



Turkish Journal of

GERIATRICS

e-ISSN: 1307-9948

Beware of Predatory Journals

A Practical Guide for Authors

The rapid growth of open-access publishing has created new opportunities for researchers, but it has also led to the emergence of **predatory, deceptive, and exploitative journals**. These journals may prioritize commercial gain over rigorous editorial and peer-review standards. Authors should exercise particular caution when approached by unfamiliar journals or publishers.

Common Warning Signs

1. Unsolicited Invitations

Be cautious of unsolicited e-mails inviting you to:

- submit a manuscript;
- join an editorial board; or
- serve as a guest editor.

Particular caution is warranted when such messages are generic, flattering, persistent, or promise guaranteed or exceptionally rapid publication.

2. Unclear Journal or Publisher Identity

Check whether:

- the publisher has a verifiable physical or institutional address;
 - the journal uses a professional contact address;
 - the Editor-in-Chief and editorial board members are genuine and appropriately affiliated;
- and

- the journal is clearly distinguishable from established publications.

Unverifiable editors, incorrect affiliations, generic contact addresses, or imitation of well-known journal titles should raise concerns.

3. Excessively Broad or Inconsistent Scope

A journal that covers an unusually wide range of unrelated disciplines, or publishes articles clearly outside its stated scope, should be examined carefully.

4. Poor Editorial and Scientific Quality

Repeated grammatical and spelling errors, poorly written articles, substantial scientific inaccuracies, or inconsistent academic standards may indicate inadequate editorial or peer-review processes.

5. Lack of Transparency

A reputable journal should clearly describe its:

- peer-review process;
- publication ethics;
- authorship and conflict-of-interest policies;
- correction and retraction procedures;
- copyright and licensing arrangements; and
- publication fees.

6. Unrealistically Rapid Publication

Be cautious when a journal guarantees acceptance, promises publication within a few days, provides little information about peer review, or offers paid expedited publication.

Rapid publication is not inherently problematic, provided that appropriate scientific evaluation is maintained.

7. Unclear Publication Fees

Article processing charges (APCs) are not, by themselves, evidence of predatory publishing. Many reputable open-access journals charge APCs.

However, fees should be clearly disclosed before submission. Unexpected charges, unexplained additional fees, or unusual payment arrangements warrant further investigation.

Verify Indexing and Bibliometric Claims

Do not assume that a journal is reputable simply because it lists numerous indexing services or displays an “impact factor.”

The **Journal Impact Factor (JIF)** is a specific Clarivate metric reported through *Journal Citation Reports*. Other indicators using similar terminology should not be confused with the JIF.

Likewise, inclusion in a lesser-known indexing or journal-evaluation service does not necessarily indicate recognition by major international citation databases. Index Copernicus (ICI), for example, is a legitimate journal evaluation and indexing service; it should not be described as a “fake index.” However, its Index Copernicus Value (ICV) should not be confused with the Journal Impact Factor or regarded as equivalent to inclusion in Web of Science or Scopus.

Always verify important claims independently through the official website of the relevant database or organization. Do not rely solely on logos, links, or indexing lists displayed on the journal's own website.

Useful resources include Think. Check. Submit., DOAJ, Web of Science/Journal Citation Reports, Scopus, and COPE.

Before You Submit

Ask yourself:

- ☐ Do I know the journal and its publisher?
- ☐ Can I verify the editors, publisher, and contact information?
- ☐ Is the peer-review and publication-ethics process transparent?
- ☐ Are publication fees clearly stated?
- ☐ Are indexing and bibliometric claims independently verified?
- ☐ Does the published content demonstrate appropriate scientific and editorial quality?
- ☐ Am I being pressured to submit or publish unusually quickly?

If several answers raise concerns, pause and investigate the journal before submitting your manuscript.

STOP – CHECK – VERIFY – SUBMIT

STOP — Do not respond immediately to an unsolicited invitation.

CHECK — Examine the journal, publisher, editors, peer-review process, fees, and published content.

VERIFY — Confirm important claims through authoritative and independent sources.

SUBMIT — Submit only when you are satisfied that the journal is legitimate, transparent, and appropriate for your work.

Remember

No single characteristic proves that a journal is predatory. The overall transparency, credibility, editorial integrity, and verifiability of the journal and publisher should be assessed collectively. Choosing where to publish is an important part of responsible research conduct and the protection of research integrity.

This document has been prepared for informational purposes by the Executive Board of the Turkish Geriatrics Society and the Editorial Board of the Turkish Journal of Geriatrics.