

UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DO RIO GRANDE DO SUL
INSTITUTO DE CIÊNCIAS BÁSICAS DA SAÚDE
CURSO DE ESPECIALIZAÇÃO EM MICROBIOLOGIA CLÍNICA

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**MODELO EM EXCEL PARA AUXILIAR NA IDENTIFICAÇÃO DE
ENTEROBACTERALES PARA USUÁRIOS DE PROVAS BIOQUÍMICAS MANUAIS**

Porto Alegre

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ENTEROBACTERALES PARA USUÁRIOS DE PROVAS BIOQUÍMICAS MANUAIS**

Trabalho de conclusão de curso de especialização apresentado ao Instituto de Ciências Básicas da Saúde da Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul como requisito parcial para a obtenção do título de Especialista em Microbiologia Clínica.

Orientador: Prof. Dr. Afonso Luís Barth
Coorientadora: Dr^a Camila Mörschbacher Wilhem

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RESUMO

Os laboratórios de pequeno e de médio porte que não contam com métodos automatizados fazem a identificação de *Enterobacterales* através de testes bioquímicos manuais. O presente trabalho desenvolveu um modelo em planilha Excel para auxiliar na leitura da identificação bacteriana aos usuários deste perfil de metodologia. A planilha foi também organizada para fornecer as identificações em ordem de probabilidade. Sua validação foi feita através da comparação dos resultados obtidos com os métodos referência e MALDI-TOF MS, tendo como base um total de 38 amostras, das quais 34 (89,5%) apresentaram concordância de resultados com alto índice de probabilidade (superior a 90%). Dos isolados restantes, 04 apresentaram duas possibilidades de identificação bacteriana, o que foi verificado tanto no método clássico como na planilha Excel. Dentre tais amostras, 01 não apresentou o resultado dos testes esperado para sua espécie, enquanto as outras 03 apresentaram resultados de bioquimismo esperados para sua espécie, mas com percentuais abaixo de 90% no índice de probabilidade, possivelmente pelo baixo poder discriminatório dos próprios testes bioquímicos utilizados na rotina para a identificação de alguns gêneros de *Enterobacterales*. Em tais situações, a utilização da planilha Excel proporciona a vantagem de obter os percentuais de ocorrência de cada bactéria e, caso inconclusivos, recomendar a realização de mais testes ou a liberação do resultado apenas por gênero bacteriano. No conjunto de 34 amostras que apresentaram identidade com alto índice de probabilidade, 02 amostras de *Escherichia coli* (amostras 21 e 22) tiveram resultados pouco frequentes para a fermentação da lactose (negativa) e não foram identificadas pela metodologia referência, mas o foram corretamente pela planilha Excel. Em resumo, quando preenchida com os resultados esperados pela literatura, a planilha Excel apontou o microorganismo correto, o que demonstra que eventuais limitações verificadas decorrem de fatores externos a ela. Quando comparados os resultados da planilha Excel com aqueles identificados pelo MALDI-TOF-MS, apenas 04 amostras (todas bactérias do mesmo gênero) apresentaram divergência, sendo identificadas pela tabela como *Klebsiella oxytoca*, enquanto por MALDI-TOF MS foi identificada como *Klebsiella variicola*, microorganismo este isolado recentemente somente pelos métodos genômicos, proteômicos ou moleculares.

Palavras-chave: Enterobacterales; Testes bioquímicos; Excel; MALDI- TOF MS.

