INSTRUCTIONS FOR AUTHORS OF ACTAS UROLÓGICAS ESPAÑOLAS

Updated March 2015

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

ACTAS UROLÓGICAS ESPAÑOLAS (http://www.journals.elsevier.com/actas-urologicas-espanolas) is an international scientific journal that publishes clinical or basic research articles, brief reports, revisions, images, editorial comments and letters to the editor, especially on topics related to urological diseases and kidney transplantation. ACTAS UROLÓGICAS ESPAÑOLAS is the official publication of the Spanish Urological Association and American Confederation of Urology and publishes 10 regular issues a year. Published in Spanish and English in its online edition, the Journal adheres to the recommendations of the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors, available at http://www.icmje.org/icmje-recommendations.pdf

MANUSCRIPT SUBMISSION

Manuscripts should be sent online using the Elsevier Editorial System (EES) at http://ees.elsevier.com/acuro, which contains the information needed to send the manuscripts. The use of this resource allows users to monitor the state of the manuscript through the website. The manuscript should be accompanied by a cover letter (see below), which is to be typed into the Enter Comments section of the EES. The manuscript text (except for the first page or title page), abstract, key words, references, tables, legends and figure captions should be included in a single file. Each of the figures should be placed in separate files. These documents will be attached in the Attach Files section.

COVER LETTER

All manuscripts must be accompanied by a cover letter in the Enter Comments section of the EES and must indicate: 1) the section of the journal in which the author(s) would like the study to be published; 2) an explanation (no more than 1 paragraph) of the original contribution and relevance of the study in this area of medicine; 3) a declaration that the manuscript is original and is not being assessed by another scientific journal; 4) in the event that part of the article has been previously published in another journal (see the considerations on redundant or duplicate publication), the details must be provided and a statement made that the author(s) and editor(s) have the necessary permission for publication; and 5) that the instructions for authors and the Ethical Responsibilities have been taken into account, that all authors have met the requirements of authorship and that all authors have declared any conflicts of interest in the “title page” and in the Additional Information page of the EES.

SPECIFIC STANDARDS FOR EACH SECTION

EDITORIAL

Editorials involve comments on Current Topics or on studies published in the same issue. The maximum length of this text shall not exceed 1200 words, with no more than 10 references. All Editorials shall be requested by the Journal’s Board and must not be sent without prior written approval. There may be the option of opposing or complementary Editorials that present different perspectives. Commissioned editorial comments will also be published for the purpose of published articles and shall have a maximum of 250 words and 6 references. These comments shall appear in the article footer, in order to complete the content of these studies or to provide a complementary perspective.

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Research studies on the following fields of urology will be considered: Robotics, Laparoscopy, Basic research, Clinical research, Surgical techniques, Imaging techniques, Transplantation, Oncology, Endourology, Urogynecology, Quality of life, Healthcare Management, Methodology, Medical Training and History. The recommended designs are analytical in the form of transverse or longitudinal surveys, case-control studies, cohort studies and controlled trials. Controlled clinical trials must follow the CONSORT legislation available at http://www.consort-state-ment.org/consort-2010. Retrospective descriptive studies that do not include the appropriate statistical treatment will not be accepted.

The manuscript must not exceed 2500 words in length and must be drafted according to the sections described in the section “Formal Aspects of the Manuscript”. The manuscript must include an abstract, written in Spanish, no more than 250 words long, with 3-6 keywords, figure legends and tables. A maximum of 6 elements (tables and/or figures) per article will be accepted. The figures must be attached in color, in separate files, in TIFF format and at 300 dpi (never placed in a Microsoft Word, PowerPoint or similar document). Succinctness and proper writing of the articles are important. The Original Briefs section of the previous edition of the journal has been removed.

REVIEW ARTICLES

These are articles that systematically show, select, critique and synthesize evidence related to well-defined issues on current topics of urology (diagnostic, therapeutic and prognostic questions). As such, the Special Articles section of the previous edition of the Journal has also been removed. All Review Articles shall be requested by the Journal’s Board. Authors who wish to write an article of this type should contact the Board directly and request permission before sending the manuscript. Articles submitted in this format will be reviewed by the Board, by members of the Journal’s Advisory Committee and by other Reviewers.

