



AMERICAN ACADEMY OF
HIV MEDICINE

STYLE GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

The American Academy of HIV Medicine (the Academy) has developed this guidance for members, staff and other stakeholders who contribute content to either *HIV Specialist* or other channels of communication that the organization publishes. This information is intended to provide support for our generous contributors. It includes useful information on medical terminology, culturally sensitive language and grammar.

As the information contained within this document is dynamic, the Academy will be updating it regularly to reflect the most current best practice. Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact communications@aahivm.org.

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PART 1: MEDICAL AND SCIENTIFIC INFORMATION

The Academy uses the following guidance when communicating scientific and medical information:

Brand Names: We do not use brand names unless it is essential to the discussion, preferring instead to use nonproprietary names.

Co-formulated Antiretroviral (ARV) Listings: When referring to co-formulated ARV regimens, we use a slash to separate drug names. When multiple formulations are indicated, we do not use “plus” or “+”, but instead use “and.” When not indicated otherwise, we list drugs in alphabetical order. Pharmacokinetic enhancers or boosting agents should be listed after the drug it is boosting.

PART 2: CULTURAL SENSITIVITY

Behavior versus Identity: We believe it is important to differentiate between a person’s identity (gender, race, sexual orientation) and behaviors that are risk factors for HIV or other conditions. For example, being a man who identifies as gay is not a risk factor. The behavior that person may engage in, such as unprotected anal sex, may be considered a risk factor for some conditions.

Non-stigmatizing language: The Academy is committed to reducing stigma among people with HIV. One way we achieve this is by using non-stigmatizing language. We have found the following resources to be helpful:

- <https://www.thewellproject.org/hiv-information/why-language-matters-facing-hiv-stigma-our-own-words>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/stophivtogether/library/stop-hiv-stigma/fact-sheets/cdc-lsht-stigma-factsheet-language-guide.pdf>

Some things we like to keep in mind :

- We are specific when referring to communities of people, for example using LGBTQ when referring to the broad community of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer people. If we are referring to men who identify as gay or bisexual, transgender people, etc., we use the appropriate, specific language.
- We do not use “transgender” as a noun, only as an adjective if relevant to story. We do not use the word transgendered.
- We do not use PLWHIV or “people living with HIV”; instead we use “people with HIV.” When an acronym is absolutely needed, we may abbreviate with PWH after initial usage.

People first language: We do not define people by a health issue or an activity. We use people first language in order to emphasize the humanity of the individual with HIV. It reinforces that HIV does not define who the patient is, it is merely one aspect of their life. Therefore, we do not use HIV status as the primary descriptor.

Preferred terminology: In 2020, the Academy joined a coalition of other HIV organizations by signing on to a letter committing ourselves to using non-stigmatizing language. The full list can be found at: <https://www.hiveonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Anti-StigmaSign-Onletter-1.pdf>

Race and ethnicity:

- We only refer to an individual's race or ethnicity if it is relevant to the point being made.
- In the instances where race or ethnicity are used, we capitalize racial and ethnic descriptions. For example, we capitalize the "B" in Black, the "W" in White and "L" in Latino, Latina or Latinx.
- We avoid dehumanizing language when referring to racial and ethnic groups. For example, we do not use terms like "Black" and "White" as nouns (e.g. Blacks made up 75% of respondents). Instead, use them as adjectives (e.g. Black people made up 75% of respondents).
- Latino, Latina or Latinx are used, as appropriate, for an individual's ethnicity. We also use Hispanic when appropriate, such as when describing CDC data collected using "Hispanic" as a designation.

PART 3: GRAMMAR

The Academy uses Associated Press (AP) Style, which dictates basic rules for, among other things, grammar and punctuation, numbers, spelling, capitalization, abbreviations and acronyms. Should you have questions, we encourage you to use the Associate Press Stylebook, 56th Edition as a reference. Some common AP guidelines are listed below:

Active/Passive Sentences: As much as possible, sentences should be structured so that the subject performs the verb's action. (e.g. "The elephant flies.")

Acronyms: Try not to use multiple acronyms in one sentence. Don't assume that all readers will understand an acronym – instead, spell it out in the first usage and place the acronym in parentheses after it. The acronym can then be used in subsequent copy.

Capitalization: Words should be lowercase unless a specific rule says to capitalize them, such as proper nouns (e.g. state names in the United States). Job titles should never be capitalized unless they appear before a name (e.g. President Lincoln).

Complex Sentences: Whenever possible, keep sentences simple so that they are easily understood and reader-friendly. Think about using bullets, formatting and headings to make writing scannable and easy to comprehend.

