



(Monday) 29 January 2001

Memorandum

To: Center faculty, staff, and friends

Fr: Curt Meinert

Re: Titling study manuscripts

This is the ninth in a series of memos concerning issues in the presentation and publication of results from trials. Previous memos have dealt with the obligation to publish, investigator right of primacy, limits to that right, type and place of publication, deposit of finished datasets, presentation of primary results at scientific meetings, internal presentation of results, and authorship formats.

A good manuscript title is succinct and telegraphic. It is devoid of redundant terms and superfluous words. It should contain terms to indicate the treatment or class of treatments being evaluated and the disease or outcome of interest. The name of the trial should be part of the title.

Sample titles of primary publications of the UGDP, CDP, and GLT are listed below.

University Group Diabetes Program

A study of the effects of hypoglycemic agents on vascular complications in patients with adult-onset diabetes: I. Design, methods, and baseline characteristics. Diabetes 19 (suppl 2):747 - 783, **1970a**.

A study of the effects of hypoglycemic agents on vascular complications in patients with adult-onset diabetes: II. Mortality results. Diabetes 19 (suppl 2):785 - 830, **1970b**.

A study of the effects of hypoglycemic agents on vascular complications in patients with adult-onset diabetes: V. Evaluation of phenformin therapy. Diabetes 24 (suppl 1):65 - 184, **1975**.

A study of the effects of hypoglycemic agents on vascular complications in patients with adult-onset diabetes: VIII Evaluation of insulin therapy: Final report. Diabetes 31 (suppl 5):1 - 81, **1982**.

Coronary Drug Project

The Coronary Drug Project: Initial findings leading to modifications of its research protocol. JAMA 214:1303 - 1313, **1970**.

The Coronary Drug Project: Findings leading to further modifications of its protocol with respect to dextrothyroxine. JAMA 220:996 - 1008, **1972**.

The Coronary Drug Project: Design, methods, and baseline results. Circulation 47 (suppl 1):I-1 - I-50, **1973a**.

The Coronary Drug Project: Findings leading to discontinuation of the 2.5-mg/day estrogen group. JAMA 226:652 - 657, **1973b**.

The Coronary Drug Project: Clofibrate and niacin in coronary heart disease. JAMA 231:360 - 381, **1975**.

Glaucoma Laser Trial

The Glaucoma Laser Trial: 1. Acute effects of argon laser trabeculoplasty on intraocular pressure. Arch Ophthalmol 107:1135 - 1142, **1989**.

The Glaucoma Laser Trial (GLT): 3. Design and methods. Controlled Clin Trials 12:504 - 524, **1991**.

Titles were numbered in the UGDP and GLT. Numbering has the advantaging of cluing readers to the fact that there are other papers from the trial. However, the numbering will be only roughly sequential if numbering (as was the case for the UGDP and GLT) is done when papers are submitted for publication.

The titling behavior of authors of multicenter trials published in the NEJM in 2000 can be seen from the table below.

	Title	Citation	Words in title	Group name?	Trial in title?
1	Markers of myocardial damage and inflammation in relation to long-term mortality in unstable coronary artery disease. FRISC Study Group. Fragmin during Instability in Coronary Artery Disease.	NEJM 2000 Oct 19;343(16):1139-47	27	yes	no
2	Long-term effects of budesonide or nedocromil in children with asthma. The Childhood Asthma Management Program Research Group.	NEJM 2000 Oct 12;343(15):1054-63	18	yes	no

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	Title	Citation	Words in title	Group name?	Trial in title?
3	A trial of shortened zidovudine regimens to prevent mother-to-child transmission of human immunodeficiency virus type 1. Perinatal HIV Prevention Trial (Thailand) Investigators.	NEJM 2000 Oct 5;343(14):982-91	25	yes	yes
4	Irinotecan plus fluorouracil and leucovorin for metastatic colorectal cancer. Irinotecan Study Group.	NEJM 2000 Sep 28;343(13):905-14	12	yes	no
5	Intramuscular interferon beta-1a therapy initiated during a first demyelinating event in multiple sclerosis. CHAMPS Study Group.	NEJM 2000 Sep 28;343(13):898-904	14	yes	no
6	Trial of a supplemental dose of four poliovirus vaccines.	NEJM 2000 Sep 14;343(11):767-73	9	no	yes
7	Transdermal testosterone treatment in women with impaired sexual function after oophorectomy.	NEJM 2000 Sep 7;343(10):682-8	11	no	no
8	A comparison of ibuprofen and indomethacin for closure of patent ductus arteriosus.	NEJM 2000 Sep 7;343(10):674-81	12	no	no
9	Effects of estrogen replacement on the progression of coronary-artery atherosclerosis.	NEJM 2000 Aug 24;343(8):522-9	11	no	no
10	A comparison of suture repair with mesh repair for incisional hernia.	NEJM 2000 Aug 10;343(6):392-8	11	no	no
11	Pravastatin therapy and the risk of stroke.	NEJM 2000 Aug 3;343(5):317-26	7	no	no

