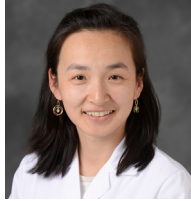


EDITOR'S PAGE



Key Steps to Writing a Great Case Report

Teach Us

Dee Dee Wang, MD, Deputy Editor, *JACC: Case Reports*



Medicine is an art. Clinical cases or case reports are the foundation of medical education. They inspire us to continue our educational journey and teach us how to improve our delivery of patient care. Every procedure you scrub into, every imaging study you interpret, every patient you meet is an educational experience.

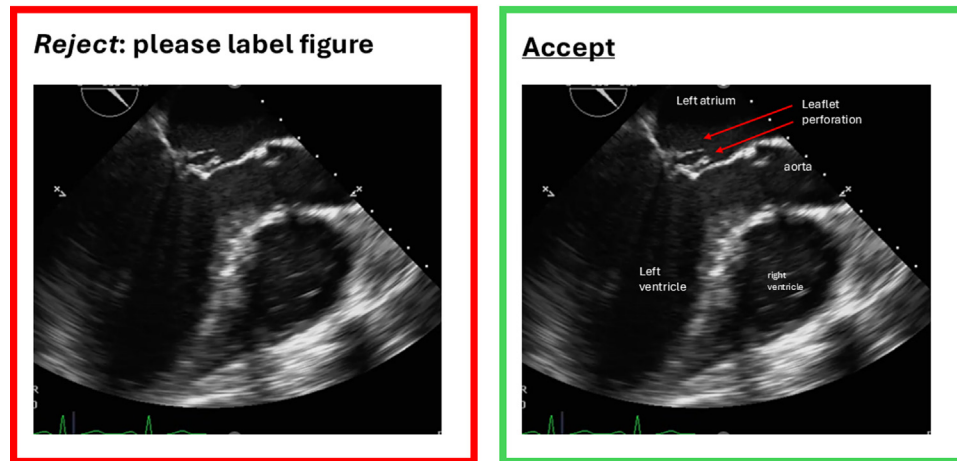
JACC: Case Reports is an open access journal with the mission to serve as a forum for promoting medical education through clinical cases and problem solving.¹ Our editorial team and our readers want to learn from you and your experiences. We welcome your submissions to help us improve and advance the field of medicine. In 2023, *JACC: Case Reports* received more than 1,800 submissions.

Accepted case reports commonly excel across 3 key components of their writing style: delivery of the science; discipline to the submission algorithm; and emphasis on collaboration. First, the science behind the case report must be of educational value to the readership. Before writing the case report, perform a literature search to understand what additional or new educational value your case report could bring to the existing published literature.² You can be confident that the reviewers and the editorial team will be researching your subject matter before formulating an expert opinion. Help the editorial team out by emphasizing what is different, unique, or additive about your presentation. Second, make sure your case report follows the Author Instructions page before hitting the submit button.¹ The journals have put considerable time and effort into the Author Instructions page to help standardize the delivery of the educational material to reviewers, the editorial team, the publishers, and finally and

most importantly the readers. Providing standardized case reports helps enable readers to quickly grasp and compare the differences among different case presentations. Much like presenting a patient on inpatient rounding services, the purpose of submission algorithms is to improve the delivery of the messaging of each case report, thereby allowing the audience (readers) to easily formulate a train of thought and differential diagnosis as they work through your case presentation.

Finally, at *JACC: Case Reports*, we highly value collaboration. Case reports reflect the multidisciplinary care involved in taking care of a single patient. Whereas the final image of the case report may be that of a new device implanted in a part of the body, or a mass that was not expected in the body, we want to see the key diagnostic imaging, intraoperative pictures, and histopathology slides that your multidisciplinary team used along the way to help you build the educational story behind your case report, not just the finished product. Successful case reports effectively integrate all 3 key components, enabling the readers to feel as if they were part of your medical team, having been invested in reading through your patient's history and physical presentation, to formulating a differential diagnosis, sleuthing potential solutions, and learning from you what worked for you and your team.

We would like to thank each and every author who has submitted a case to *JACC: Case Reports*. We value your time and clinical expertise. As we continue to grow and expand our educational outreach, we look forward to continuing to partner and work alongside all of you to help advance the field of medicine.

FIGURE 1 How to Label Figures as Part of a Case Report Submission

SUMMARY OF KEY TAKEAWAYS FOR BUILDING A SUCCESSFUL CASE REPORT SUBMISSION

1. Is it a rare or unusual medical condition, technique, or diagnostic dilemma?
 - a. Perform a pubmed.gov literature search to confirm novelty of the potential case report.
 - Did you remove all patient-identifying information from the case report and imaging files?
 - Did you obtain patient consent for publication?
 - Did you highlight what is uniquely educational about your case from existing literature?
 - b. Is it an innovative technology, new device, or new clinical trial?
 - Was there a multidisciplinary heart team evaluation of this patient?
 - Did you obtain patient consent for publication?
 - Did you obtain consent from the study sponsor for publication for innovative technology (if part of an investigational device/trial)?
2. Are images or pictures being submitted as part of the case report?
 - a. Are all key anatomical parts labeled in the images (eg, echocardiography, computed

tomography, magnetic resonance imaging, others) (Figure 1)?

- b. If a surgical specimen picture is submitted:
 - Are key structures labeled in the image?
 - Is the histopathology image also submitted?
3. Is the case report presentation clear?
 - a. Does the case report formatting match the instructions page for the journal?
 - b. Does the case report title reflect the educational question to be tackled?
 - c. Is there clarity to the problem, the differential diagnosis, and the solution?
 - d. Are all key diagnostic studies that were mentioned in the case report included as part of the submission (eg, right-sided heart catheterization, left-sided heart catheterization, electrocardiographic, echocardiographic, computed tomographic, or multimodality imaging images)?

FUNDING SUPPORT AND AUTHOR DISCLOSURES

Dr Wang has served as a consultant for Edwards Lifesciences, Abbott, Boston Scientific, and Materialise.

ADDRESS FOR CORRESPONDENCE: Dr Dee Dee Wang, Wayne State University School of Medicine, Detroit, Michigan 48202, USA. E-mail: ddwang06@gmail.com.

REFERENCES

1. JACC: Case Reports instructions for authors. American College of Cardiology. 2024. https://www.jaccsubmit-casereports.org/cgi-bin/main.plex?form_type=display_auth_instructions
2. Guidelines to writing a clinical case report. *Heart Views*. 2017;18:104-105.