ABSTRACT

Small and medium-sized laboratories that do not have automated methods identify *Enterobacteriales* through manual biochemical tests. The present work developed a model in an Excel spreadsheet to help users of this methodology profile read the bacterial identification. The worksheet was also organized to provide identifications in order of probability. And its validation was performed by comparing the results obtained with the reference and MALDI-TOF-MS methods, based on a total of 38 isolates, of which 34 (89.5%) showed concordant results with a high probability index (greater than 90%). Of the remaining isolates, 04 presented two possibilities of bacterial identification, which was verified both in the classic method and in the Excel spreadsheet. One of the isolates did not present the expected test results for its species, while the other 03 presented expected biochemical results for its species, but with percentages below 90% probability index, possibly due to the low discriminatory power of the biochemical tests used routinely to identify some *Enterobacteriales* genera. In such situations, the use of an Excel spreadsheet provides the advantage of obtaining the percentages of occurrence of each bacterium and, if inconclusive, recommending further tests or reporting the result only by bacterial genus. In the set of 34 samples that presented identity with a high probability index, 02 samples of *Escherichia coli* (samples 21 and 22) had infrequent results for lactose fermentation (negative) and were not identified by the reference methodology, but were correctly identified by the Excel spreadsheet. In summary, when filled with the results expected by the literature, the Excel spreadsheet identified the correct microorganism, which demonstrates that any limitations that were encountered were from external factors in relation to the spreadsheet. When comparing the results of the Excel spreadsheet with those indicated by the MALDI-TOF MS, only 04 isolates (all bacteria of the same genus) showed divergence, which were identified by the table as *Klebsiella oxytoca*, while they were identified by MALDI-TOF MS as *Klebsiella variicola*, a microorganism recently isolated only by genomic, proteomic or molecular methods.

Keywords: *Enterobacteriales*; Biochemical tests; Excel; MALDI -TOF MS.

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1 INTRODUÇÃO

Os bacilos Gram negativos pertencentes à família *Enterobacterales* são os isolados mais frequentemente encontrados em espécimes clínicos analisados no setor de microbiologia de um laboratório de análises clínicas. Para sua identificação são utilizados métodos convencionais (manuais), automatizados e, mais atualmente, a espectrometria de massa por ionização/dessorção a laser auxiliada por matriz (MALDI-TOF MS). Os métodos automatizados oferecem muitas vantagens como, por exemplo, a reprodutibilidade e a disponibilidade de fornecer resultados dentro de 24 horas. Além disso, esses métodos apresentam um sistema de interfaceamento que proporciona facilidade ao médico de obter resultados parciais ou integrais do exame de seu paciente (1). As desvantagens, porém, são o custo elevado e a dependência de um sistema fechado, que exige manutenção e renovação de seus softwares (2).

A tecnologia proteômica, com a utilização da metodologia de MALDI-TOF MS, deu início a uma nova era, de modo que novos gêneros foram validados e muitas novas espécies foram descritas (3). No entanto, os custos da implementação da tecnologia de espectrofotometria de massas ainda estão além das possibilidades financeiras de muitos laboratórios.

Os laboratórios de pequeno e de médio porte que não contam com métodos automatizados fazem a identificação de *Enterobacterales* através de testes bioquímicos manuais, nos quais características metabólicas específicas são detectadas nos microrganismos. Após a leitura dos testes, os resultados são interpretados através de consulta em tabelas. Tais tabelas são fornecidas pelas principais literaturas de referência em microbiologia e possuem a caracterização bioquímica dos principais microrganismos, o que permite a identificação da bactéria a partir da coincidência do resultado com o perfil fornecido para espécie/gênero. Com este método, é possível realizar a identificação dos principais gêneros bacterianos de interesse clínico (4) a um custo mais acessível para os laboratórios com menos recursos, embora tal rotina seja problemática em razão da falta de praticidade, principalmente para os profissionais com menor experiência, pois é necessário o manuseio físico de tabelas extensas, demandando demasiado tempo.

É relevante observar que os métodos fenotípicos de identificação microbiana, como os testes bioquímicos manuais, ainda são os métodos de primeira escolha para a realização do diagnóstico microbiológico na maioria dos laboratórios dos países em desenvolvimento (5).