Title	Citation	Words in title	Group name?	Trial in title?
12 Intravenous nesiritide, a natriuretic peptide, in the treatment of decompensated congestive heart failure. Nesiritide Study Group.	NEJM 2000 Jul 27;343(4):246-53	17	yes	no
13 Incidence of cancer after prophylaxis with warfarin against recurrent venous thromboembolism. Duration of Anticoagulation Trial.	NEJM 2000 Jun 29;342(26):1953-8	15	yes	yes
14 The effect of celecoxib, a cyclooxygenase-2 inhibitor, in familial adenomatous polyposis.	NEJM 2000 Jun 29;342(26):1946-52	11	no	no
15 Electrophysiologic testing to identify patients with coronary artery disease who are at risk for sudden death. Multicenter Unsustained Tachycardia Trial Investigators.	NEJM 2000 Jun 29;342(26):1937-45	21	yes	yes
16 A comparison of methotrexate with placebo for the maintenance of remission in Crohn's disease. North American Crohn's Study Group Investigators.	NEJM 2000 Jun 1;342(22):1627-32	20	yes	no
17 Dexamethasone alone or in combination with ondansetron for the prevention of delayed nausea and vomiting induced by chemotherapy. The Italian Group for Antiemetic Research.	NEJM 2000 May 25;342(21):1554-9	24	yes	no
18 A five-year study of the incidence of dyskinesia in patients with early Parkinson's disease who were treated with ropinirole or levodopa. 056 Study Group.	NEJM 2000 May 18;342(20):1484-91	24	yes	no

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Title	Citation	Words in title	Group name?	Trial in title?
19 A comparison of nefazodone, the cognitive behavioral-analysis system of psychotherapy, and their combination for the treatment of chronic depression.	NEJM 2000 May 18;342(20):1462-70	20	no	no
20 Effects of physiologic pacing versus ventricular pacing on the risk of stroke and death due to cardiovascular causes. Canadian Trial of Physiologic Pacing Investigators.	NEJM 2000 May 11;342(19):1385-91	24	yes	yes
21 Long-term treatment with a platelet glycoprotein-receptor antagonist after percutaneous coronary revascularization. EXCITE Trial Investigators. Evaluation of Oral Xemilofiban in Controlling Thrombotic Events.	NEJM 2000 May 4;342(18):1316-24	24	yes	yes
22 Ventilation with lower tidal volumes as compared with traditional tidal volumes for acute lung injury and the acute respiratory distress syndrome. The Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome Network.	NEJM 2000 May 4;342(18):1301-8	27	yes	no
23 Treatment of acromegaly with the growth hormone-receptor antagonist pegvisomant.	NEJM 2000 Apr 20;342(16):1171-7	10	no	no
24 Lack of effect of a high-fiber cereal supplement on the recurrence of colorectal adenomas. Phoenix Colon Cancer Prevention Physicians' Network.	NEJM 2000 Apr 20;342(16):1156-62	21	yes	no
25 Lack of effect of a low-fat, high-fiber diet on the recurrence of colorectal adenomas. Polyp Prevention Trial Study Group.	NEJM 2000 Apr 20;342(16):1149-55	21	yes	yes

Title	Citation	Words in title	Group name?	Trial in title?
26 Discontinuation of prophylaxis for Mycobacterium avium complex disease in HIV-infected patients who have a response to antiretroviral therapy. Terry Bein Community Programs for Clinical Research on AIDS.	NEJM 2000 Apr 13;342(15):1085-92	28	yes	no
27 Conventional-dose chemotherapy compared with high-dose chemotherapy plus autologous hematopoietic stem-cell transplantation for metastatic breast cancer. Philadelphia Bone Marrow Transplant Group.	NEJM 2000 Apr 13;342(15):1069-76	23	yes	no
28 The effect of balloon angioplasty on hypertension in atherosclerotic renal-artery stenosis. Dutch Renal Artery Stenosis Intervention Cooperative Study Group.	NEJM 2000 Apr 6;342(14):1007-14	20	yes	no
29 Amiodarone to prevent recurrence of atrial fibrillation. Canadian Trial of Atrial Fibrillation Investigators.	NEJM 2000 Mar 30;342(13):913-20	14	yes	no
30 Abnormal myocardial phosphorus-31 nuclear magnetic resonance spectroscopy in women with chest pain but normal coronary angiograms.	NEJM 2000 Mar 23;342(12):829-35	16	no	no
31 Etanercept in children with polyarticular juvenile rheumatoid arthritis. Pediatric Rheumatology Collaborative Study Group.	NEJM 2000 Mar 16;342(11):763-9	14	yes	no
32 The value of routine preoperative medical testing before cataract surgery. Study of Medical Testing for Cataract Surgery.	NEJM 2000 Jan 20;342(3):168-75	17	yes	no

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Title	Citation	Words in title	Group name?	Trial in title?
33 Vitamin E supplementation and cardiovascular events in high-risk patients. The Heart Outcomes Prevention Evaluation Study Investigators.	NEJM 2000 Jan 20;342(3):154-60	17	yes	no
34 Effects of an angiotensin-converting-enzyme inhibitor, ramipril, on cardiovascular events in high-risk patients. The Heart Outcomes Prevention Evaluation Study Investigators.	NEJM 2000 Jan 20;342(3):145-53	26	yes	no
35 Noninvasive diagnosis by Doppler ultrasonography of fetal anemia due to maternal red-cell alloimmunization. Collaborative Group for Doppler Assessment of the Blood Velocity in Anemic Fetuses.	NEJM 2000 Jan 6;342(1):9-14	27	yes	no

The longest title is citation 26 (28 words). The title for citation 11 was shortest (7 words). Only 7 of the 35 titles contained the term *trial*. Twenty-five of the titles included the name of the study group doing the trial. None of the titles contained the word *random* or *randomized*.

Titling recommendations

- Minimize number of words
 - Include name of trial in the title
 - Consider numbering
 - Include the term *trial* or *randomized trial*
 - Use words to indicate
 - Disease or condition being treated
 - Outcome measure
 - Type of treatment
 - Use masked (eg, as double-masked) and placebo-controlled if appropriate
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