The manuscript must not exceed 3,500 words and must be drafted according to the sections listed in the section, “Formal Aspects of the Manuscript”. However, the inclusion of sections that the author considers necessary for a perfect understanding of the treated topic (Context, Objective, Acquisition of Evidence, Synthesis of Evidence, Conclusions) will be accepted. The abstract must be structured and not exceed 250 words. The manuscript must include 3-6 keywords; up to 40 references; and any figure legends and tables. A maximum of 10 elements (tables and/or figures) will be accepted. The figures must be attached in color, in separate files, in TIFF format and at 300 dpi (never placed in a Microsoft Word, PowerPoint or similar document). Succinctness and proper writing of the articles are important.

SURGICAL TECHNIQUE

This new section will consider studies that present new surgical techniques in urology. A mixed design is recommended, in the form of an original article and review article, treating timely surgical problems. Merely descriptive studies that do not include personal or caseload experience with follow-up will not be accepted.

The manuscript must not exceed 2500 words in length and must be drafted according to the sections described in the section “Formal Aspects of the Manuscript”. The manuscript...
must include an abstract written in Spanish no more than 250 words long, with 3-6 keywords, up to 30 references, figure legends and tables. It is recommended that the number of signatories be restricted to no more than 6. Succinctness, clarity of presentation and proper writing of the articles are important. A maximum of 6 elements (tables and/or figures) per article will be accepted. The figures must be attached in color, in separate files, in TIFF format and at 300 dpi. The article must be accompanied by a video file in dynamic image format, with copyright-free music and narrated in Spanish or English, illustrating the main steps of the technique. This file will remain available in the Journal’s online version (http://www.journals.elsevier.com/actas-urologicas-espanolas).

Surgical Technique articles will be requested by the Journal’s Board. Authors who wish to write an article of this type should contact the Board directly and request permission before sending the manuscript. Articles submitted in this format will also be reviewed according to the Editorial Process and might be rejected.

**SKILL AND INNOVATION**

This new section will publish studies that show new surgical techniques performed for specific issues. Due to their infrequent nature, extensive experience with the technique is not necessary. In other words, this type of article can be written for cases studies in which a timely problem is solved in a novel manner. This type of article must not exceed 2000 words in length and must include an abstract written in Spanish no more than 250 words long, with 3-6 keywords, up to 15 references; figure legends and tables. It is recommended that the number of signatories be restricted to no more than 6. Succinctness, clarity of presentation and proper writing of the articles are important. A maximum of 4 elements (tables and/or figures) per article will be accepted. The figures must be attached in color, in separate files, in TIFF format and at 300 dpi.

**CASE SERIES OF THE MONTH**

In the interest of concision and to improve editorial quality, the exhibition of individual cases studies will not be considered. Only case series that integrate a considerably rich yet concise presentation, medical teaching and/or exceptional rarity may be published in this new section of ACTAS UROLÓGICAS ESPAÑOLAS. The manuscript must not exceed 1,200 words or include an abstract and will be drafted into 2 sections: Clinical Problem (with case-based reasoning) and Commentary. It must provide noteworthy images that link diagnostic and therapeutic aspects in an educational manner. A maximum of 4 elements (tables and/or figures) per article will be accepted. It is recommended that the number of signatories be restricted to no more than 6. The figures must be attached in color, in separate files from the main text, in TIFF format and at a minimum of 300 dpi.

The Scientific-Clinical Letters section with individual case exhibition in the previous edition of the journal has been removed. The Urology Images section was also removed. Articles submitted with this format will be reviewed directly by the Journal’s Board; the Editorial Process will only be initiated if necessary.

**LETTER TO THE EDITOR**

The articles included in this section may be free opinions or comments relating to articles recently published in the Journal and are expressed as replies or supplements to studies published in ACTAS UROLÓGICAS ESPAÑOLAS. The letters must be individually signed. The text of the letter must not exceed 500 words. Personal comments are to be avoided. Do not include abstracts or keywords. If images are needed, include only one per letter; the image must be in color, in TIFF format and at a minimum of 300 dpi. It is recommended that the letters be accompanied by references, although no more than 3.