Dados do PNCQ - Programa Nacional de Controle de Qualidade da Sociedade Brasileira de Análises Clínicas, referentes ao ano de 2022, apontam para a mesma realidade: aproximadamente 87% das identificações encaminhadas para o Programa utilizaram métodos manuais, ou seja, foram 23.037 cepas identificadas pelo método manual *versus* 3.405 pelo método automatizado (6).

1.1 OBJETIVOS

1.1.1 Objetivo geral

Elaborar um modelo informatizado em planilha Excel, como alternativa dinâmica de identificação bacteriana para uso em laboratórios de pequeno e médio porte que utilizam os testes bioquímicos para identificação de *Enterobacterales* de forma manual.

1.1.2 Objetivos específicos

- a) Desenvolver modelo informatizado em formato de planilha Excel que forneça, automaticamente, após introdução dos resultados encontrados no bioquimismo bacteriano, a identificação do microrganismo em questão;
- b) Estruturar um banco de dados através da inserção de tabela com os perfis bioquímicos de cada família/gênero e de tabela com a porcentagem de positividade para cada prova, ambas já determinadas pela literatura especializada;
- c) Validar a planilha Excel para identificação bacteriana mediante comparação com os resultados obtidos através do método referência de interpretação, utilizando amostras de isolados clínicos (urina) e cepas provenientes do Controle Externo de Qualidade (PNCQ);
- d) Comparar os resultados obtidos pelo método de referência e pelo modelo Excel também com os resultados obtidos por MALDI-TOF MS, utilizando também amostras de isolados clínicos e cepas provenientes do Controle Externo de Qualidade (PNCQ).

3 CONCLUSÃO E PERSPECTIVAS

O modelo informatizado em planilha Excel, atendeu as perspectivas de uma alternativa dinâmica de identificação bacteriana para uso em laboratórios de pequeno e médio porte que utilizam os testes bioquímicos para identificação de *Enterobacteriales* de forma manual.

É relevante salientar, acerca da validação realizada, que o Manual de Procedimentos Básicos em Microbiologia Clínica para o Controle de Infecção Hospitalar da Agência Nacional de Vigilância Sanitária do Ministério da Saúde, 2002, registra que, qualquer sistema de testes existentes no comércio, com leitura manual ou automatizada, tem limitações no número de provas e de discriminação dos diferentes gêneros e espécies de enterobactérias, de modo que a maioria dos esquemas trabalha com um máximo de 80% de acerto. É importante destacar que nenhum sistema oferece 100% de acerto para a caracterização das espécies de enterobactérias, mas analisam o principal comportamento descrito na literatura (7).

O mesmo Manual também registra que para as espécies dos gêneros *Citrobacter*, *Enterobacter*, *Klebsiella* e *Serratia* os testes mais utilizados apresentam baixo poder de discriminação, sendo a identificação feita pelo maior percentual de probabilidade (7).

Partindo de tais premissas, o exame da validação levada a termo na execução do presente trabalho de finalização de curso permite a conclusão de que a planilha em Excel desenvolvida apresenta índices de conformidade com o método clássico, sobressaindo-se pela maior dinâmica e facilidade de acesso aos resultados, com inegável ganho em termos de otimização das rotinas de trabalho.

Quando comparada com o método MALDI-TOF MS, apresentou discriminação semelhante dos microrganismos identificados, embora a superioridade do método proteômico em termos de agilidade e acurácia como alternativa para os laboratórios que possuem maior capacidade orçamentária nunca foi alvo de questionamento no presente trabalho.

Após finalizado o processo de desenvolvimento e validação do modelo, o próximo passo tem como objetivo a criação de um aplicativo usando a planilha elaborada neste trabalho como sistema computacional.

