

Publishing a Case Report in Anatomy: the Editors' View

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Case reports have historically played a fundamental role in the advancement of morphological and anatomical sciences. By documenting rare anatomical variations, unexpected findings, and novel morphostructural observations, case reports have contributed to the refinement of anatomical knowledge and its direct application to clinical practice, imaging, surgical planning, and medical education (Standing, 2021; Tubbs *et al.*, 2014). Within the scope of the Journal of Morphological Sciences, anatomical case reports remain an important scientific format when they provide clear novelty and educational relevance.

Despite their recognized value, the publication of anatomical case reports has become increasingly selective. From an editorial perspective, this trend reflects the growing demand for scientific rigor, originality, and explicit contribution to knowledge. Manuscripts based solely on descriptive observations, without adequate contextualization or relevance, are frequently deemed insufficient for publication (Rison *et al.*, 2017). Consequently, authors must clearly justify why a reported anatomical finding deserves dissemination in the current scientific literature.

A high-quality anatomical case report should extend beyond the presentation of an isolated observation. Editors expect a well-defined introduction that situates the case within existing knowledge and identifies gaps in the literature. The anatomical description must be precise, reproducible, and grounded in internationally accepted terminology, particularly the Terminologia Anatomica, which remains essential for standardization and scientific clarity (FIPAT, 2019). Inconsistent or obsolete terminology is a frequent reason for negative editorial assessment.

The discussion section represents a decisive component in editorial evaluation. Rather than reiterating descriptive elements, authors should critically compare their findings with previously published cases, exploring anatomical classifications, embryological explanations, prevalence data, and potential clinical or educational implications (Tubbs & Shoja, 2019). Case reports that successfully integrate morphological data with clinical, radiological, or surgical correlations are particularly valued within morphology-oriented journals.

Ethical considerations are also central to the editorial review process. Explicit documentation of informed consent is mandatory when clinical information or identifiable images are included, in accordance with international editorial standards (ICMJE, 2023). In studies involving cadaveric material,

transparency regarding body donation programs and institutional ethical approval is equally essential. Failure to adequately address ethical requirements remains a common cause of rejection at the initial screening stage.

Image quality and didactic value are especially important in anatomical publications. High-resolution figures, clear labeling, and informative legends significantly enhance the educational impact of a case report and facilitate peer review (Shoja *et al.*, 2018). Editors favor submissions in which images actively contribute to anatomical understanding rather than merely illustrating the text.

Common reasons for rejection of anatomical case reports include lack of originality, insufficient review of the literature, limited clinical or educational relevance, poor image quality, and noncompliance with journal guidelines. In contrast, manuscripts that demonstrate novelty, anatomical precision, ethical rigor, and strong integration with current knowledge are more likely to progress successfully through the peer-review process.

By outlining the main criteria considered during editorial evaluation, this editorial aims to guide authors in the preparation of anatomically sound and scientifically robust case reports. Clarifying editorial expectations may help researchers, clinicians, and anatomists produce submissions that meaningfully contribute to the mission of the Journal of Morphological Sciences and to the advancement of morphological research and education.



References

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