**FORMAL ASPECTS OF ARTICLE DRAFTING**

The completed studies are to be presented typewritten in double space, on A4 paper, with a 12-point font, leaving a left and right margin of 2.5 cm. The pages are to be numbered consecutively in the upper right corner. Articles may be presented in Spanish or English. The figures will go separately. Delivery of the article will be performed using the EES tool.

Use only abbreviations that are common to the field of Medicine, and avoid the use of abbreviations in the study title and abstract. The first time an abbreviation appears it must be preceded by the complete term to which it refers, except for common measuring units, which are to be expressed in the International System of Units. Chemical, physical, biological and clinical units should always be strictly defined. Studies must include the required information below, regardless of the fact that the EES tool also requests them in a number of its pages during the delivery process.

When drafting the article, the Specific Standards for every section (listed in the instructions) must be taken into account, as well as the formal aspects of the presentation of studies, whose structure is described below: title page; abstract page (if necessary) and keywords in Spanish; abstract page and key words (in English), and, starting on a new page, the manuscript text and the potential acknowledgements, references, tables and figures.

**Title page**

This page must contain the following information:

- The title of the article, which should adequately describe the contents of the study. Must be brief (no more than 80 characters), clear and informative.
- The first and last names of the authors (last names composed of two names should be hyphenated). The name(s) of the department(s) and institution(s) to which the study should be attributed. Do not include their academic or professional position.
- It must include the acknowledgement of any grant or financial support.
- The declaration by each of the authors of any conflicts of interest. Keep in mind the financial relationships that can cause conflicts of interest (see “Ethical Responsibilities”). That which is indicated here concerning this issue will be included directly by the Editorial staff so that it appears in the edited article.
- Include the complete name, telephone number, fax (and e-mail, if available) and the complete postal address of the author to whom correspondence should be sent and who will be responsible for correcting the tests.
- The manuscript’s word count, excluding the abstract, keywords, references, tables and figure legend.

The EES tool will request the delivery of the first page of the manuscript (the “Title Page”) in a separate file from the rest of the manuscript.

**2nd page: Abstract and keywords**

The abstract must always appear on the second page of the manuscript. It must be understandable by itself and not contain references or abbreviations (unless those corresponding to units of measure). Originals will be structured and contain no more than 250 words. To determine whether an abstract needs to be written and its characteristics, consult the section “Specific Standards for Each Section” included in this document. The structured abstracts must have the following subheadings:

- Objectives, indicating the study’s fundamental purpose.
- Materials and method, explaining the study design,
In this section, specify the study location, time and population, with b) Material and Methods. Present the study data or conclusions. Do not include tables or figures. Authors can consult the equivalence between the Spanish terms and the corresponding English terms at the URL:

3rd page: Abstract and Key words
The abstract must be written on a separate page, which must include the study title and key words, also in English.

4th page: The text with its various sections:

a) Background
Background will provide context or history for the study and list the specific purpose of the study. It must clearly state the study objectives without extensively reviewing the subject (include only the strictly necessary references). Do not present the study data or conclusions. Do not include tables or figures.

b) Material and Methods.
In this section, specify the study location, time and population, with a clear description of the participants’ selection and exclusion criteria. It must include the necessary information on the study design, detailing the methods, equipment and procedures with sufficient detail for other researchers to reproduce the study. It must indicate the type of statistical analysis employed, specifying the confidence interval. The studies should describe the corresponding experiments or control groups; otherwise, the author(s) should explain the measures used to avoid biases and comment on the possible effect of bias on the study’s conclusions. If the methodology is original, the author(s) should explain the reasons leading to its use and describe its potential limitations. Special mention should be made of the clinical follow-up of the patients or research animals, which should be sufficiently long so as to assess the tested procedure. Do not use patients’ names or initials. Report the generic names of the drugs employed (avoiding using their commercial names), as well as the administered dosage and the pathway. The ethical standards followed (for both humans and animals) by the researchers should be briefly described. Studies with humans should have the express approval of the local ethics and clinical trials committee, and this approval should be indicated in the manuscript (See “Ethical Responsibilities”).

c) Results.
The results should be clear and concise. The observations should be listed along with the method employed, avoiding interpreting the results. Tables and figures may be included as long as they do not repeat the data already included in the text.