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APÊNDICE A – TABELA PERFIL BIOQUÍMICO DAS ENTEROBACTEREALES DE IMPORTÂNCIA CLÍNICA

BACTÉRIA	GÁS	H ₂ S	URE	IND	MOT	ORN	CIT	LIA	LACT
<i>Escherichia coli</i>	+	-	-	+	+	+	-	+	+
<i>Shigella dysenteriae</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Shigella flexneri</i>	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Shigella sonnei</i>	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-
<i>Shigella boydi</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Salmonella enteritidis (grupo)</i>	+	+	-	-	+	+	+	+	-
<i>Salmonella enteritidis biotipo Paratyphi A</i>	+	-	-	-	+	+	-	-	-
<i>Salmonella thypi</i>	-	+	-	-	+	-	-	+	-
<i>Salmonella choleraesuis</i>	+	+	-	-	+	+	-	+	-
<i>Citrobacter freundii</i>	+	+	-	-	+	-	+	-	+
<i>Citrobacter koseri (diversus)</i>	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	-	+/-
<i>Citrobacter amalonaticus</i>	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	-	-
<i>Klebsiella pneumoniae</i>	+	-	+	-	-	-	+	+	+
<i>Klebsiella oxytoca</i>	+	-	+	+	-	-	+	+	+
<i>Klebsiella aerogenes</i>	+	-	-	-	+	+	+	+	+
<i>Enterobacter cloacae</i>	+	-	+	-	+	+	+	-	+
<i>Enterobacter sakasakii</i>	+	-	-	-	+	+	+	-	+
<i>Enterobacter gergoriae</i>	+	-	+	-	+	+	+	+	+
<i>Enterobacter agglomerans/Grupo</i>	-	-	-	-	+	-	+	-	+/-
<i>Hafnia alvei</i>	+	-	-	-	+	+	-	+	-
<i>Serratia marcescens</i>	+	-	-	-	+	+	+	+	-
<i>Serratia liquefaciens</i>	+	-	-	-	+	+	+	+	-
<i>Proteus vulgaris</i>	+	+	+	+	+	-	-	-	-
<i>Proteus mirabilis</i>	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	-	-
<i>Providencia rettgeri</i>	-	-	+	+	+	-	+	-	-
<i>Providencia stuartii</i>	-	-	-	+	+	-	+	-	-
<i>Morganella morgani</i>	+	-	+	+	+	+	-	-	-
<i>Edwardsiella tarda</i>	+	+	-	+	+	+	-	+	-
<i>Yersinia enterocolitica</i>	-	-	+	+	-	+	-	-	-

APÊNDICE B – TABELA DE POSITIVIDADE DAS ENTEROBACTERIAES DE IMPORTÂNCIA CLÍNICA FRENTE AOS TESTES BIOQUÍMICOS

CARACTERÍSTICAS BIOQUÍMICAS DE ENTEROBACTÉRIAS DE INTERESSE NA PATOLOGIA HUMANA

Respostas em 48h. de incubação	Testes Bioquímicos																				Respostas em 48h. de incubação	
	Argemone	Artemisa	Artemisa	Artemisa	Artemisa	Artemisa	Artemisa	Artemisa	Artemisa	Artemisa	Artemisa	Artemisa	Artemisa	Artemisa	Artemisa	Artemisa	Artemisa	Artemisa	Artemisa	Artemisa		Artemisa
Argemone	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Artemisa	99	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
...
Xilose	95	98	100	96	98	99	98	99	98	99	98	99	98	99	98	99	98	99	98	99	98	99

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ANEXO A – NORMAS DE PUBLICAÇÃO DO BRAZILIAN JOURNAL OF MICROBIOLOGY



Submission guidelines
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Instructions for Authors
Article types and sections
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Utilization of plants, algae, fungi
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Short communication: a short communication is new and significant findings. Submit form is the same way as research paper. They receive the same review, they are not published more rapidly than research papers.

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SECTIONS

Biotechnology and Industrial Microbiology: biosynthesis and bioconversion of natural products, including antibiotics, xenobiotics, and macromolecules produced by bacteria.

Biosynthesis and bioconversion of natural products, including antibiotics, xenobiotics, and macromolecules produced by fungi. Molecular aspects of fungal biotechnology. Molecular aspects of bacterial biotechnology.

