

UROGYNECOLOGY Peer Review

A brief overview provided by the *UROGYNECOLOGY* Editorial team.

The *UROGYNECOLOGY* Editorial team has invited you to participate as a peer reviewer. We greatly appreciate the time and effort peer reviews require. In this peer reviewer role, you serve an important role for our professional society and our official journal. Your review, as well as other peer reviews, will be instrumental in helping the editors reach an editorial decision for the submission. Each review should include direct comments intended for the *UROGYNECOLOGY* editors only – these succinct comments should be separate and distinct from the comments intended for the authors.

Comments for editors:

The *UROGYNECOLOGY* editors want your opinion as to whether the manuscript should be accepted, revised, or rejected. Your recommendation should be based on the relevance and novelty of the research question, rigor of study design and analysis, substantiation of conclusions, and clarity of presentation for journal readership. A useful format would include a few sentences summarizing the study (study type, aims, conclusions) followed by your clear recommendation and rationale for that recommendation. For example, “important research question, with excellent execution of strong study design and well-supported conclusions”. Alternatively, you may find that the research question is unclear or poorly defined, or the study design is flawed, or the sample size is too small, or the conclusions cannot be supported. Please let the editors know if you recommend that the manuscript be reviewed by a statistician or an English language editing service.

Comments for authors:

Please do not include editorial decision recommendations (accept, revise, reject) in author comments.

Please ensure that your comments to the authors are professional, respectful, polite, and diplomatic, yet convey opportunities to improve clarity or address scientific rigor. Please don't write anything you wouldn't want to receive yourself. The authors have done a lot of work to get to this point and you may be able to help them get their work published. With that in mind, appropriate scientific complements are generally appreciated within peer review comments. For example, you may wish to acknowledge strengths or particularly well-written discussions.

Authors appreciate clear language that helps them understand what you thought about work and how you think the manuscript could be improved. Phrases such as "fatal flaws" or "serious mistakes" should be reserved for communication in the comments to the editors.

At the start of comments to the authors, there is no need to:

- list the manuscript number or title, or
- thank anyone for the opportunity to do the peer review.

General Tips for Peer Reviewers:

- 1) Most reviewers find it helpful to make notes while reading the manuscript.

- 2) Be sure that the abstract (which is the only portion of the manuscript ready by many readers) is consistent with the full manuscript text.
- 3) Be sure you clearly understand the aim/primary goal of the study. Then be sure the study design can address that aim and that all sections of the manuscript maintain consistently with the aim.
- 4) Be sure the introduction includes relevant background for the study rationale.
- 5) Be sure that the methods are reported in sufficient detail to allow the study to be reproduced. *UROGYNECOLOGY* requires that clinical trials be registered at clinicaltrials.gov prior to enrollment of the first participant. Check the trial registry to ensure that the study aims are consistent with manuscript report. Indicate if you have concerns about research ethics.
- 6) Be sure results are clearly presented without unnecessary duplication of text, tables, or figures. Check for consistency.
- 7) Be sure conclusions statements are supported by the presented results.
- 8) Consider whether the discussion adequately frames the current study within the context of existing literature. For example, why might the findings of the current study differ from previously published research? Some reviewers find it helpful to check PubMed or other reliable sources of literature review to ensure that current literature is appropriately included.

There are several styles of preparing comments for authors. No particular style is required for *UROGYNECOLOGY* and reviewers may use differing styles depending on the manuscript and their intended comments.

Major – Minor Technique:

In this style of peer review, the reviewer indicates major vs. minor concerns. This is helpful to guide the authors to more important concerns. This style is especially helpful when there is a substantial concern about the manuscript which has prompted a rejection recommendation to the editors. There is no need to list many minor problems once major concerns are noted. Often the list of minor concerns includes typographical, copy editing issues that could easily be corrected if revision is subsequently recommended.

Sequential Comments:

In this style of peer review, the reviewer lists comments in sequence of their relevance to the manuscript (abstract, intro, methods, results, discussion, etc.). An advantage of this style is that it may help an author track necessary changes and respond to revision requests. Be sure to include requests to clarify or re-write text that you found confusing or that you think would aid the reader in understanding the methodology, results, or implications of the work.