PUBLICATION ETHICS POLICY

International Journal of Ayurveda

POLICY STATEMENT

The International Journal of Ayurveda is committed to maintaining the highest standards of publication ethics and academic integrity. This policy establishes comprehensive guidelines for ethical conduct in scholarly publishing, research integrity, and professional behavior for all stakeholders involved in the publication process.

Scope of Application

This policy applies to:

- **Authors and co-authors** of submitted and published manuscripts
- **Editorial board members** and guest editors
- **Peer reviewers** and expert consultants
- **Editorial staff** and administrative personnel
- **Publishers** and organizational affiliates
- **Readers and users** of published content

Guiding Principles

- **Research Integrity:** Commitment to honest, accurate, and reproducible research
- **Academic Freedom:** Support for open scientific inquiry and communication
- **Professional Responsibility:** Accountability for ethical conduct and quality standards
- **Transparency:** Open communication about policies, processes, and decisions
- **Global Standards:** Adherence to international best practices in scholarly publishing

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RESEARCH MISCONDUCT DEFINITIONS

Primary Forms of Misconduct

Fabrication

Definition: Making up data, results, or entire studies that were never conducted

Examples:

- **Inventing data points** or statistical results
- **Creating false clinical outcomes** or patient responses
- **Fabricating experimental conditions** or laboratory results
- **Generating fictional case studies** or patient histories
- **Manufacturing survey responses** or interview data

Detection Methods:

- **Statistical analysis** of data patterns and distributions
- **Replication attempts** and verification studies
- **Original data requests** and documentation review
- **Institutional investigations** and audit procedures
- **Peer review scrutiny** and expert evaluation

Falsification

Definition: Manipulating, changing, or omitting data to misrepresent research findings

Examples:

- **Selective data reporting** excluding contradictory results
- **Image manipulation** beyond acceptable enhancement
- **Statistical manipulation** to achieve desired significance
- **Dose or treatment modifications** without proper reporting
- **Timeline alterations** in longitudinal studies

Detection Methods:

- **Original data comparison** with reported results
- **Image analysis** software for manipulation detection
- **Statistical review** for inappropriate analyses
- **Methodology verification** against reported procedures
- **Replication studies** and independent validation

Plagiarism

Definition: Using someone else's work, ideas, or words without proper attribution

Forms of Plagiarism:

- **Direct copying** without quotation marks or citation
- **Paraphrasing** without attribution to original source

- **Self-plagiarism** or duplicate publication of own work
- **Idea theft** without crediting original contributors
- **Traditional knowledge appropriation** without community acknowledgment

Detection Methods:

- **Automated screening** using plagiarism detection software
- **Manual comparison** with known sources and databases
- **Expert recognition** of familiar content or ideas
- **Student and colleague reporting** of suspicious similarities
- **Cross-reference checking** against published literature

Secondary Forms of Misconduct

Duplicate Publication

Definition: Publishing substantially the same work in multiple venues without disclosure

Violations Include:

- **Simultaneous submission** to multiple journals
- **Redundant publication** of same data or findings
- **Salami slicing** of single study into multiple papers
- **Language translation** publication without disclosure
- **Conference to journal** publication without acknowledgment

Authorship Violations

Definition: Inappropriate assignment or denial of authorship credit

Common Violations:

- **Ghost authorship:** Undisclosed significant contributors
- **Gift authorship:** Honorary authors without substantial contribution
- **Denial of authorship:** Excluding qualified contributors
- **Order manipulation:** Inappropriate author sequence decisions
- **Posthumous violations:** Misrepresenting deceased authors' contributions

Data Management Misconduct

Definition: Inappropriate handling, storage, or sharing of research data

Violations Include:

- **Data destruction** to avoid scrutiny or replication
- **Inadequate record keeping** preventing verification
- **Unauthorized data sharing** violating confidentiality
- **Data hoarding** preventing legitimate scientific inquiry
- **Falsified documentation** of data collection procedures

ETHICAL STANDARDS FOR AUTHORS

Research Conduct Standards

Honest Reporting

- **Accurate representation** of research methods and findings
- **Complete disclosure** of relevant data and outcomes
- **Transparent methodology** description enabling replication
- **Balanced interpretation** acknowledging limitations and uncertainties
- **Objective analysis** free from personal or commercial bias

Data Integrity

- **Systematic data collection** following approved protocols
- **Accurate data recording** and secure storage procedures
- **Appropriate analysis** using validated statistical methods
- **Complete reporting** of all planned and exploratory analyses
- **Data availability** for verification and replication when requested