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Veterinary Microbiology: diseases of animals, Control and/or treatment of animals, Animal pathogen diagnostics, and Veterinary or zoonotic pathogens.

Fungal and Bacterial Physiology: biochemistry, biophysics, metabolism, cell structure, stress response, growth, differentiation and other related process.

Human Microbiome: studies on human microbiota, its association with physiological or pathological processes.

Bacterial, Fungal and Virus Molecular Biology: fungal and bacterial genetics, molecular biology, gene regulation, DNA replication and repair, genomics, proteomics, transcriptomics.

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Please always use internationally accepted signs and symbols for units (SI units).

Genus and species names should be in italics.

Generic names of drugs and pesticides are preferred; if trade names are used, the generic name should be given at first mention.

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Manuscript Submission

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Use a normal, plain font (e.g., 10-point Times Roman) for text.

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Use the automatic page numbering function to number the pages.

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Use the table function, not spreadsheets, to make tables.

Use the equation editor or MathType for equations.

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Abbreviations

Abbreviations should be defined at first mention and used consistently thereafter.

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Footnotes to the text are numbered consecutively; those to tables should be indicated by superscript lower-case letters (or asterisks for significance values and other statistical data).

Footnotes to the title or the authors of the article are not given reference symbols.

Always use footnotes instead of endnotes.

Acknowledgments

Acknowledgments of people, grants, funds, etc. should be placed in a separate section on the title page. The names of funding organizations should be written in full.

References

Citation

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Book chapter

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Online document

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Research Resource Identifiers (RRID) are persistent unique identifiers (effectively similar to a DOI) for research resources. This journal encourages authors to adopt RRIDs when reporting key biological resources (antibodies, cell lines, model organisms and tools) in their manuscripts.

Examples:

Organism: *Filip1tm1a(KOMP)Wtsi* RRID:MMRRC_055641-UCD

Cell Line: RST307 cell line RRID:CVCL_C321

Antibody: Luciferase antibody DSHB Cat# LUC-3, RRID:AB_2722109

Plasmid: mRuby3 plasmid RRID:Addgene_104005

Software: ImageJ Version 1.2.4 RRID:SCR_003070

RRIDs are provided by the Resource Identification Portal. Many commonly used research resources already have designated RRIDs. The portal also provides authors links so that they can quickly register a new resource and obtain an RRID.

Clinical Trial Registration

The World Health Organization (WHO) definition of a clinical trial is "any research study that prospectively assigns human participants or groups of humans to one or more health-related interventions to evaluate the effects on health outcomes". The WHO defines health interventions as "A health intervention is an act performed for, with or on behalf of a person or population whose purpose is to assess, improve, maintain, promote or modify health, functioning or health conditions" and a health-related outcome is generally defined as a change in the health of a person or population as a result of an intervention.

To ensure the integrity of the reporting of patient-centered trials, authors must register prospective clinical trials (phase II to IV trials) in suitable publicly available repositories. For example www.clinicaltrials.gov or any of the primary registries that participate in the WHO International Clinical Trials Registry Platform.

The trial registration number (TRN) and date of registration should be included as the last line of the manuscript abstract.

For clinical trials that have not been registered prospectively, authors are encouraged to register retrospectively to ensure the complete publication of all results. The trial registration number (TRN), date of registration and the words 'retrospectively registered' should be included as the last line of the manuscript abstract.

Standards of reporting

Springer Nature advocates complete and transparent reporting of biomedical and biological research and research with biological applications. Authors are recommended to adhere to the minimum reporting guidelines hosted by the EQUATOR Network when preparing their manuscript.

Exact requirements may vary depending on the journal; please refer to the journal's Instructions for Authors.

