

AJTCVM Formatting for Specific Article Types

Article Types Published by AJTCVM:

Research:

- Basic Science Studies
- Clinical Research Studies
- Retrospective Studies
- Scientific Reports (i.e. Systematic Review and Meta-analysis)
- Case Series – 10 cases or greater
- Epidemiology

Non-research:

- Review Article
- Case Series – 3-9 cases
- TCVM for Avian, Laboratory and Exotic Species
- Food Therapy in TCVM Clinical Practice
- Business Economics of TCVM Clinical Practice
- Pearls from TCVM Practice
- Clinical Corner: Case Reports, What's Your Diagnosis
- Herbal Medicine Articles
- Brief Communications
- Editorial

Format for Research Studies

- Typical research articles in AJTCVM are 5,000 to 6,000 words *excluding* footnotes, references, tables, and figure legends.
- **Title:** If the study is randomized, controlled, or blinded, please add those to the title, also include clear succinct statement of species, disease and what was done.
- **Abstract:** a 250-word or less summary of what was done, results and conclusions.
- **Keywords:** Important words (3-6) that others may use to search databases to find your article.
- The 4 main sections are:
 - Introduction
 - Materials and Methods
 - Results
 - Discussion

Introduction

“Why is this study needed and expected outcome”

No title for the section is necessary; just begin text as a first paragraph indented by 0.5.

- Typical articles have 700-800 words in 4 to 5 paragraphs for the introduction area.
- Statement of problem prevalence (backed by epidemiological studies if possible) with most current references on subject. (Paragraph 1)
- Clinical signs and causes, conventional diagnosis and treatments (give a few pertinent current references). (Paragraph 2)
- Disease from a TCVM perspective. (Paragraph 3)
- Basis for proposed TCVM/Integrative medical treatment (no exhaustive review). Why is your study necessary? (Paragraph 4)
- Conclude the section with a clear statement of the aims and objective(s) of the study and state study hypothesis (expected outcome). (Paragraph 5)

Materials and Methods

“What did you do and how did you do it”

Title for the section, aligned left, all capitals and bolded

- Example: **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

- Typical articles have a 4 to 6 paragraph length for this area of the paper.
- Present a concise, clear description of the experimental design, subjects and statistical methods, beginning under the title as a first paragraph indented by 0.5.
- Include source of animals, animal care and use guidelines, owner informed consent.
- In studies with animals sourced from 1 supplier (e.g. pre-clinical studies, laboratory animal studies, university herd); where all animals undergo study treatments concurrently, state total number of animals sourced and number of animals assigned to each group in the Materials and Methods area.
- Clinical Studies which use rolling enrollment over a period of time (months to years), where animals are treated sequentially, and total number of study animals is not known at study start; place final number of animals enrolled in the “Results” area.
- State whether a naturally occurring disease.
- Randomization method
- Inclusion criteria
- Exclusion criteria
- Study protocol/what was done (specific details so other research clinicians can repeat).
- Outcomes measure, Scoring System(s), Statistics used to evaluate the outcomes (keep stats simple)

Results

“What did you find”

Title for the section, aligned left, all capitals and bolded

- Example: **RESULTS**

- The typical length for this area is 4-6 paragraphs; but varies dependent on findings.

- The results of the study should be stated concisely and in a logical sequence summarizing important observations, beginning under the title as a first paragraph indented by 0.5.
- Give total number of animals included in the study and any that were removed or dropped out and why.
- Include any other pertinent information about animals (age, breed, sex, weight, etc).
- Provide results of scoring systems, study day results, statistics for all experimental groups; provide just the statistical results with **no comments about results**.
- Show all your data including 'means plus and minus standard deviations' (Mean $\pm$ SD) and *p*-values in tables so others can check your results for themselves.
- Provide summary of information from tables.
 - **Example:** The acupoints initially stimulated were BL-21, BL-20, BL-23 and KID-3 (Table 1).
Do not say "See Table 1".
 - Place actual tables at the end of the text, after the list of references
- **Show the exact *p* value** for all data.
 - **Example:** *p* = 0.02; *p* = 0.74
- **Do not simply use *p* < 0.05 or *p* > 0.05** as the exact *p* value is important for anyone using your data to calculate confidence limits or using your data in a meta-analysis.
- State any adverse reactions that occurred during the study to any animal in control or test groups; report results that are inconsistent (1 or 2 paragraphs depending on information).