Collaborative Ethics

- **Fair authorship** determination based on substantial contributions
- **Appropriate acknowledgment** of all contributors and supporters
- **Collaborative respect** for colleagues' expertise and contributions
- **Intellectual property** respect and appropriate attribution
- **Professional communication** throughout research collaboration

Submission Ethics

Originality Requirements

- **Novel research** that advances knowledge in the field
- **Original analysis** of data not previously published
- **Fresh perspective** on existing knowledge or methods
- **Unique contribution** to traditional medicine understanding
- **Innovative approaches** to classical or contemporary problems

Publication Integrity

- **Single submission:** Submit to only one journal at a time
- **Previous publication disclosure:** Acknowledge any prior presentations
- **Related work citation:** Reference your own previous publications
- **Permission acquisition:** Obtain rights for republished material
- **Competing interests declaration:** Full disclosure of potential conflicts

Ethical Compliance Documentation

- **Institutional review board approval:** Required for human subjects research
- **Animal care compliance:** IACUC approval for animal studies
- **Informed consent:** Documentation of participant agreement
- **Community consent:** Traditional knowledge research approval
- **Regulatory compliance:** Adherence to applicable laws and regulations

Post-Publication Responsibilities

Correction Obligations

- **Error reporting:** Immediate notification of significant mistakes
- **Cooperation with corrections:** Support editorial correction processes
- **Public acknowledgment:** Accept responsibility for errors
- **Prevention measures:** Implement safeguards against future errors
- **Professional learning:** Use errors as improvement opportunities

Data Sharing

- **Reasonable access:** Provide data access for verification when requested
- **Confidentiality protection:** Maintain privacy while enabling verification
- **Documentation provision:** Supply sufficient detail for replication
- **Timely response:** Respond promptly to legitimate data requests
- **Professional cooperation:** Work constructively with verification efforts

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EDITORIAL RESPONSIBILITIES AND ETHICS

Editorial Independence

Decision-Making Authority

- **Scientific merit basis:** Decisions based solely on research quality
- **Commercial independence:** Freedom from advertiser or sponsor influence
- **Institutional autonomy:** Independence from publisher commercial interests
- **Professional judgment:** Reliance on expert evaluation and peer review
- **Transparent processes:** Clear and consistent decision-making procedures

Conflict Management

- **Recusal procedures:** Stepping aside when conflicts exist
- **Alternative handling:** Independent oversight for conflicted manuscripts
- **Disclosure requirements:** Transparent reporting of editorial conflicts
- **Process documentation:** Clear records of conflict management decisions
- **Quality assurance:** Maintaining standards despite conflict challenges

Peer Review Oversight

Reviewer Selection

- **Expertise matching:** Appropriate reviewer qualifications for manuscript topics
- **Conflict screening:** Verification of reviewer independence
- **Diversity promotion:** Inclusive reviewer selection across demographics
- **Quality assessment:** Regular evaluation of reviewer performance
- **Development support:** Training and resources for reviewer improvement

Review Process Integrity

- **Confidentiality protection:** Secure handling of manuscripts and reviews
- **Bias prevention:** Measures to ensure objective evaluation
- **Quality standards:** Consistent expectations for review thoroughness
- **Timeline management:** Reasonable deadlines and progress monitoring
- **Feedback provision:** Constructive communication with reviewers

Publication Standards

Quality Assurance

- **Scientific rigor:** Verification of methodological soundness
- **Statistical accuracy:** Review of analytical approaches and interpretations
- **Ethical compliance:** Confirmation of research ethics adherence
- **Presentation standards:** Professional formatting and clarity requirements
- **Cultural sensitivity:** Appropriate treatment of traditional knowledge

Post-Publication Oversight

- **Error monitoring:** Systems for identifying and addressing mistakes
- **Misconduct investigation:** Procedures for examining ethical violations
- **Correction publication:** Timely and transparent error correction
- **Retraction policies:** Clear standards for manuscript withdrawal
- **Community communication:** Transparent reporting of publication issues

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PEER REVIEWER ETHICAL OBLIGATIONS

Review Conduct Standards

Objective Evaluation

- **Merit-based assessment:** Evaluation based solely on scientific quality
- **Bias avoidance:** Recognition and management of personal prejudices
- **Cultural sensitivity:** Respectful treatment of diverse research approaches
- **Professional courtesy:** Constructive and encouraging feedback tone
- **Evidence-based criticism:** Support all negative comments with specific evidence

