

Author guidelines

The official journal of the American Nurses Association, *American Nurse Today* is dedicated to truly integrating the art and science of nursing. If you're considering writing for us, use these guidelines to help choose an appropriate topic, find out how to submit your manuscript, and increase the chance that we'll accept it for publication. If we publish your article, you'll receive several copies of the issue in which it's published.

About the journal

American Nurse Today is a peer-reviewed journal providing a voice for today's nurses in all specialties and practice settings. Packed with practical information, it keeps nurses up-to-date on best practices, helps them maximize patient outcomes, and enhances their careers. By transforming authoritative research and clinical data into clearly written prose, the journal provides evidence-based information that readers can use daily in their practice. It also serves as a forum for discussion of professional development and career management issues.

As part of our commitment to enhancing readers' professional and personal growth and fulfillment, we also publish articles that guide nurses toward living healthier lifestyles, managing stress effectively, and bringing mind, body, and spirit into closer alignment.

The journal is sent to 175,000 nurses from a wide variety of settings and specialty areas, including staff nurses, advanced practice nurses, managers, educators, researchers, and administrators. This wide circulation requires a broad range of editorial material.

American Nurse Today is indexed in the Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature (CINAHL) Database.

Editorial profile

Each issue of *American Nurse Today* offers compelling feature articles on clinical and professional topics, plus continuing education (CE) articles and regular departments. These departments include:

- Strictly Clinical
- Practice Matters
- Career Sphere
- Mind/Body/Spirit

Topics to write about

We're especially interested in timely topics relevant to hands-on nursing care in all settings—hospital, home, or community—as well as current professional issues. In particular, we're seeking articles that:

- present cutting edge nursing research that can be translated into practical application

- discuss health information that has been in the news recently, such as new treatments, procedures, or diagnostic techniques
- provide step-by-step descriptions of new or difficult clinical procedures
- discuss new drugs or new drug regimens
- explore the legal and ethical issues that nurses face
- address important professional and career issues
- share strategies to improve patient safety and the quality of nursing care through best practices
- explore controversies in nursing and healthcare
- provide personal accounts of patient-care experiences
- help nurses influence decision-making in their practice environments and organizations
- discuss future healthcare trends and technologies
- offer advice on enhancing mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being, such as meditation and relaxation techniques, mastering your fears, and reaching your full potential in every aspect of life.

Before you submit an article

Please send a brief email query to caver@verizon.net. In the email, describe the topic of your proposed article. Attach your resume or curriculum vita (preferably in MS Word format); if this isn't possible, briefly summarize your background and explain why you're qualified to write on this topic. We'll let you know if we're interested in the article you've proposed and can advise you on how to focus it.

Tips on writing for *American Nurse Today*

Our journal is written in simple, concise, nonacademic language. The tone is informal, and articles are short to medium in length. When writing the manuscript, follow these guidelines:

- Make sure the information in your article is based on the latest nursing standards and clinical practice guidelines.
- Be clear and concise. Use short sentences whenever possible.
- Provide practical points. Preferably, give examples from your own experience.
- Address readers directly, as if you're speaking to them. Here are some examples:
 - “As a med-surg nurse, you're probably familiar with”
 - “After turning on the power, connect the tube....”
- Use active—not passive—verbs. Active verbs engage the reader and make the writing simpler, clearer, and more interesting.
 - Sentence with active verb: *Monitor heart rhythm closely.*
 - Sentence expressing the same thought with a passive verb: *Heart rhythm should be monitored closely.*
- Clearly explain theoretical or complex terms in everyday language. Avoid medical and nursing jargon.
- Don't use acronyms or abbreviations, except those you're sure every reader is familiar with (such as “I.V.”). Instead, spell out the full term.
- As appropriate, use trailing zeroes for diagnostic test results, as in “urine pH 5.0”. However, Do NOT use trailing zeroes for drug dosages; for example, use “15 mg”, NOT “15.0 mg”.
- When mentioning a specific drug, give the drug's generic name first, followed by the brand name in parentheses (if relevant).
- Consider using boxed copy (a sidebar) for points you'd like to emphasize, clarify, or elaborate on. Also consider putting appropriate information in tables (in MS Word format).
- List all references at the end of your manuscript. References must be from professionally reliable sources and should be no more than 5 years old.