Discussion

"What do results mean? How do results compare with other studies?
Compare hypothesis with actual outcome?"

Title for the section, aligned left, all capitals and bolded

- Example: **DISCUSSION**
- This should be the longest section, usually about 10 paragraphs.
- First present a brief synopsis of the key findings and acceptance or rejection of the hypothesis.
- Review of animal & human studies on the TCVM treatment studied.
- Then compare the present study's findings with relevant findings from other published studies (animal and human) and when possible formulate a brief systematic review combining the results of the current study, with the results of previous relevant studies.
- Provide a discussion: mechanism of action for TCVM treatment studied, explanation of findings.
- Discussion of pitfalls and problems of present study; include anomalous results, and provide logical reasons for the discrepancy if possible. Describe any adverse events that occurred during the study and relationship to experimental treatment.
- Were methods used to minimize and compensate for these study limitations and issues?
- Write a brief section that summarizes the clinical and research implications; provide recommendations and new possibilities or investigations.
- Conclude with a paragraph that summarizes study findings; cost effectiveness, availability and ease of administration of experimental treatment; last sentence gives value of the study.

Format for Review Articles

- A review article should provide readers with an overview of the scientific literature in a specialized area of TCVM research or an educational article with an extensive review of one area of traditional Chinese veterinary medicine or traditional Chinese medicine.
- Review articles may be solicited by the Editor-in-Chief or submitted unsolicited by the author(s).
- Manuscripts generally target 6,000 words, *excluding* footnotes, references, tables, and figure legends.
- The manuscript may have several sections with titles determined by the author and Editor-in-Chief.
- The use of illustrations, line drawings and figures is encouraged.

Format for Small Case Series (3-9 animals) and Case Reports (1 animal)

- Case report (1 animal) / Clinical series (3-9 animals) paper will include a detailed description of the diagnosis, management and clinical outcome of 1 animal or 3-9 animals with a discussion on the clinical syndrome represented by the affected individuals. Use a Table to list information for greater than 3 animals.
- For more than 9 animals, the report should use “Research Study” format.
- Manuscripts typically target 3,000 words, *excluding* footnotes, references, tables and figures.
- Case series or a Case Report should include information not previously reported, findings that are uncommon/unique, new treatments or diagnostic methods.
- **Abstract:** Begin with a 250 word or less abstract summarizing the case/cases.
Example of information that might be included: signalment, primary complaint, clinical signs, TCVM examination findings, TCVM diagnosis, conventional treatments (include dose, frequency and duration), TCVM treatment (include acupuncture points, frequency of treatments, number of treatments and any herbal medicine formulas with doses, frequency and duration), rehabilitation activities (if applicable), outcome and length of follow-up.
- **Key words:** List 3 to 6 important words that others may use to search databases to find your article.

Typical Organization of this manuscript type

- **Introduction:** Begin the text of the manuscript with the case descriptions.
 - For each case begin with the signalment, primary complaint and duration
 - **Example:** A ten-year-old male neutered Beagle dog was presented for a history of intermittent seizures of one-year duration.

In this area, provide pertinent medical history which includes the conventional history.
Include conventional diagnostic test results and conventional diagnosis if applicable.

TCVM PATTERN DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT

Subheadings:

TCVM Examination, TCVM Pattern Diagnosis, TCVM Treatment, Clinical Outcome, Discussion

TCVM Examination – describe current conventional and TCVM examination findings (include tongue, pulse, acupoint palpation, ears and body surface temperature).

- **Example:** seeks heat, seeks cool, personality characteristics to determine constitution;
Add a Table if more than 3 animals.

TCVM Pattern Diagnosis – TCVM diagnosis and findings that support diagnosis should be clearly stated.

TCVM Treatment – treatment principles/strategy and rationale for them should then be presented.

Clinical Outcome – outcomes and duration of follow-up are then presented.