d) Discussion.
The new and significant features of the study and its conclusions should be emphasized. The results and their reliability, validity and limitations (possible inconsistency in the methodology) should be explained but not repeated. The study’s clinical importance, the practical application of the results and its future projections should be highlighted. The conclusions, should they be presented, must be short and concise and clearly apparent from the results. In this section, the relationship between the study and similar publications should be discussed, comparing the areas of agreement and disagreement, as well as the indications and directives for future research.

e) Acknowledgements.
Acknowledgements will only be expressed to those individuals or entities that have clearly contributed to making the study possible. This section should mention a) the contributions that should be thanked but do not justify inclusion as author (See “Ethical Responsibilities”) and b) acknowledgement of technical assistance. All individuals specifically mentioned in the Acknowledgements section should be aware of and approve their inclusion in this paragraph.

The Editorial board requires a statement from each signatory author concerning conflicts of interest in the “Title Page” and will include the statement in the edited version of the accepted article (See “Ethical Responsibilities”). The author should not include it here to ensure the blind assessment of the article.

f) References
Only include those citations that are considered important and have been read by the authors. All references should be cited consecutively in the text according to the order they appear and should be identified using Arabic numbers in superscript and according to the “Uniformity requirements for manuscripts submitted for publication in biomedical journals” available at http://www.icmje.org/.


Do not use imprecise phrases such as “unpublished observations”, “personal reports” or similar. Originals that are accepted but unpublished at the time of listing may be included as references with the statement “In press”.

Listed below are a few examples of proper citations for various types of documents. Examples for formats not included in this relationship can be viewed at http://www.nlm.nih.gov/bsd/uniform_requirements.html

Article
All authors should be listed, as long as there are no more than six. If there are more than six, list the first six and use the expression “et al.” after a comma.


Supplemental article of a volume

Supplement to an issue

Study in press
Review article in electronic format

Books
Personal authors

Book chapter

Editors as authors

g) Tables
As with the rest of the manuscript, the tables must be double spaced and on separate pages. Each table must be on a separate page. The tables must be numbered with correlating Arabic numbers in the same order they appear in the text and must include a brief but sufficiently explanatory title at the top of the table. Each table column must contain a brief heading. The necessary explanatory notes must be included in the table footer using call-outs in the form of lowercase letters in superscript and in alphabetical order (a, b, c, etc.). When a statistical study has been conducted, indicate the technique or test employed and the significance level in the table footer if they are not indicated in the text. The statistical measures of variance, such as the standard deviation and standard error of the mean, should be identified.

h) Figures
All graphs, drawings and photographs are considered figures. The figures are to be identified with Arabic numerals that match their order of appearance in the text. The identification of patients in the photographs must be avoided. If this is not possible then the written authorization of the patient involved is required. The footer text for the figures must be double spaced on separate pages. The legends and footers for the figures should contain sufficient information for readers to interpret the data presented without needing to resort to the text. For the explanatory notes in the figure footer, use call-outs in the form of lowercase letters in superscript and in alphabetical order (a, b, c, etc.). The photographs of histological preparations should include the type of staining and the magnification. For the sake of improving the image quality, illustrations must be sent in TIFF format (uncompressed), with a minimum resolution of 300 dots per inch.

ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Protection of individuals and animals
When describing experiments conducted on humans, it should be stated whether the conducted procedures met the ethical standards of the responsible committee on human experimentation (institutional or regional) and those of the 1975 Declaration of Helsinki, available at http://www.wma.net/en/30publications/10policies/b3/. Do not show images, names, initials or hospital numbers that enable the identification of the study participants. When describing experiments conducted on animals, it should be stated whether the study followed the regimens of an international research council or institution or a national regulatory law on the care and use of laboratory animals.

Redundant or duplicate publication
The Journal will not accept previously published material. In the cover letter, the authors should provide information on the previous submissions or publications of the study in question, in whole or in part, which may be considered redundant or duplicate publication. These previous publications must be cited and included in the references section in the new manuscript.

Obtaining permission
Remember that the articles, tables and figures must be original. In the event that text or images need to be partially reproduced, read the considerations concerning redundant publication and ensure that consent has been provided. The authors are responsible for obtaining the appropriate permission for partially reproducing material (text, tables or figures) from other publications. These permissions must be requested from both the author and publisher who have published this material. Permission to publish is required from the institution that funded the research.