Date and Time: Spell out months when not part of a date: "Inauguration is in January." When part of a date, abbreviate these months: Jan., Feb., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov., Dec. (e.g. "Orientation begins Sept. 9"). Spell out: March, April, May, June, July.

Spell out days of the week.

Lowercase a.m. and p.m. and use periods: "The meeting will begin at 7:30 p.m."

Location: Use "United States" as a noun; "U.S." as an adjective; and "US" in a headline. (e.g. "The United States is a country." "I travel with my U.S. passport").

Numbers: Spell out numbers one through nine and use numerals for numbers 10 and higher. If appearing at the beginning of a sentence, numbers should always be spelled out. Ages, currency, dates and percentages are always written numerals.

PART 4: REFERENCES AND CITATIONS

For the *HIV Specialist* and all Academy publications, please cite references within the body of the paper with a superscript number at the article or end of the sentence after the period. Here is an example:

Gender-affirming medical and/or surgical therapy should be offered to transgender individuals, following the World Professional Association for Transgender Health (WPATH) standards of care.¹

Please include reference at the end of the article or paper in a list format, as well as on a separate page to be submitted with your article.

Formatting References

The Academy uses the [American Medical Association's \(AMA\) Style](#) for references. We have provided some frequently-used examples of the format below:

For a Print Book

Format: Author AA. Title of Work. Edition Number. Publisher; Year.

Example: Goldberg L, Elliot DL. Exercise for Prevention and Treatment of Illness. FA Davis Co; 1994.

For a Book's Chapter

Format: Chapter Author AA. Title of chapter. In: Editor AA, ed. Title of Work. Publisher; Year:Page-Page.

Example: Gamble VN. On becoming a physician: a dream not deferred. In: White EC, ed. The Black Women's Health Book: Speaking for Ourselves. Seal Press; 1990:52-64.

For an eBook:

Format: Author AA. Title of Work. Publisher; Year. Accessed date. URL

Example: Bowden F. Gone Viral: The Germs that Share Our Lives. NewSouth; 2011. Accessed May 23, 2017. <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/stkate-ebooks/reader.action?docID=731512&ppg=1>

For a Chapter in an eBook

Example: Dwyer J. Nutrient requirements and dietary assessment. In: Kasper DL, Fauci AS, Hauser SL, Longo DL, Jameson JL Loscalzo, eds. Harrison's Principles of Internal Medicine. 19th ed. McGrawHill; 2015. Accessed August 23, 2017. <http://accessmedicine.mhmedical.com/bookid=1130>

For a Website with the Writer

Format: Author AA. Webpage title. Name of Website. Date published. Date updated. date. Accessed date. URL

Example: Carlson SJ. Step up your activity to help lower the risk of diabetes. Mayo Clinic. Published June 4, 2015. Accessed August 20, 2017. <http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/diabetes/expert-blog/lower-diabetes-riskwithactivity/bgp-20142203>

For a Website without a Writer

Format: Webpage title. Name of Website. Date published. Date updated. Accessed date. URL

Example: Protect against the respiratory syncytial virus. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Updated October 16, 2017. Accessed October 28, 2017. <https://www.cdc.gov/features/rsv/index.html>

For an Organization

Format: Name of Website or Organization. Webpage title. Date published. Date updated. Accessed date. URL

Example: College of Registered Nurses of British Columbia. What nurses do. Published in 2012. Accessed September 23, 2012. <https://www.crnbc.ca/WhatNursesDo/Pages/Default.aspx>

For a Government Report

Format: Author AA. Title of Report. Name of Govt Agency. Date: Page-Page.

Example: World Health Organization. World Health Report 2013: Research for Universal Health Coverage. World Health Organization; 2013.

For Two to Six Writers

Format: (List all authors up to six – separated by commas only) Author AA, Author BB. Title of Work. Location: Publisher; Year: Page - Page.

Example: Tamburini S, Shen N, Chih Wu H, Clemente JC. The microbiome in early life: implications for health outcomes. *Nat Med*. Published online July 7, 2016. doi:10.1038/nm4142

For Seven and More Writers

Format: (List first three authors only followed by et al. – separated by commas only) Author AA, Author BB, Author CC, et al. Title of Work. Location: Publisher; Year: Page - Page.

Example: Sunderam S, Kissin DM, Crawford SB, et al. Assisted reproductive technology surveillance—United States, 2012. *MMWR Surveill Summ*. 2015;64(suppl 6):1-29.

For a Book with an Editor

Format: Editor AA, ed. Title of Work. Publisher; Year.

