



The NEW ENGLAND JOURNAL of MEDICINE

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT TO MEET READER NEEDS

Two key factors have influenced the *Journal's* evolution in the 21st century. The first is that physicians are constricted by incredible time pressures. The second is that medical science is becoming more technically sophisticated.

Under the direction of Dr. Drazen, who became editor-in-chief in July 2000, the *New England Journal of Medicine* has demonstrated a steadfast commitment to meeting the changing needs of its readers. The *Journal's* primary focus is to present the best research at the interface of biomedical science and clinical practice in an understandable and clinically useful format.

For a time-starved physician who wants to stay on top of best practices, the *Journal* makes great efforts to attract, review, and clearly present the highest quality information. Each issue of the *Journal* contains something of interest to everyone, from practitioners to researchers. Among the research reports in each issue, at least one — and usually more — has clinical implications. The *Journal* also publishes review articles summarizing current knowledge about a specific disease or treatment; editorials and essays interpreting and commenting on published research or issues in medicine; case reports providing interesting clinical problems to allow physicians to hone their clinical skills; and other features exploring health policy, legal issues, and special topics.

In recent years, the *Journal* has listened to its readers and delivered a series of improvements designed not only to improve content but also to make it easier to find and read. The *Journal* has:

- Introduced audio summaries. This weekly Podcast provides a 10 to 20 minute overview of the most important conclusions from each article in the current week's issue.
- Developed two new series of Review Articles, one entitled "Clinical Practice," which analyzes the evidence and clinical decision-making around a particular clinical problem, and more recently, "Clinical Therapeutics," which focuses on a specific therapy for a given clinical problem.
- Created the weekly "Perspective" section, with essays that explore the significance of recent research findings and current topics in medicine.
- Added audio interviews to accompany certain Perspective articles, which expand on the author's thoughts, providing a more detailed understanding of the topic.
- Expanded the Web-based services available through www.nejm.org, including making the table of contents, abstracts, and full text accessible by PDA; adding the ability to download color figures for use in PowerPoint; and providing RSS feeds.

- Launched “Videos in Clinical Medicine,” a series of educational videos designed to teach procedures requiring skilled techniques and specialized physical examination to students, trainees, and younger physicians.
- Improved upon the medical illustrations in the *Journal* in response to readers who say they help communicate complex topics in an understandable format.
- Added occasional animations and slideshows to elucidate topics requiring multiple media (sound and motion).
- Continued to hone a weekly Continuing Medical Education program, which allows readers to earn continuing-education credits while encouraging them to read articles more closely and derive more benefit from each week’s contents.

In January 2003, the *Journal* introduced a new print design featuring an improved cover, more distinctive headings to aid navigation, and color shading in tables so that reading data across multiple columns is easier. Figures and illustrations were made clearer and more distinctive. The Methods section was restored to full-size type. Small improvements to this new design continue.

As it evolves to meet the changing needs of its readers in the 21st century, the *Journal* has hewn to the principles that have made it the most widely read, cited, and influential general medical periodical in the world.

The *Journal* is a career companion for physicians. It keeps practicing physicians up to date on developments that are important to their patients and keeps them connected to the values of being a good physician. And it helps to define and reinforce best practices for physicians in training.

The *Journal*’s traditions of editorial independence, content uninterrupted by commercial advertising, and academic rigor remain unaltered as it continues its work of publishing the highest quality research and reliable, authoritative review articles.