**Lab 1: The Anatomy of a Medical Journal Article**

Read the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors description of a [journal article](http://www.icmje.org/recommendations/browse/manuscript-preparation/preparing-for-submission.html). Then, briefly review these other resources:

* The Laryngoscope’s [website](https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/15314995)
* Interpretation of the [Impact Factor](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Impact_factor)
* The [Journal Citation Report](https://jcr.clarivate.com/jcr-jp/journal-profile?journal=LARYNGOSCOPE&year=2023&fromPage=%2Fjcr%2Fhome) for *The Laryngoscope*. *If for some reason the link I give you here doesn’t work then go to* [*https://jcr.clarivate.com*](https://jcr.clarivate.com/) *and enter Laryngoscope into the Search box.*

Finally, read the title page and the Abstract for the article by Lim, et al. titled *Pretreatment Albumin Level Predicts Survival in Head and Neck Squamous Cell Carcinoma*. This article is posted on Sakai on the Labs page.

Be prepared to discuss answers to the following questions during the lab session.

1. The article is published in a journal called *The Laryngoscope.* Who is the primary audience (readership) for this journal? Where did you look to find this information?

The primary audience for The Laryngoscope is otolaryngologists (ear, nose, and throat specialists), head and neck surgeons, and other medical professionals and researchers in this field.

I found this information on the first page of the provided document, which acts as a promotional page for publications from The Triological Society. The journal is explicitly presented as a source of "high-quality content to keep you informed with the latest developments in the field" of otolaryngology-head and neck surgery.

1. How reputable is this journal? How do you know?

The Laryngoscope is a highly reputable and well-established journal.

This is evident for several reasons found within the document:

**Longevity:** The journal was founded in 1896, giving it a long history of publication in its field.

**Professional Affiliation:** It is an official publication of The Triological Society, a prestigious professional society for otolaryngologists.

**Leading Status:** It is described as "The leading source for information in head and neck disorders".

**Publisher:** The journal is published by Wiley, a major and respected academic publisher.

1. Now look at the study by Lim, et al. What does the title of the article imply about the study? Are any elements of the ICMJE recommendations missing from the title?

The title, "Pretreatment Albumin Level Predicts Survival in Head and Neck Squamous Cell Carcinoma," implies that the study is observational and predictive. It suggests that by measuring a specific biomarker (serum albumin) at a specific time (before treatment), clinicians can forecast a critical outcome (survival) in a particular patient population (those with HNSCC).

The main element missing from the title, based on ICMJE recommendations, is the study design. The abstract clarifies that this was a "prospective observational cohort study". A more comprehensive title might have been, "Pretreatment Albumin Level Predicts Survival in Head and Neck Squamous Cell Carcinoma: A Prospective Cohort Study."

1. What are the authors’ medical/research specialties and where are they from? Why do you think this information matters?

The authors' specialties are primarily Otolaryngology and Internal Medicine (Oncology). They are all affiliated with the Asan Medical Center, University of Ulsan College of Medicine, in Seoul, Republic of Korea.

This information is important for two key reasons:

**Credibility:** The collaboration between otolaryngologists (the surgeons who primarily treat these cancers) and oncologists (who manage the systemic aspects of the disease) shows that the research was conducted by a team with comprehensive and relevant expertise, strengthening the study's validity.

**Generalizability:** Knowing the study was conducted on a specific population in Korea is crucial. While the findings are significant, it raises the question of whether they apply equally to other populations with different genetic backgrounds, diets, or environmental exposures. This suggests a need for validation in diverse patient groups.

1. How was the research paid for? Why does this matter?

The research was funded by grants from two public Korean entities: the National Research Foundation of Korea (NRF) and the Korea Health Industry Development Institute (KHIDI). The authors also explicitly state they have. The research was conducted in Korea.

No conflicts of interest to disclose.

Disclosing the funding source is a critical component of research ethics for a few reasons:

**Transparency and Bias:** It allows readers to assess whether the study's funders could have a vested interest in the outcome. Funding from government or public research foundations, as in this case, is generally perceived as having less potential for commercial bias than funding from a for-profit corporation.

**Objectivity:** The declaration of "no...conflicts of interest" further assures the reader that the authors' conclusions are not influenced by financial relationships.

1. Evaluate how well the Abstract complies with the ICMJE recommendations for what should be present in an article Abstract. Are you able to find all of the elements? Is anything missing?
   1. Context or background for the study

Present. The abstract begins by stating that "Poor nutritional status in patients with head and neck squamous cell carcinoma (HNSCC) is associated with tumor progression and survival".

* 1. The study’s purpose

Present. It clearly states, "This study examined the prognostic value of nutritional and hematological markers in patients with HNSCC who received definitive treatments".

* 1. Basic procedures (selection of subjects, participants, setting, measurements, and analytical methods)

Present. The abstract describes the study design ("A prospective observational cohort study") , the participants ("338 consecutive patients") , the measurements ("nutritional and hematological parameters were regularly measured") , and the analytical methods ("Univariate and multivariate analyses using Cox proportional hazards models").

* 1. The main findings of the study

Present. The key results are clearly summarized, noting that "Multivariate analyses identified age, tumor site, N classification, and pretreatment albumin levels as independent predictors" and that patients with low albumin "experienced approximately sixfold increases in the risks of tumor progression and cancer-specific and overall mortality".

* 1. The primary conclusions of the research, emphasizing the new information the study has revealed

Present. The abstract concludes that "pretreatment serum albumin levels predict DFS, CSS, and OS" and that these findings "might help to predict treatment outcome and guide nutritional intervention".

* 1. Important limitations of the study

The abstract does not mention any of the study's limitations. While limitations are discussed later in the full article, ICMJE guidelines recommend including them in the abstract for a complete picture.