Example: Gusek JJ, Figueroa LA, eds. *Mitigation of Metal Mining Influenced Water*. Society for Mining, Metallurgy, and Exploration; 2009.

For a Book with Both Writer and Editor

Format: Author AA. Title of Work. Editor AA, Editor BB, eds. Publisher; Year.

Example: Goodman LS, Brunton LL, Chabner B, Knollmann BC. Goodman & Gilman's *The Pharmacological Basis of Therapeutics*. Brunton LL, ed. McGraw-Hill; 2011.

For a Group as an Author

Format: Group (Acronym if applicable). Title of Work. Publisher; Year.

Example: WorldatWork. *The WorldatWork Handbook of Compensation, Benefits & Total Rewards: A Comprehensive Guide for HR Professionals*. John Wiley & Sons; 2007.

For Multiple Editions

Format: Author AA. Title of Work. Nth Ed. Publisher; Year.

Example: Nieswiadomy RM. Foundation of Nursing Research. 6th ed. Pearson; 2012.

For Encyclopedia and Dictionary

Format: Entry Author AA. Title of entry. In: Editor AA, ed. Title of Work. Publisher; Year:Page-Page.

Example: Pesut DJ. Change Agents and Change Agent Strategies. In: Feldman HR, ed. Nursing Leadership: A Concise Encyclopedia. Springer; 2008:103-105.

For Online Dictionary and Encyclopedia

Format: Entry Author AA. Title of entry. In: Editor AA, ed. Title of Work. Name of the website; Date published. Date updated. Accessed date. URL

Example: Patrias K, Wendling DL, eds. Citing Medicine: The NLM Style Guide for Authors, Editors, and Publishers. 2nd ed. National Library of Medicine; 2007. Updated October 2, 2015. Accessed August 11, 2016. <https://www.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK7526>

For Article in an Electronic Journal

Format: Author AA. Title of the article. Abbreviated Journal Title. Year; Volume(Issue):Page-Page. Accessed date. URL

Example: Meeker D, Linder JA, Fox CR, et al. Effect of behavioral interventions on inappropriate antibiotic prescribing among primary care practices: a randomized clinical trial. Supplement 1. Study protocol and changes to analysis plan. JAMA. 2016;315(6):562-570. Accessed June 18, 2019. <https://www.jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/2488307>

For an Electronic Journal Article with DOI

Format: Author AA, Author BB. Title of the article. Abbreviated Journal Title. Year; Volume(Issue):Page-Page. DOI:xx.xxxx/xxxxxxxxxxxxxx.

Example: Watts T. Initiating end-of-life care pathways: A discussion paper. J Adv Nursing. 2012;68(10):2359-2370. DOI: 10.1111/j.1365-2648.2011.05924.x.

For Magazine or Newspaper Article

Format: Author AA. Title of the article. Title of Magazine or Newspaper. Month Day, Year:Page - Page.

Example: Schencker L. Peanut allergy relief? Chicago Tribune. September 22, 2019:C1.

Online Magazine or Newspaper Article

Format: Author AA. Title of Article. Title of Magazine or Newspaper. Month Day, Year:Page - Page. Accessed date. URL

Example: Tevlin J. Minneapolis street doctor dispenses care with a dose of dignity. Minneapolis Star Tribune. January 23, 2016. Accessed January 28, 2016. <http://www.startribune.com/minneapolis-street-doctor-dispenses-care-with-a-dose-of-dignity/366313741/>

For an Online Report

Format: Author AA. Title of Report. Name of Govt Agency. Date published. Date updated. Accessed date. URL

Example: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Women on the Run: First-Hand Accounts of Refugees Fleeing El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Mexico. UNHCR: UN Refugee Agency; 2015. Accessed August 16, 2016. <http://www.unhcr.org/5630f24c6.pdf>

For Proceedings and Conference Papers

Format: Presenter AA. Title of paper or presentation. Paper or Poster presented at: Conference Title; Month Day, Year; Location. Accessed date. URL

Example: Morales M, Zhou X. Health practices of immigrant women: indigenous knowledge in an urban environment. Paper presented at: 78th Association for Information Science and Technology Annual Meeting; November 6-10, 2015; St Louis, MO. Accessed March 15, 2016. <https://dl.acm.org/doi/10.5555/2857070.2857108>

For Thesis and Dissertation

Format: Author AA. Title of Work. Dissertation or Master's thesis. Institution; Year.

Example: Maiti N. Association Between Bullying Behaviors, Health Characteristics, and Injuries Among Adolescents in the United States. Dissertation. Palo Alto University; 2010.