

Original articles versus case reports: the hierarchy of scientific evidence levels

It has been very encouraging to witness the growth of the **Revista Brasileira de Cirurgia Plástica (Brazilian Journal of Plastic Surgery)** and the increasing number of articles submitted by Brazilian Society of Plastic Surgery (BSPS) members and other plastic surgeons.

However, we have predominantly received case reports, resulting in accumulation and a waiting period of as long as two years to publish this kind of scientific paper.

The amount of effort we put in to any scientific work is almost similar, regardless of the type of the study. Would it not be more appropriate to invest our time in studies of greater scientific impact?

With regard to the hierarchy of scientific data, case reports have lower levels of scientific impact. This does not mean that they are not important, but we have to consider that its relevance is restricted to reports of data of extreme rarity and reports of an individual medical or surgical experience that can assist in decision making of similar rare cases.

Thus, for both sides, the author and the journal, the publication of original articles, including case series and systematic reviews, is much more important than case reports.

Therefore, we must reflect on this change of focus that the publication of original articles will have greater scientific impact not only for the journal, but mainly for the author.

At a time when evidence-based medicine enters the territory of plastic surgery, it is important that we, as editors, guide and encourage authors to develop studies with high levels of evidence.

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