

How to Develop an Abstract for a Case Report

Section	Info to Include
Title	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly identifies the disease/condition
Background (Introduction)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides context for the case <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background on the disease/condition • Common presenting symptoms
Case Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patient information • Presenting symptoms • Patient’s medical history/relevant family history • Test results • Diagnosis • Follow-up
Results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presents findings without interpretation • What did you learn/discover?
Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clinical relevance • Key points

Tricks of the Trade

1. Include the same information as that required for a full manuscript, but present it as a summary—in a condensed form. Focus on the most important points and do not include nice-to-know/interesting information and discussion. Limit your abstract to 250-300 words.

2. A good strategy is to write the outline headings—Introduction, Case Report, Discussion—on a piece of paper and then fill in the sections with bullet statements that provide the information called for in the table above.
 - a. Rank the bullet statements under each heading in order of importance.
 - b. Eliminate all but the top three bullet statements.
 - c. Develop the bullet statements into complete sentences.
 - d. Check your word count and edit/delete sentences as necessary.

3. Use short sentences with action verbs.

4. Do not include tables, figures, or references in abstracts.