

How to get published in medical school and boost your CV

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Getting a scholarly article published during medical school can pay off when it comes time to apply to residency programs. A 2018 survey of residency program directors, conducted by the National Resident Matching Program, indicated that more than 40% of respondents listed “demonstrated involvement and interest in research” as a factor they considered when weighing candidates.

So what do medical students need to do to get published and where might they find the opportunity? Here’s a quick guide.

What to know

Most publications are going to want some uniform information. That list is likely to include a disclosure of conflicts of interest, approvals or waivers from any participants in research, and an author statement signed by all listed authors.

Howard Bauchner, MD, editor-in-chief of *JAMA*, is offering a 12-month leadership experience for six AMA medical student members interested in research and medical publishing practices. In terms of what will get you published, Dr. Bauchner has offered a few tips.

Write a good abstract. “Only your significant other, your mother and father, and a select number of people will read your whole paper,” Dr. Bauchner said. “I can’t emphasize enough how important the abstract is.” Keep your abstract structured and concise, and include some data. Make sure the data in your abstract matches the data in your paper.

Have a clear theme. Can you state two to three important points for your paper? If not, you probably have too much, and you might get lost. Emphasize your important points in the results section of your abstract, reflect on these points in the abstract’s conclusions and highlight them in the first paragraph of the conclusions section of your paper.

Make revisions. Have somebody else—outside of your research—read your paper before you submit. Later, if it gets rejected, don't send it out to another journal without making changes. "It's very likely the same peer reviewers will see it," Dr. Bauchner said. "I tell the editor that I won't edit it, and they shouldn't publish it."

Where to publish

These journals specifically seek submissions from physicians in training and are accessible for newcomers in publishing.

AMA Journal of Ethics®: This AMA journal features articles by experts that offer practical advice and insights for students and clinicians. The journal is written by experts, but topics are driven by students, residents, and fellows interested in leadership and innovation in ethics and health policy.

You can submit a manuscript or submit artwork that explores the ethical dimensions of health or health care, or win up to \$5,000 by entering the journal's Conley Ethics Essay Contest or Conley Art of Medicine Contest.

The *AMA Journal of Ethics* also offers the chance for students to become theme issue editors.

The American Medical Student Research Journal: Created by medical students, this journal gives future physician-scientists the opportunity to develop the critical thinking skills needed to succeed in academia and clinical practice. The journal is written, reviewed and edited by medical students working under the guidance of faculty mentors. It accepts submissions ranging from basic science research and case reports to personal experience essays.

Harvard Public Health Review: This publication seeks diverse research interests that addresses issues of health equity and invites submissions from students and faculty across academic disciplines. The staff announces publication themes each quarter with special calls for contributions released in response to pressing public health issues.

International Journal of Medical Students: This is a peer-reviewed, open-access scientific journal created to share the research and experiences of medical students worldwide.

Student BMJ: Launched in 1992, this international journal publishes articles that have been commissioned with medical students in mind.