Checklists are available for a number of study designs, including:

Randomised trials (CONSORT) and Study protocols (SPIRIT)

Observational studies (STROBE)

Systematic reviews and meta-analyses (PRISMA) and protocols (Prisma-P)

Diagnostic/prognostic studies (STARD) and (TRIPOD)

Case reports (CARE)

Clinical practice guidelines (AGREE) and (RIGHT)

Qualitative research (SRQR) and (COREQ)

Animal pre-clinical studies (ARRIVE)

Quality improvement studies (SQUIRE)

Economic evaluations (CHEERS)

Summary of requirements

The above should be summarized in a statement and placed in a 'Declarations' section before the reference list under a heading of 'Ethics approval'.

Please see the various examples of wording below and revise/customize the sample statements according to your own needs.

Examples of statements to be used when ethics approval has been obtained:

- All procedures performed in studies involving human participants were in accordance with the ethical standards of the institutional and/or national research committee and with the 1964 Helsinki Declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards. The study was approved by the Bioethics Committee of the Medical University of A (No. ...).

- This study was performed in line with the principles of the Declaration of Helsinki.

Approval was granted by the Ethics Committee of University B (Date.../No. ...).

- Approval was obtained from the ethics committee of University C. The procedures used in this study adhere to the tenets of the Declaration of Helsinki.

- The questionnaire and methodology for this study was approved by the Human Research Ethics committee of the University of D (Ethics approval number: ...).

Examples of statements to be used for a retrospective study:

- Ethical approval was waived by the local Ethics Committee of University A in view of the retrospective nature of the study and all the procedures being performed were part of the routine care.

- This research study was conducted retrospectively from data obtained for clinical purposes. We consulted extensively with the IRB of XYZ who determined that our study did not need ethical approval. An IRB official waiver of ethical approval was granted from the IRB of XYZ.

- This retrospective chart review study involving human participants was in accordance with the ethical standards of the institutional and national research committee and with the 1964 Helsinki Declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards. The Human Investigation Committee (IRB) of University B approved this study.

Examples of statements to be used when no ethical approval is required/exemption granted:

- This is an observational study. The XYZ Research Ethics Committee has confirmed that no ethical approval is required.

- The data reproduced from Article X utilized human tissue that was procured via our Biobank AB, which provides de-identified samples. This study was reviewed and deemed

exempt by our XYZ Institutional Review Board. The BioBank protocols are in accordance with the ethical standards of our institution and with the 1964 Helsinki declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards.

Authors are responsible for correctness of the statements provided in the manuscript. See also Authorship Principles. The Editor-in-Chief reserves the right to reject submissions that do not meet the guidelines described in this section.

Informed consent

All individuals have individual rights that are not to be infringed. Individual participants in studies have, for example, the right to decide what happens to the (identifiable) personal data gathered, to what they have said during a study or an interview, as well as to any photograph that was taken. This is especially true concerning images of vulnerable people (e.g. minors, patients, refugees, etc) or the use of images in sensitive contexts. In many instances authors will need to secure written consent before including images.

Identifying details (names, dates of birth, identity numbers, biometrical characteristics (such as facial features, fingerprint, writing style, voice pattern, DNA or other distinguishing characteristic) and other information) of the participants that were studied should not be published in written descriptions, photographs, and genetic profiles unless the information is essential for scholarly purposes and the participant (or parent/guardian if the participant is a minor or incapable or legal representative) gave written informed consent for publication.

Complete anonymity is difficult to achieve in some cases. Detailed descriptions of individual participants, whether of their whole bodies or of body sections, may lead to disclosure of their identity. Under certain circumstances consent is not required as long as information is anonymized and the submission does not include images that may identify the person.

Informed consent for publication should be obtained if there is any doubt. For example, masking the eye region in photographs of participants is inadequate protection of anonymity.

If identifying characteristics are altered to protect anonymity, such as in genetic profiles, authors should provide assurance that alterations do not distort meaning.

Exceptions where it is not necessary to obtain consent:

- Images such as x rays, laparoscopic images, ultrasound images, brain scans, pathology slides unless there is a concern about identifying information in which case, authors should ensure that consent is obtained.