Expertise Honesty

- **Competence acknowledgment:** Accept only reviews within expertise areas

- **Knowledge limitations:** Acknowledge areas beyond reviewer competence
- **Learning opportunity:** Accept occasional reviews for professional development
- **Consultation permission:** Seek additional expertise when needed
- **Honest declination:** Refuse reviews when unqualified or unavailable

Confidentiality and Professional Conduct

Information Protection

- **Manuscript confidentiality:** Treat submissions as privileged information
- **Data security:** Secure handling and storage of review materials
- **Discussion prohibition:** No sharing of manuscript content with others
- **Future protection:** Continued confidentiality after review completion
- **Digital security:** Appropriate technological safeguards for review process

Professional Integrity

- **Timely completion:** Meet agreed-upon review deadlines
- **Thorough evaluation:** Provide comprehensive and constructive feedback
- **Professional communication:** Respectful interaction with editors and authors
- **Continuous improvement:** Seek feedback and development opportunities
- **Ethical reporting:** Immediate notification of suspected misconduct

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MISCONDUCT DETECTION AND INVESTIGATION

Detection Mechanisms

Automated Screening

- **Plagiarism detection:** Systematic screening using specialized software
- **Image analysis:** Automated detection of figure manipulation
- **Statistical screening:** Identification of unusual data patterns
- **Duplicate detection:** Identification of overlapping or identical submissions
- **Citation analysis:** Verification of reference accuracy and appropriateness

Human Review

- **Editorial screening:** Expert evaluation during initial review
- **Peer review identification:** Reviewer reporting of suspected problems
- **Post-publication reporting:** Reader notification of potential issues
- **Expert consultation:** Specialist review of complex cases
- **Institutional collaboration:** Cooperation with institutional investigations

Investigation Procedures

Initial Assessment

- **Allegation evaluation:** Preliminary assessment of misconduct reports
- **Evidence gathering:** Collection of relevant documentation and information
- **Expertise consultation:** Involvement of appropriate specialists
- **Timeline establishment:** Reasonable deadlines for investigation completion
- **Stakeholder notification:** Appropriate communication with affected parties

Formal Investigation

- **Committee formation:** Assembly of qualified investigation panel
- **Due process protection:** Fair procedures protecting all parties' rights
- **Evidence evaluation:** Systematic review of all relevant information
- **Expert testimony:** Input from qualified specialists when needed
- **Documentation requirements:** Complete records of investigation proceedings

Decision Making

- **Evidence-based conclusions:** Decisions supported by investigation findings
- **Proportionate responses:** Sanctions appropriate to misconduct severity
- **Appeals consideration:** Fair procedures for challenging decisions
- **Implementation planning:** Clear timeline and procedures for consequence enforcement
- **Follow-up monitoring:** Verification of compliance with imposed sanctions

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SANCTIONS AND CORRECTIVE MEASURES

Graduated Response System

Minor Violations

Violations: Technical errors, citation omissions, minor presentation issues

Responses:

- **Editorial correction:** Publication of correction notice
- **Author notification:** Private communication about issues
- **Educational guidance:** Resources for avoiding future problems
- **Process improvement:** Enhanced review procedures if needed
- **Documentation:** Records of issues and responses for future reference

Moderate Violations

Violations: Significant methodological errors, incomplete disclosure, authorship disputes

Responses:

- **Manuscript revision:** Required changes before publication
- **Expression of concern:** Public notice of potential problems

- **Enhanced review:** Additional expert evaluation
- **Author counseling:** Professional development recommendations
- **Institutional notification:** Communication with author's institution

Severe Violations

Violations: Data fabrication, major plagiarism, serious ethical violations

Responses:

- **Manuscript rejection:** Refusal to publish compromised research
- **Retraction:** Withdrawal of published articles
- **Author sanctions:** Restrictions on future submissions
- **Public disclosure:** Transparent reporting of violations and responses
- **Professional reporting:** Notification to relevant professional organizations

Corrective Actions

Immediate Responses

- **Publication halt:** Stopping publication process when misconduct discovered
- **Investigation initiation:** Prompt beginning of formal inquiry procedures
- **Stakeholder notification:** Appropriate communication with affected parties
- **Evidence preservation:** Secure maintenance of relevant documentation
- **Damage limitation:** Measures to minimize harm from misconduct

