

Predatory Journals

By Now, many of you have probably received invitations from journals to publish your research. While many of these journals are reputable, some are considered to be predatory journals. As you may know, predatory journals and publishers are entities that prioritize self-interest at the expense of scholarship and are characterized by false or misleading information, deviation from best editorial and publication practices, a lack of transparency, and/or the use of aggressive and indiscriminate solicitation practices.

In an effort to recognize predatory journals, I've listed a few steps you can follow. In addition, here's a link to a popular predatory journal list (www.bealllist.net) created by Jeffrey Beall. While Jeffrey is no longer adding to the list, it still offers a nice list of potential predatory journals.

Recognizing potential predatory journals:

- Search for the journals impact factor (e.g., Google the journal name along with the words *impact factor*). ALL reputable journals have an impact factor.
- If no impact factor can be found, Google the journal name along with the words *predatory journal*. There may be information on the web pertaining to the journal's predatory nature.
- Reputable journals almost never request money (Article Processing Charges) prior to acceptance (e.g., pay to submit) of your manuscript. However, there is a trend for journals to charge once the manuscript is accepted (after a rigorous peer-review process). This is becoming more common.
- All reputable journals have a rigorous peer-review process. If the peer-review process seems overly simplistic, fast, and/or requests minimal changes, the journal might be predatory.
- Use an academic search engine (e.g., PubMed) to search for the journal. If you do not find any citations of the journal, it may be predatory.
- You can always do a search for information on the editor(s). Often times you will find the editor(s) of predatory journals do not have appointments in any healthcare system or academic institution.

Finally, here's a reference to an article that provides further information on predatory journals

Elmore, S. A., & Weston, E. H. (2020). Predatory Journals: What They Are and How to Avoid Them. *Toxicologic pathology*, 48(4), 607-610.