- Reuse of images: If images are being reused from prior publications, the Publisher will assume that the prior publication obtained the relevant information regarding consent.

Authors should provide the appropriate attribution for republished images.

Consent and already available data and/or biologic material

Regardless of whether material is collected from living or dead patients, they (family or guardian if the deceased has not made a pre-mortem decision) must have given prior written consent. The aspect of confidentiality as well as any wishes from the deceased should be respected.

Data protection, confidentiality and privacy

When biological material is donated for or data is generated as part of a research project authors should ensure, as part of the informed consent procedure, that the participants are made aware what kind of (personal) data will be processed, how it will be used and for what purpose. In case of data acquired via a biobank/biorepository, it is possible they apply a broad consent which allows research participants to consent to a broad range of uses of their data and samples which is regarded by research ethics committees as specific enough to be considered “informed”. However, authors should always check the specific biobank/biorepository policies or any other type of data provider policies (in case of non-bio research) to be sure that this is the case.

Consent to Participate

For all research involving human subjects, freely-given, informed consent to participate in the study must be obtained from participants (or their parent or legal guardian in the case of children under 16) and a statement to this effect should appear in the manuscript. In the case of articles describing human transplantation studies, authors must include a statement declaring that no organs/tissues were obtained from prisoners and must also name the institution(s)/clinic(s)/department(s) via which organs/tissues were obtained. For manuscripts reporting studies involving vulnerable groups where there is the potential for coercion or where consent may not have been fully informed, extra care will be taken by the editor and may be referred to the Springer Nature Research Integrity Group.

Consent to Publish

Individuals may consent to participate in a study, but object to having their data published in a journal article. Authors should make sure to also seek consent from individuals to publish their data prior to submitting their paper to a journal. This is in particular applicable to case studies. A consent to publish form can be found

here. (Download docx, 36 kB)

Summary of requirements

The above should be summarized in a statement and placed in a 'Declarations' section before the reference list under a heading of 'Consent to participate' and/or 'Consent to publish'.

Other declarations include Funding, Competing interests, Ethics approval, Consent, Data and/or Code availability and Authors' contribution statements.

Please see the various examples of wording below and revise/customize the sample statements according to your own needs.

Sample statements for "Consent to participate":

Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study.

Informed consent was obtained from legal guardians.

Written informed consent was obtained from the parents.

Verbal informed consent was obtained prior to the interview.

Sample statements for "Consent to publish":

The authors affirm that human research participants provided informed consent for publication of the images in Figure(s) 1a, 1b and 1c.

The participant has consented to the submission of the case report to the journal.

Patients signed informed consent regarding publishing their data and photographs.

Sample statements if identifying information about participants is available in the article:

Additional informed consent was obtained from all individual participants for whom identifying information is included in this article.

Authors are responsible for correctness of the statements provided in the manuscript. See also Authorship Principles. The Editor-in-Chief reserves the right to reject submissions that do not meet the guidelines described in this section.

Images will be removed from publication if authors have not obtained informed consent or the paper may be removed and replaced with a notice explaining the reason for removal.

Utilization of plants, algae, fungi

This journal values stewardship, transparency, and adhering to governance with regards to collecting and utilizing specimens and conducting experiments and/or field studies. Therefore the journal sets out the following guidelines:

Field studies involving genetically engineered plants must be conducted in accordance with national or local legislation and, if applicable, the manuscript needs to include a statement specifying the appropriate permissions and/or licences.

Authors utilizing genetic plant resources received via local suppliers/collectors, such as species collected from protected areas or endangered species with medical importance, must

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Authors whose research is focusing on quarantine organisms (i.e. harmful or pest organisms, including plant pathogens) should adhere to national legislation and notify the relevant National Plant Protection Organization of new findings before publication. More information can be found via the International Plant Protection Convention.

In principle, it is recommended that authors comply with:

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Convention on the Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora

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