- **DISCUSSION** (at end of article)

Provide a discussion of the problem described in the paper and address how the case series or case report findings relate to other species, including humans. Is there literature supporting treatments? Conclude the article with how the information in this case series/case study can be useful for similar cases in the future.

- **Information to include** (consider placing in Tables):

Acupuncture treatment – List acupoints chosen and their actions, type of acupuncture, the duration of each treatment, number and frequency of treatments, total time period treated and if ongoing, how long it has been; footnote acupuncture equipment companies, needles, etc.

Herbal medicine – Provide formula type of herbal medicine (e.g. top dressing, capsule, teapills, granule or biscuits) given, dosage (amount per kg of body weight), number of doses per day, whether given before, after or with meals, and total duration of treatment should be provided; footnote companies.

Tui-na – List techniques used, duration, frequency and caretaker *Tui-na* instructions.

Food Therapy – List food to add to diet (reasons to include); foods to avoid with reasons to exclude.

Conventional Medication(s)/Pharmaceuticals – Give doses, frequency and duration; footnote companies.

- *Do not use an animal's name, but refer to each as "the horse, dog, cat, bird etc".
- *Do not use any dates in the manuscript.
 - **Example:** use "two weeks after initial presentation" versus "presented on May 14"
- Make sure the time frame is clear between treatments, total duration of treatment period is given and what is the length of the follow-up period.
- Pertinent references should be included with page numbers
- With permission from the client, please include pictures of cases or procedures whenever possible.
- See "**Informed Consent**" document

Format for Pearls from TCVM Practice

- These articles are practical applications of TCVM as used by experts in the clinical setting.
- The text for these articles target 3,000 words *excluding* footnotes, references, tables and figures.
- Sections can vary but in general follow this pattern:

Introduction: Conventional description of the clinical problem that is covered in the article and conventional treatments and their success.

TCVM Etiology and Pathology: Describe TCVM background for the clinical syndrome.

TCVM Treatment Principles and TCVM Patterns: Diagnosis of patterns with clinical signs, and treatment strategies/principles for the various TCVM patterns.

Discussion and/or Case Examples: discuss any evidence-based studies showing benefit (acupuncture, herbs, integrative therapy, etc); try to provide clinical case examples using the treatment strategies presented in article to help reader understand application of TCVM treatments in a clinical setting.

- ***Do not** write in the first person.
 - **Example:** instead of saying “I have found” or “in my experience” say “The author has found” or “in the author’s experience”
- ***Do not** refer to the reader as “you” instead structure the sentences, so words like “you, your, our, we, me, my (etc.)” are not necessary.
- The use of algorithms, line drawings, tables, figures and illustrations are important.
- Pertinent references should be included with page numbers.
- With permission from the client, please include pictures of cases or procedures whenever possible.
- See “**Informed Consent**” document

Format for Brief Communications

- Articles will be approximately 1500 words.
- Pilot research studies which are used to design larger controlled randomized blinded clinical trials can report early results in this area.
 - Contact the Editor-in-Chief for approval of topic and formatting.

Format for Business Economics of TCVM Clinical Practice

- These articles are practical business applications of interest to veterinary practitioners as used by experts in a clinical setting using TCVM.
- The text generally will target 2500 words *excluding* footnotes, references, tables and figures.
- Section titles will vary and can be determined by the author(s) and Editor-in-Chief.
- ***Do not** write in the first person.
 - **Example:** instead of saying “I have found” or “in my experience” say “The author has found” or “in the author’s experience”
- ***Do not** refer to the reader as “you” instead structure the sentences, so words like “you, your, our, we, me, my (etc.)” are not necessary.
- The use of algorithms, line drawings, tables, figures and illustrations are important.
- Pertinent references should be included with page numbers.

TCVM for Avian, Laboratory and Exotic Species

- The text length generally targets 1500 words *excluding* footnotes, references, tables and figure legends.
- These papers should describe information not previously reported, findings that are new or unique, new treatments or diagnostic methods not described in the particular species before.
- The format is similar to the CASE SERIES/CASE REPORT articles.

Editorial Format

- An editorial is an article evaluating a subject of current importance to TCVM veterinarians written by the Editor-in-Chief, Associate Editors or TCVM Expert selected by the Editor-in-Chief.
- The format may vary depending on the subject.