Long-term Measures

- **Policy improvement:** Systematic enhancement of prevention procedures
- **Training enhancement:** Educational programs addressing identified deficiencies
- **System strengthening:** Process improvements based on investigation findings
- **Community education:** Awareness programs about ethical standards
- **Monitoring implementation:** Verification of preventive measure effectiveness

RETRACTION AND CORRECTION POLICIES

Retraction Criteria

Mandatory Retraction

- **Scientific misconduct:** Fabrication, falsification, or plagiarism
- **Ethical violations:** Serious research ethics breaches
- **Legal issues:** Copyright infringement or other legal problems
- **Safety concerns:** Risk to public health or safety
- **Unreliable findings:** Results that cannot be trusted or replicated

Retraction Process

- **Investigation completion:** Thorough examination of allegations
- **Stakeholder consultation:** Input from authors, institutions, and experts
- **Decision documentation:** Clear rationale for retraction decision
- **Public notification:** Transparent announcement of retraction
- **Indexing notification:** Communication with databases and indexing services

Correction Procedures

Correction Types

- **Erratum:** Author-initiated correction of honest errors
- **Corrigendum:** Publisher-initiated correction of production errors
- **Editorial expression of concern:** Notice of potential problems under investigation
- **Partial retraction:** Withdrawal of specific sections or data
- **Comment and response:** Dialogue about published research

Correction Standards

- **Prompt action:** Timely response to identified errors
- **Clear communication:** Explicit description of corrections made
- **Permanent record:** Lasting documentation of original and corrected versions
- **Indexing updates:** Notification of corrections to relevant databases
- **Transparent process:** Open communication about correction procedures

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TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE ETHICS

Cultural Sensitivity Requirements

Community Engagement

- **Prior informed consent:** Community approval before research initiation
- **Ongoing consultation:** Continued community involvement throughout research
- **Benefit sharing:** Appropriate recognition and compensation for knowledge use
- **Cultural protocols:** Respect for traditional research and knowledge sharing practices
- **Intellectual property protection:** Safeguarding of community knowledge rights

Respectful Representation

- **Accurate portrayal:** Truthful representation of traditional practices
- **Context preservation:** Maintaining cultural frameworks and meanings
- **Avoiding stereotypes:** Nuanced understanding of traditional knowledge systems
- **Collaborative interpretation:** Community input on research interpretation
- **Cultural competence:** Appropriate expertise in traditional knowledge systems

Attribution and Acknowledgment

Source Recognition

- **Community acknowledgment:** Clear citation of knowledge-providing communities
- **Individual recognition:** Appropriate credit to traditional knowledge holders
- **Historical context:** Understanding of knowledge development and transmission
- **Geographic specificity:** Accurate identification of knowledge origins
- **Cultural significance:** Recognition of knowledge spiritual and cultural importance

Commercial Considerations

- **Community consent:** Agreement for any commercial applications
- **Benefit sharing agreements:** Fair distribution of commercial benefits
- **Intellectual property respect:** Protection of traditional knowledge rights
- **Ethical commercialization:** Appropriate limits on commercial exploitation
- **Ongoing relationships:** Continued engagement with knowledge-providing communities

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APPEAL AND DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Appeal Process

Grounds for Appeal

- **Procedural errors:** Violations of established editorial procedures
- **Bias allegations:** Evidence of unfair treatment or prejudice
- **New evidence:** Significant information not available during original review
- **Misinterpretation:** Disagreement with editorial interpretation of policies
- **Process violations:** Failure to follow established guidelines

Appeal Procedures

- **Formal submission:** Written appeal with supporting documentation
- **Timeline requirements:** Reasonable deadlines for appeal submission
- **Independent review:** Evaluation by uninvolved editorial board members
- **Evidence consideration:** Systematic review of all relevant information
- **Final decision:** Definitive resolution with clear rationale

Dispute Resolution

Author Disputes

- **Authorship conflicts:** Mediation of contribution and credit disputes
- **Data ownership:** Resolution of data access and sharing disagreements
- **Publication rights:** Clarification of publishing permissions and restrictions
- **Professional relationships:** Mediation of collaborative conflicts
- **Intellectual property:** Resolution of invention and discovery credit issues

Editorial Disputes

- **Review disagreements:** Resolution of conflicting reviewer recommendations
- **Policy interpretation:** Clarification of guideline application
- **Decision challenges:** Review of editorial judgment and rationale
- **Process complaints:** Investigation of procedural concerns
- **Quality issues:** Assessment of editorial and review process effectiveness