Conflicts of interest
There is a conflict of interest when authors have or have had financial or personal relationships that could have biased or improperly influenced their actions. Potential conflicts of interest exist regardless of whether or not the interested parties consider such relationships as influencing their scientific opinion. Authors must report (in the cover letter and in the Additional Information section) any financial or personal relationship that they have or have had, at the time the article was written or submitted, with individuals or institutions that could lead to conflicts of interest regarding the article submitted for publication. Authors must mention the participation, if applicable, of funding sources in the study design, data collection, analysis and interpretation, manuscript drafting and the decision to send it for publication. If the funding sources have not been involved, include the phrase “the funding sources have not participated in the study design, data collection, analysis and interpretation, manuscript drafting or in decision to send it for publication.” These declarations will be included in the printed Journal.

Informed consent
The authors must mention (in the Method section) that the procedures used on the patients and controls have been performed after obtaining their informed consent.

Authorship
Only those individuals who have intellectually contributed to the development of the study should be included in the list of authors. Having helped collect information or participated in some technique does not in and of itself constitute sufficient grounds for inclusion as an author. In general, the following requirements must be met to be included as author:
1. Having participated in the concept and implementation of the study that has resulted in the article in question.
2. Having collaborated in the drafting of the text and in its revisions.
3. Having approved the version that will ultimately be published.

ACTAS UROLÓGICAS ESPAÑOLAS disclaims any responsibility for potential conflicts resulting from the authorship of studies published in the Journal.

4. OBLIGATIONS OF THE AUTHOR

Ethical responsibilities
Confidentiality. The authors are responsible for following the protocols established by their respective health centers to access medical record data in order to write this type of publication for research/disclosure purposes. Authors must therefore declare that they have complied with this requirement. Authors are obliged to ensure that the requirement of having informed the study patients has been met and that the authors
have in their possession the document signed by the patients indicating that the patients have been given sufficient information. Authors must have the patients’ written informed consent for participation in the study. The authors must mention in the “Materials and Methods” section that the procedures employed on the patients and controls were performed after obtaining informed consent.

**Privacy.** The author is also responsible for ensuring the patients’ privacy rights through the protection of their identity, both in the text of the article and in the images. Names, initials and hospital medical record numbers must not be used (or any other type of data irrelevant to the investigation that could identify the patient) either in the text or in photographs, unless this information is essential for scientific purposes. In this case, the information may be included in the article, provided that the patients (or their parents or guardians) have given their informed consent in writing for its publication. The authors are responsible for obtaining written consent, authorizing the publication, reproduction and circulation of the data in hardcopy and online.

**Funding**

The authors must declare the source of any financial or technical help received.

**GUARANTEES AND TRANSFER OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS**

The EES will prompt the author to read the authorship statement and the copyright transfer statement within the tool itself and will require the author to declare whether there is a conflict of interest in the text box created for this purpose. Likewise, the tool will require the author to declare whether the corresponding author (or any of the article’s authors) works for the government of Australia, Canada, United States or United Kingdom or whether they have a contractual relationship with these institutions. In the event that the author is an employee of the United States government, the contract number will be requested. If the research has received funding from the US National Institutes of Health or if the corresponding author or any of the authors belong to the Howard Hughes Medical Institute, these must be declared. The text concerning the guarantees and transfer of copyright is listed below:

1. **Author guarantees and responsibility.** The author guarantees that the text, including any graphs, designs and illustrations (hereinafter, generically referred to as “the Studies”), sent to ACTAS UROLÓGICAS ESPAÑOLAS for publication are original, unedited and of their own authorship. The authors also guarantee that the studies have not been previously published or simultaneously submitted to any other editor for publication. Similarly, the authors guarantee (under their own responsibility) that they hold all the exploitation rights for the Studies, that they in no case infringe upon the rights of third parties and that, in the event the studies represent the exploitation of the rights of third parties, the author has obtained the corresponding authorization to exploit and authorize their use by Elsevier Spain, S.L.U.

Furthermore, the author guarantees that the Studies they send do not breach legislation on the protection of personal data. In particular, the authors guarantee that they have obtained previous approval and prior written consent from the patients or their relatives for this publication, when these patients are identified in the Studies or when the information published makes them easily identifiable.

