

Protocols for clinical use at *Nature Protocols*

Nature Protocols has traditionally published protocols for use in biological or biomedical research but has recently expanded its scope to include protocols for clinical practice.

When *Nature Protocols* launched in 2006, our scope covered all areas of the biological and biomedical sciences, including methods grounded in chemistry with a practical application to answering biological questions. Recently, we made the decision to follow in the footsteps of some of the other Nature Portfolio journals, such as *Nature*, *Nature Medicine*, *Nature Microbiology* and *Nature Immunology*, by expanding our scope to include more clinical content. In the past, we have occasionally published protocols with potential applications in the clinical setting but have encouraged authors to focus primarily on the biomedical research applications. Now we are removing this stipulation and encouraging authors to also submit protocols with purely clinical applications.

Our aim is to publish highly detailed step-by-step instructions for performing technically challenging clinical (medical or surgical) interventions that have not yet been adequately described in accredited guidelines. These protocols will usually describe the use of new or emerging tools, techniques, strategies or software in early clinical studies. There is often a delay between the emergence of a new technique and its wider uptake within the clinical community, which is generally only possible once standardized guidelines have been published.

We are hoping to bridge this gap by providing clinicians with the technical guidance they need to pioneer a new approach.

For example, we have just published a protocol from Public Health England for three assays to measure levels of neutralizing antibodies against SARS-CoV-2, which have been used to assess the efficacy of the ChAdOx1 nCoV-19 (AstraZeneca; Oxford University) and Ad26.COV2.S (Janssen) COVID-19 vaccines in clinical trials¹. These wild-type plaque-reduction neutralization, micro-neutralization and pseudotyped virus neutralization assays are expected to have a pivotal role in the development and licensure of future COVID-19 vaccine candidates. Another example of our scope expansion is a Protocol Extension on the radiosynthesis of [¹⁸F]SiFAlin-TATE for clinical neuroendocrine tumor positron emission tomography², which provides guidelines for taking a specific example of the previously published synthesis protocols to the clinic^{3,4}.

We welcome presubmission enquiries to the journal for clinical protocols that meet the criteria outlined above. It is important to note that we do not publish clinical trial design protocols (i.e., detailed guidance on designing a clinical trial); we only publish protocols for performing clinical interventions. We also welcome proposals for clinically focused

reviews, which can be either surveys of different methodological approaches (Comparative Analysis) or detailed discussions of experimental design considerations for using a particular technology or technique (Tutorials). Please note that our publication criteria remain the same for our clinical content, as do our general policies and processes. Importantly, all of our protocols must have been proven to work already (used to generate data in published papers), with further validation provided by peer review of the protocols themselves. □

1. Bewley, K. R. et al. Quantification of SARS-CoV-2 neutralizing antibody by wild-type plaque reduction neutralization, micro-neutralization and pseudotyped virus neutralization assays. *Nat. Protoc.* <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41596-021-00536-y> (2021).
2. Lindner, S. et al. Radiosynthesis of [¹⁸F]SiFAlin-TATE for clinical neuroendocrine tumor positron emission tomography. *Nat. Protoc.* **15**, 3827–3843 (2020).
3. Wängler, B. et al. Protein labeling with the labeling precursor [¹⁸F]SiFA-SH for positron emission tomography. *Nat. Protoc.* **7**, 1964–1969 (2012).
4. Wängler, C. et al. One-step ¹⁸F-labeling of peptides for positron emission tomography imaging using the SiFA methodology. *Nat. Protoc.* **7**, 1946–1955 (2012).

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