

**Weill Cornell  
Medicine**

# Identifying Predatory Journals: 10 Red Flags



**Michelle Demetres, MLIS**  
**Scholarly Communications Librarian**  
Samuel J. Wood Library &  
C.V. Starr Biomedical Information Center  
Weill Cornell Medicine  
[mrd2006@med.cornell.edu](mailto:mrd2006@med.cornell.edu)



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# PREDATORY JOURNAL RED FLAGS

The following observations do not necessarily mean that a journal/publisher is predatory. However, they should raise some red flags, requiring further investigation before a decision is made by the author.

**1**

## **EMAIL SOLICITATIONS**

Questionable journals/publishers often target scholars through spam email to submit their manuscripts or serve on editorial boards. Don't be fooled by flattery!

**2**

## **YOU'VE NEVER READ THE JOURNAL**

Do you or your colleagues know the journal? Have you previously read any articles in the journal?

**3**

## **UNCLEAR PUBLICATION FEES**

Fees are unclear before submission. Often, they will notify authors of fees only after acceptance, when you are obligated to publish and cannot resubmit elsewhere.

**4**

## **ADVERTISING FAST PUBLICATION**

Journals/publishers advertising fast publication turnaround typically do not undergo peer review. The peer review process is time consuming, and should be made explicit on their site.

**5**

## **GRAMMATICAL AND SPELLING ERRORS**

If the journal publishes in English, their website and correspondence should follow English language grammatical conventions.

6

## QUESTIONABLE EDITORIAL BOARD

Editorial boards should be international, and comprised of recognizable, established experts in the field. Does the editorial board mention the journal on their own websites?

7

## QUESTIONABLE PUBLISHING LOCATION

Do a Google search for the street view of the address. Does it look like a location from which a reputable publisher would operate?

8

## FAKE IMPACT FACTORS

Always double check a journal's impact factor claims, as this is easily falsified.

9

## BROAD AIM OR SCOPE

Does the scope of the publisher/journal content seem to include "everything?"

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## NOT WIDELY INDEXED

Are articles indexed in services that you use? (MEDLINE? Scopus?) Google Scholar does not qualify as an indexing service. Verify claims with UlrichsWeb.

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Questions?  
Michelle Demetres  
mrd2006@med.cornell.edu