2. **Transfer of exploitation rights.** The author transfers exclusively to the ASOCIACIÓN ESPAÑOLA DE UROLOGÍA (AEU), with the power to transfer to third parties, all exploitation rights resulting from the Studies that are accepted for publication in the Journal ACTAS UROLÓGICAS ESPAÑOLAS, as well as any product derived from them and, in particular, those of reproduction, distribution, public communication (including making them available in an interactive format) and transformation (including adaptation, modification and, if necessary, translation), for all modalities of exploitation (including but not limited to hardcopy, electronic, online, computer or audiovisual support, as well as any other format, including for promotional or advertising purposes and/or for creating derivative products), for a worldwide audience and for the entire legal duration of the rights indicated in the current Consolidated Text of Intellectual Property Law.

Consequently, authors may not publish or disseminate Studies that are selected for publication in ACTAS UROLÓGICAS ESPAÑOLAS, either in part or whole, nor may they authorize the studies’ publication to third parties, without the required expressed authorization in writing from the AEU. During the submission of the manuscript through EES, the authors may consult the complete text of the transfer of rights conditions.

**EDITORIAL PROCESS**

ACTAS UROLÓGICAS ESPAÑOLAS will acknowledge receipt of submitted studies and will inform the authors on the decision to accept, modify or reject the manuscript. The evaluation of the studies, which will follow a protocol established to this effect, will be anonymous. This evaluation process will last two months. To ensure the blind review, the authors’ names and origin and references to centers where the study was conducted must not appear in any of the manuscript’s sections. In the event that the study requires changes, they should be submitted to the Journal within the requested timeframe. If this time elapses and the Journal does not receive an adjusted version of the study that specifies the changes performed, the study will be rejected for publication. No study will be definitively accepted until all of the corrections have been made. Any time the Editorial Committee requests changes, the authors should submit a new version accompanied by a written letter in the section RESPOND TO REVIEWERS of the EES, which will describe the changes in detail. The changes suggested by the reviewers and performed by the authors can thereby be observed.

The Editorial Committee reserves the right to perform omissions or insertions in the study for the sake of better comprehension of the study, without the modification resulting in a change in its content. The author will approve the version edited by the Editorial Committee before its definitive publication. If necessary, a second and even third round of editing will be performed. This process attempts to provide the maximum quality to manuscripts published in ACTAS UROLÓGICAS ESPAÑOLAS.

Once accepted, the corresponding author will be sent a print test of the article. The print test should be reviewed and possible errors marked. The corrected tests should be returned to the Journal’s editorial department in all cases within 48 hours. It is very important that the corresponding author ensure the correct operation of this phase of the editorial process. The printing tests are designed to detect typing, spelling and format errors. Similarly, the author will be responsible for the review of the text in English. Corrections that affect the content or modify the article’s original sense will not be accepted. If these tests are not received within the established time period, the Editorial Committee will not be responsible for any errors or omissions that might be published. Likewise, the Editorial Committee reserves the right to accept or decline corrections performed by the author in the printing test. In the event that the publication standards were not met or for other circumstances of a higher nature, there is the
possibility that the decision of acceptance will be rescinded and that the study will definitely not be published.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS TO REVIEWERS
All anonymous Reviewers who participate in the evaluation of manuscripts will be publically thanked for their work in a complete list that will appear in *ACTAS UROLÓGICAS ESPAÑOLAS* at the end of the year. The quality of the Journal depends in large measure on the quality of the work performed by these individuals; therefore, the utmost professionalism and diligence in the meeting of these obligations is recommended. As much as possible, the continuous renewal of this Panel of Reviewers and Experts is to be encouraged. Those who wish to participate in correcting manuscripts may do so after contacting the Journal’s Board of Directors. The Board expresses their ongoing thanks for efforts of the Reviewers and members of the Advisory Committee.

EDITORIAL POLICY
The judgment and opinions expressed in the articles and reports published in *ACTAS UROLÓGICAS ESPAÑOLAS* are those of the author(s) and not necessarily those of the Editorial Committee of the Journal’s Board of Directors. The Editorial Committee, the Journal’s Board of Directors and the editing company itself declines any responsibility for this material. Neither the Editorial Committee, the Journal’s Board of Directors nor the editing company guarantee or support any product mentioned in the Journal, nor do they guarantee the statements made by the manufacturers on said product or service.