points in turn:

1. Do *title* and *abstract* actually reflect the content of the work?
2. *Introduction*: Study aim: does the introduction accurately describe the rationale behind the work and the questions the paper sets out to answer? Does it outline the main problems and explain the research it builds upon or refers to (if applicable)?
3. *Materials and Methods*: Does the author accurately explain how the data was collected? Is the design suitable for answering the question posed? Is there sufficient information present for you to replicate the research? Does the article identify the procedures followed? Are these ordered in a meaningful way? If the methods are new, are they explained in detail? Was the sampling appropriate? Have the patients, equipment and materials been adequately described?
If it is a clinical paper, is the case appropriately described, were anamnesis, diagnosis and treatment adequately conducted? For ethical considerations, see Point 6 below.
4. *Results*: Are they presented clearly and in a logical sequence? Do they seem reasonable? Are the statistics correct? Was the appropriate analysis used? If you are not comfortable with the statistics, please inform the Editor when submitting your report.

5. *Conclusion/Discussion*: Are the claims actually supported by the results? Have the authors explained how the results relate to expectations and to earlier research? Do they contradict or support previous theories? Has this paper actually contributed to the body of knowledge in its field?

3 Language

Is the paper clearly written, is it easy to follow even for non-experts in the particular field of research/clinical practice? Please highlight badly written papers to the Editors. Please do not correct the language or orthography yourself, but feel free to recommend the use of a professional language editing service to the authors.

4 Figures, tables

Do they inform the reader, are they an important part of the story? Do they describe the data accurately? Are the figure legends correct and informative?

5 References

Are previous works in the field appropriately referenced? Are any important ones missing? Are the references accurate?

6 Ethics

1. *Plagiarism*: If you suspect a case of plagiarism, tell the Editor.
2. *Fraud*: This is very hard to detect, but if you suspect the results may not be true, tell the Editor.
3. *Ethical research conduct*: Have the main pillars of research/clinical practice been observed? *Geburtshilfe und Frauenheilkunde* authors need to declare during the submission process that all relevant ethical codes have been adhered to (where applicable):
 - a) Declaration of Helsinki and Good Clinical Practice guidelines
 - b) Local ethics committee approval for research involving humans
 - c) Patients gave written informed consent and not identifiable
 - d) Trials reported have been registered at an official trial registry (e.g. clinicaltrials.org; who.int/ictpr; clinicaltrialsregister.eu)
 - e) Local ethics committee approval for research involving animals
 - f) *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals* was used

If you suspect ethical standards have not been met, please inform the Editor.

7 Submitting your review

Once you have agreed to perform a review, you will be receiving an email containing a direct link to the page “Review Manuscript”. When submitting your review to the ScholarOne system, there will be a number of steps to complete. First, you are asked to briefly indicate whether or not you find the manuscript suitable for publication and whether it should take priority over other manuscripts.

“Tick Priority for Publication”:

- **Outstanding** (must publish)
- **Very good** (merits publication)
- **Good** (publish if space available)
- **Marginal** (barely meets standard)
- **Definitely inappropriate**

Then please go over the checklist to ensure all important points have been covered.

- The paper is of sufficient relevance and scientific merit to warrant publication.
- The methodology section is sound, statistics are correct.
- Data is correctly and adequately presented (incl. figures and tables).
- Authors have adhered to the Instructions of *Geburtshilfe und Frauenheilkunde*.
- Authors have adhered to ethical requirements.

- Background and rationale of the paper have been clearly and adequately explained.
- The literature is comprehensive (if not, please give recommendations, see below).
- Authors have been given recommendations on how to improve their manuscript (in case a revision is required).

Next, you enter your recommendation to the Editor:

“Recommendation”:

- **Accept**
- **Minor Revision**
- **Major Revision**
- **Reject & Resubmit**
- **Reject**

Finally, please fill in both commentary boxes:

1. Confidential report to the Editor (not visible to the authors)
2. Commentary to the authors: this will be sent to the authors together with the decision letter of the Editor. Make sure you enter here all the recommendations that you have for the authors on how to improve the manuscript, especially when recommending a revision! Please be fair, concise and precise.

You can also upload your review via “Attach a File”, but it is better to fill in the commentary boxes (box allows copy and paste).

Thank you for your time and your support of *Geburtshilfe und Frauenheilkunde*!