For reference style, use the *American Medical Association Manual of Style: A Guide for Authors and Editors* (10th ed). If you don't have access to this book, include **at least** the following information for each reference you cite:

For a book: author(s), book title, edition (if appropriate), place of publication, publisher, and publication date

For a print journal article: author(s); article title; journal name; year, volume; inclusive page numbers

For online references: be sure to include the URL (web address) and the date you accessed the website.

Please limit the number of references to no more than five (10 for a CE article). You may provide an additional 5 references (10 for a CE article) to place with the online version of the article.

About tables, photos, and illustrations

- We encourage you to submit tables, photographs, and illustrations for your article (although we can't guarantee we'll publish them). Please submit them in a *separate* electronic file, if possible, or send them by regular mail (See "How to submit your article" section for mailing address). Identify the source of each table, photo, or illustration and include a brief caption or label (e.g., "Illustration #1: Preventing complications from diabetes. From American Diabetic Association, 2006"). In the body of your article, indicate where the photo or illustration should be placed (e.g., "Insert Illustration #1 here.") If you believe specific items in the photo or illustration should be identified, tell us this in a note. (Be aware that any person whose image is shown in a photograph must sign a consent form that gives us permission to publish it.)
- Do not embed tables, figures, or images in the same file as the body of your article. Also, do not submit any text in a box or otherwise put rules around it, above, or below it. Instead, label this copy as a sidebar and submit it in a separate word file.
- You may submit clip art as a guide to indicate an illustration you'd like us to run with your article. However, be sure to identify it as clip art.

Important cautions

The article must be your own original work. Do not submit material taken verbatim from a published source. Although you may **paraphrase** material from another source (that is, restate it using different words), please indicate that you have done so in a note placed next to the copy in question.

Article length

Use the following as a rough guide:

- CE article: about 3,100 words
- Regular feature article: about 1,400 to 2,000 words
- Short feature article or department article: 700 to 1,000 words
- Other features: Discuss with us.

How to submit your article

Whenever possible, submit your manuscript electronically as an MS Word file. (Please submit documents in .doc format. Not MS Word 2007 .docx format.)

- Use double line spacing (see MS Word's "Format" function).

- DO NOT include extra hard returns between lines or paragraphs, extra spaces between words, or HTML codes (or any other codes).
- Send a separate cover letter that includes your name, address, home and work telephone numbers, cell phone number, email address, and fax number (as appropriate). At the top of the article (top of the first document page), place the article title, your initials (not your name), date, and the word-processing software and version you used.
- Keep both an electronic copy and a hard copy for your files.
- Email the article and any attachments to: jkenny@healthcommedia.com.
- If you can't send the article electronically, send three hard-copy printouts (double-spaced on 8½" x 11" paper, with margins of at least 1½" on all sides) by regular mail to Jennifer Kenny, HealthCom Media, Lantern Hill Business Park, 259 Veterans Lane, 3rd Floor, Doylestown, PA 18901. On a separate enclosed sheet, list your name, address, and contact information, including your email address. (*Note: If we reject your manuscript, we'll return the hard copy to you—provided you've enclosed a self-addressed, stamped envelope.*)

What happens to your manuscript after submittal?

- We'll send you an email confirming that we received it.
- If we're interested in publishing your manuscript, we'll send it out for blind clinical peer reviews. We'll let you know after this review whether the manuscript has been accepted.
- If we accept your manuscript for publication, we'll ask you to sign an agreement that gives HealthCom Media (publisher of *American Nurse Today*) the rights to your article.
- Your article will go through our standard in-house editorial process to ensure consistency with our editorial style. Before it's published, you'll have a chance to review the edited version.
- If we reject your manuscript, we'll email you a rejection message.

Thank you for considering publishing in *American Nurse Today*, the official publication of the American Nurses Association. If you have any questions, please email: Cindy Saver, RN, MS at csaver@verizon.net.

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