



How to write a case report

**Presented at
ABCA Convention 2019**

General headings in a case report

- Title
- Abstract (written last)
- Introduction
- Case report/Methods
- Intervention and Outcome
- Discussion
- Conclusion
- Acknowledgements (if applicable)
- References
- Tables

Introduction

A short summary (2-4 paragraphs) outlining reason for your case report.

These points below should be covered in your introduction

- What is the condition? How is it diagnosed?
- How many people have it? (Prevalence, incidents)
- Who are the high-risk groups or those commonly affected? (Gender, age)
- What are the common treatments?
- What are alternative treatments?
- Are there any documented costs to society of your reported condition?
- How is chiropractic and this condition related?
- Has chiropractic been shown to help?

Case Report section

This section details the patient's history, their chief complaint, your examination findings pertinent to the case. (No details of either the patients name nor the practitioner should be published)

These points should be covered in your case report section:

- How did the patient present?
- What were your exam findings?
- What was your clinical impression?

Intervention

What was your intervention used to treat this case? (ABC technique) Document clearly the procedure performed and that it is readily identifiable.

These points should be covered in your intervention section

- What did you do?
- Explanation of intervention?
- What was your frequency of care?

Outcome

This section describes the measurable changes observed in your patient. (Changes in health status, pain, symptoms, unexpected results, etc.)

(This is where your outcome measure should be relatively easy to re-asses)

Both expected and “unexpected outcomes” should be recorded in this section.

Unexpected changes can be documented although they were not of original concern. We all know other areas of change in the patients overall health that we observe/record with ABC.

This point should be covered in your outcome section

- Positive or negative results in this case

Discussion

This section covers interpretations of your findings, the reasons for your results, other case study comparisons, the rationale behind your recommended management plan, the limitations and flaws in your study and variables that may have affected your results/outcomes.

It is important to discuss the limitations/flaws in your study if applicable (try to not write from a biased perspective). Also highlight on the variables that may have aided or limited your results.

You can hypothesise regarding other literature and your experience with the case (encourage further study on your aspects of your case)

These points should be covered in your discussion section:

- How does your case confirm/refute previous studies on this topic?
- Why did you do what you did?
- Possible reasons for your recorded results
- What are the limitations?

Conclusion

This section provides what was learned throughout the case, describes why the case is significant and suggests future area's of study. (Important to not make unsubstantial claims)

Points to be covered in the conclusion:

- What was learned from this study?
- What is the next step in studying this topic?

Abstract

The abstract summarises the main points of the case study. Includes the purpose, basic procedures, findings and conclusions. (This section is written after the case study has been completed and written)

Objective: Why is the case study being presented?

Clinical features: This should be a brief overview of the patient's presentation & diagnosis.

Outcomes measures: What instruments were used to measure change?

Intervention: What was done?

Outcome: What happened as a result?

Conclusions: This is a brief statement of what you feel the significance of the case is and future studies.

Should be no more than 250 words and be precise in nature. The aim is to attract the reader to explore your case report further.

References

Lists relevant references that were used to support the case report and any statements made within.

Should be numbered in the order that they appear. Need to be listed immediately following phrases from another author or article. Factual statements must be referenced.

The Hierarchy of references

- Research Articles (past research)
- Textbooks (diagnosis, exams)
- Websites (CDC, NIH, Epi data)
- Newspaper, magazines, etc.
- Emails, Telephone Interview, etc.

Top FIVE databases

- MANTIS: Citations and abstracts, 1985-present
- Alternal Health Watch: Journals and newsletters on alternative care
- Cochrance Library: Reviews of Healthcare Interventions
- Index to Chiropractic Literature: Citations and abstracts, 1985-present
- PubMed: Citations and abstracts, ca. 1950-present

Google Scholar – Free

Outcome measures

Starting off with relatively simple outcome measures and then attempting more complex ones would be advisable (limitations become more prominent in complex measurements)

- NDI
- ROM
- Pain scale
- Angels recorded on posture photos
- SF – 36
- Index of activities of daily living

The don'ts of a case report for publishing

Write from a promotional perspective about your technique. Submit without being proofread. Use personal information about the patient or doctors' details. Use generalizations ("proved effectiveness of ABC").