

## Avoiding Predatory Journals

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Whether working in an academic or clinical setting, there is ample opportunity and incentive to seek out publication in one's area of interest and expertise. Once the research is complete and the post-intervention data collected, it comes time to find a suitable home to publish your efforts. As you seek a journal that best fits your area of focus, you may encounter or even be solicited by journals promising quick turn-around times while also boasting about their peer-review process. Often times these journals will have names very similar to more established publications and fail to provide verifiable details about their citation metrics or peer-review process beyond brief assertions on their website or via a soliciting email (Elmore & Weston, 2020). The types of publishers were deemed "predatory publishers" in 2008 by Jeffery Beall. Beall ultimately created a list of suspect publishers for the scholarly community (Happe, 2020). The list is no longer officially posted online due to both threat of legal action and ultimately concerns about possible biases (Straumsheim, 2017).

Setting aside the well-meaning but problematic initial effort of Mr. Beall, there remains an issue of less than ethical publishers making money from and ultimately deceiving authors seeking legitimate scholarly publication. The good news is that there are a variety of simple steps you can take to weed out any suspect publishers. Some common agreed upon approaches (Elmore & Weston, 2020; Happe, 2020; Shahriari et al., 2016; Zakout, 2020):

- Be leery of unsolicited emails asking for submissions especially those with poor formatting or grammatical errors.
- Lack of detail on peer-review process, fees, editorial board or an overall poorly designed website.
- Asking for copyright sign-over at time of submission versus after peer review and official acceptance.
- Look for current and ongoing indexing of the publication in reputable databases.
  - *PubMed Note: Not every listed citation in PubMed is an officially cleared and indexed journal within MEDLINE*
- Use the [Think. Check. Submit.](#) Checklist
- Consult your institutional or local librarian.

### Additional Resources and Tools:

- [COPE \(Committee on Publication Ethics\) – Journal Member List](#)
- [Directory of Open Access Journals – DOAJ](#)
- [PubHub: Resources for Getting Published via MaineHealth Library & Knowledge Services](#)

## References

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