Statement on the Reporting of Race and Ethnicity in Medical and Science Journals

(August 30, 2021)
The American Medical Association has updated its guidelines on the reporting of race and ethnicity in medical and science journals. The AANA Journal follows AMA Style so submitting authors should be intimately familiar with these guidelines and follow their provisos closely.

This guidance will be freely available in the pages of JAMA¹, on the JAMA website, and in the AMA Manual of Style.²

“This guidance continues to acknowledge that race and ethnicity are social constructs as well as the important sensitivities and controversies related to use of these terms and associated nomenclature in medical and health research, education, and practice. Thus, for content published in medical journals, language and terminology must be accurate, clear, and precise, and must reflect fairness, equity, and consistency in use and reporting of race and ethnicity. The guidance also acknowledges that the reporting of race and ethnicity should not be considered in isolation and should be accompanied by reporting of other sociodemographic factors and social determinants, including concerns about racism, disparities, and inequities, and the intersectionality of race and ethnicity with these other factors.”

Guidance for Reporting Race and Ethnicity in Research Articles
The JAMA Network journals include the following guidance for reporting race and ethnicity and other demographic information in research articles in the AMA Manual of Style Instructions for Authors.³

Demographic Information
Aggregate, deidentified demographic information (eg, age, sex, race and ethnicity, and socioeconomic indicators) should be reported for research reports along with all prespecified outcomes. Demographic variables collected for a specific study should be indicated in the Methods section. Demographic information assessed should be reported in the Results section, either in the main article or in an online supplement or both. If any demographic characteristics that were collected are not reported, the reason should be stated. Summary demographic information (eg, baseline characteristics of study participants) should be reported in the first line of the Results section of the Abstract.

With regard to the collection and reporting of demographic data on race and ethnicity:
• The Methods section should include an explanation of who identified participant race and ethnicity and the source of the classifications used (eg, self-report or selection, investigator observed, database, electronic health record, survey instrument).
• If race and ethnicity categories were collected for a study, the reasons that these were assessed also should be described in the Methods section. If collection of data on race and ethnicity was required by the funding agency, that should be noted.
• Specific racial and ethnic categories are preferred over collective terms, when possible. Authors should report the specific categories used in their studies and recognize that these categories will differ based on the databases or surveys used, the requirements of funders, and the geographic location of data collection or study participants. Categories included in groups labeled as “other” should be defined.
• Categories should be listed in alphabetical order in text and tables.
• Race and ethnicity categories of the study population should be reported in the Results section.

Examples:
“Reporting race and ethnicity in this study was mandated by the US National Institutes of Health (NIH), consistent with the Inclusion of Women, Minorities, and Children policy. Individuals participating in the poststudy survey were categorized as American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Hispanic or Latino, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, or White based on the NIH Policy on Reporting Race and Ethnicity Data. Children’s race and ethnicity were based on the parents’ report.”

“Race was self-reported by study participants, and race categories (Black and White) were defined by investigators based on the US Office of Management and Budget’s Revisions to the Standards for the Classification of Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity. Given that racial residential segregation is distinctively experienced by Black individuals in the US, the analytical sample was restricted to participants who self-identified as Black.”

See:
3. JAMA Instructions for authors: reporting demographic information for study participants. JAMA Network. https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/pages/instructions-for-authors#SecReportingRace/Ethnicity