

Spotlight on human studies



Here we reflect on touching points between basic science and clinical research, while highlighting key points to consider when submitting clinical work to our journal.

Each month, *Nature Metabolism* brings you our selection of exciting research from across the wider field of metabolic science, most of the time featuring studies carried out in cells, model organisms or animal models of disease. In recent years, we have also developed an interest in publishing translational and clinical studies, and have refined our editorial criteria and policies for clinical content. This month's issue contains two studies carried out in humans, providing a welcome opportunity to reflect on what type of translational and clinical studies the editors of *Nature Metabolism* are particularly interested in, and what to watch out for when submitting.

A common theme of the two human studies in our current issue is the application of functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) to explore the brain's responses to pharmacologic or sensory stimuli: whereas the [Letter](#) by Hummel, Benkendorff et al. uncovers differences in brain insulin sensitivity across the menstrual cycle in women,

the [Letter](#) by Perszyk and colleagues delves into how odour imagery confers risk of weight gain in adults.

These two studies serve as nice examples of the type of human study that we expect to be of interest to basic scientists as well, because they can be perceived as an extension of basic research into the broader underlying physiology. Other areas in which exploratory analyses in humans can build on preclinical research that is of interest to our readers, or where similarities in experimental design and analysis exist, include dietary interventions and exercise, in which we are actively encouraging submissions.

More generally, we are interested in interventional studies, basic experimental studies in humans, post-hoc analyses stemming from large clinical trials, and observational population health studies that inform on metabolic processes in humans. Additionally, we are also open to considering clinical trials in cases where they are deemed of sufficient relevance to basic scientists. Case reports will be considered only in exceptional circumstances. As each of these studies requires particular attention with regards to registration, reporting, provision of protocols and data sharing, we encourage you to make yourself familiar with the [guidance provided on our website](#) before submitting your manuscript.

Keep in mind that *Nature Metabolism* (like other Nature-branded journals) follows the guidance of the [EQUATOR](#) network when it comes to the reporting of study design, objectives and outcomes for all study types. When considering manuscripts that include clinical trials, we adhere to the [recommendations from the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors](#), which means we can consider only trials that have been prospectively registered in a public trials registry. To ensure an appropriate assessment of your work at first submission, it is important that you submit the approved study protocol and statistical analysis plan from your study when relevant, and especially when the work involves a randomized clinical trial. You are always welcome to contact the editors at any time should you have questions about any of these guidelines.

We look forward to seeing the content of *Nature Metabolism* evolve over the coming years, with the objective of bridging the gap between basic scientists and clinical researchers by highlighting work carried out in cells, model organisms, animals and humans in each issue, all sharing the common theme of metabolism. We hope that the visibility we can offer will serve as a solid starting point for future developments in improving patient health outcomes.

Published online: 22 September 2023