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EDUCATION AND PREVENTION

Training Programs

Author Education

- **Research integrity workshops:** Training on ethical research conduct
- **Publication ethics seminars:** Education about scholarly publishing standards
- **Writing skills development:** Assistance with clear and honest communication
- **Cultural competence training:** Education about traditional knowledge ethics
- **Professional development:** Career-long learning about evolving standards

Editorial Training

- **Ethics education:** Comprehensive training on publication ethics
- **Decision-making skills:** Development of fair and consistent judgment
- **Conflict management:** Training on bias recognition and management
- **Investigation procedures:** Education about misconduct identification and response
- **Professional development:** Ongoing education about evolving best practices

Resource Development

Educational Materials

- **Policy documentation:** Clear and accessible ethics guidelines
- **Case study libraries:** Examples of ethical decision-making
- **Best practice guides:** Practical guidance for common situations
- **Training resources:** Comprehensive educational tools and materials
- **Reference materials:** Access to relevant literature and guidelines

Support Systems

- **Ethics consultation:** Available expertise for complex ethical issues
- **Peer support:** Networking with other publication professionals
- **Professional development:** Opportunities for ethics education advancement
- **External resources:** Access to professional organizations and training programs
- **Regular communication:** Updates on ethical issues and developments

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MONITORING AND COMPLIANCE

Quality Assurance

Regular Auditing

- **Process evaluation:** Systematic review of editorial and publication procedures
- **Compliance monitoring:** Verification of ethics policy adherence
- **Performance assessment:** Evaluation of system effectiveness
- **Stakeholder feedback:** Input from authors, reviewers, and readers
- **Continuous improvement:** Ongoing enhancement of ethical practices

Outcome Measurement

- **Misconduct tracking:** Documentation of ethical violations and responses
- **Prevention effectiveness:** Assessment of educational and preventive measures
- **Stakeholder satisfaction:** Evaluation of community confidence and trust
- **Professional recognition:** External validation of ethical practices
- **Best practice sharing:** Contribution to field-wide ethics improvement

External Accountability

Professional Standards

- **COPE membership:** Committee on Publication Ethics participation
- **Industry benchmarking:** Comparison with recognized best practices
- **Professional certification:** Pursuit of relevant quality certifications
- **External review:** Independent assessment of ethics policies and practices
- **Transparency reporting:** Public documentation of ethics policies and outcomes

Community Engagement

- **Stakeholder consultation:** Regular input from publication community
- **Public reporting:** Transparent communication about ethics activities
- **Professional collaboration:** Cooperation with other journals and organizations
- **Policy sharing:** Contribution to field-wide ethics development
- **Advocacy participation:** Support for publication ethics advancement

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POLICY IMPLEMENTATION AND UPDATES

Implementation Timeline

- **Immediate effect:** Policy effective upon publication
- **Training rollout:** Systematic education of all stakeholders
- **Process integration:** Incorporation into all editorial procedures
- **Monitoring initiation:** Beginning of compliance assessment activities
- **Feedback collection:** Systematic gathering of implementation experiences

Review and Revision

- **Annual assessment:** Systematic evaluation of policy effectiveness
- **Stakeholder input:** Regular consultation with affected parties
- **Best practice integration:** Incorporation of evolving field standards
- **Legal compliance:** Verification of regulatory adherence
- **Continuous improvement:** Ongoing enhancement based on experience and feedback

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CONTACT INFORMATION

Ethics Inquiries

Email: editor@internationaljournalofayurveda.org
Subject Line: Ethics Inquiry - [Specific Topic]
Response Time: Within 48 hours for routine inquiries

Misconduct Reporting

Email: editor@internationaljournalofayurveda.org
Subject Line: Misconduct Report - CONFIDENTIAL
Response Time: Immediate acknowledgment, investigation within 7 days

Appeal Submission

Email: editor@internationaljournalofayurveda.org
Subject Line: Formal Appeal - [Case Reference]
Response Time: Acknowledgment within 24 hours, review within 14 days

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CONCLUSION

The International Journal of Ayurveda is committed to maintaining the highest standards of publication ethics and research integrity. This policy provides a comprehensive framework for ethical conduct that protects the interests of authors, reviewers, readers, and the broader traditional medicine community while advancing scientific knowledge and professional standards.

All stakeholders are expected to familiarize themselves with and adhere to these ethical standards. Questions about policy interpretation or application should be directed to the editorial office for clarification and guidance.

This policy ensures ethical excellence in traditional medicine research publication while fostering innovation, collaboration, and professional growth within the global Ayurvedic research community.