**Abstract: Types and Format**

* Based on the targeted audience, an abstract can be technical, lay or graphical.
* A technical abstract is written for researchers (same or closely related field) using technical jargons1.
* A lay abstract is written in simple and plain English for non-scientists (lay people, patient community, decision makers)2. It should answer the following six questions: why? How? What? When? Where? Who?
* A graphical abstract is a single schematic image that visually represents the primary findings of an article. It allows readers to easily identify the article's main message3.
* Based on the structure, a technical abstract can be structured or semi-structured or unstructured4,5.
* A structured abstract is an abstract with distinct, labeled sections (e.g., **I**ntroduction, **M**ethods, **R**esults, **D**iscussion) for rapid comprehension for the readers.
* A semi-structured abstract is written in only one paragraph in which each sentence corresponds to a section in the **IMRaD** structure.
* An unstructured abstract is the traditional or structured abstract with the same information, but it is written as a continuous paragraph without a clear label of the **IMRaD** structure.
* Based on the content, there are four types of abstracts: informative, descriptive, critical, and highlight abstracts.
* **Informative abstracts:** are approximately 250-300 words long, and contain a summary of the main concepts or results of the research, the methodology, conclusion, and future direction6.
* **Descriptive abstracts:** are typically about 100-150 words long and contain only a detailed description of the methodology not the results, conclusion or recommendation7,8.
* **Critical abstracts**: are 450 words long and contain a detailed analysis of the validity or reliability of a published study7,8.
* **Highlight abstracts**: are to emphasize what is unique about the research, such as important conclusions or results, usually written in bullet points9.

Note: regardless the type of abstract, read carefully the guidelines (general10 or specific to your targeted journal).

**References**

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# Useful link: How to Prepare a Lay Abstract. Available at <https://cdf.ca/en/how-to-prepare-a-lay-abstract/> July 1, 2023