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Replying to Reviewers' Comments

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WHY IS IT CRITICAL TO WRITE A CORRECT POINT-BY-POINT REPLY?

- ✓ Addressing editor and reviewer's queries helps clarify doubts and misunderstandings and authenticate the manuscript data
- ✓ Both editors and reviewers appreciate transparency and professionalism in authors' responses
- ✓ Constructive revisions demonstrate respect for the reviewers' role and the peer-review process
- ✓ A well-structured response guides the reviewers during the second round of revision and enables a focused reassessment of the specific aspects of the manuscript that were asked to be revised
- ✓ A well-structured response increases the chances of acceptance

How to Write a Point-by-Point Reply

1. THANKING THE REVIEWERS AND EDITOR

- ✓ Begin the response with a formal introductory paragraph addressed to the Editor and signed by the corresponding author
- ✓ Thank the reviewers and editor for their time and valuable feedback
- ✓ Express gratitude for their constructive suggestions that will improve quality and readability of the manuscript
- ✓ State that each comment is addressed in detail below



How to Write a Point-by-Point Reply

2. LISTING REVIEWERS' AND EDITORS' COMMENTS

- ✓ At first catalogue the reviewers (e.g. Reviewer 1, Editor) and reiterate each reviewer's comment, using a distinct font (bold or italics)
- ✓ Refer to specific sections, paragraphs or page numbers where changes have been made

Reviewers' Comments	Author's Response	Position where changes occurred (Page, Line)
Reviewer 1		
[...]		Page X, Line Y
[...]		Page X, Line Y
Reviewer 2		
[...]		Page X, Line Y
[...]		Page X, Line Y
Reviewer 3		
[...]		Page X, Line Y
[...]		Page X, Line Y

Editors' Comments	Author's Response	Position where changes occurred (Page, Line)
Editor-in-Chief		
[...]		Page X, Line Y
[...]		Page X, Line Y
Editor 1		
[...]		Page X, Line Y
[...]		Page X, Line Y
Editor 2		
[...]		Page X, Line Y
[...]		Page X, Line Y

3. POINT-BY-POINT RESPONSES TO REVIEWER COMMENTS

- ✓ Follow the comment with a clear and detailed response
- ✓ Address every single point raised, providing a rationale
- ✓ Explain exactly the changes made in response
- ✓ Do not ignore comments: if a suggestion is not fulfilled, provide a well-reasoned explanation
- ✓ Remain professional, always using a cordial and respectful language, even if you do not fully align with a comment, for example
 - when you need to **negotiate** (requests outside the scope of the study, infeasible experiments, insufficient sample size,...)
 - when you have to **politely decline**, using formulations such as:
“We agree in principle; however..., therefore we have ... instead.”

4. HIGHLIGHTING CHANGES IN THE REVISED MANUSCRIPT

- ✓ Concisely report the main improvements in the revised manuscript, highlighting all the changes shared
- ✓ Mention additional citations when included

5. CONCLUSION AND FINAL STATEMENT

- ✓ End with a brief summary
- ✓ Express appreciation for the requested revision

6. QUALITY CONTROL CHECKLIST

- ✓ All reviewer comments are reproduced verbatim, clearly numbered, with no omissions
- ✓ Each response includes: (i) the action taken, (ii) where the change was made, and (iii) the justification
- ✓ Changes are implemented consistently throughout the manuscript (abstract, methods, results, tables, supplementary material)
- ✓ The tone remains courteous throughout
- ✓ Both clean and track-changes versions of the manuscript are provided, when applicable

7. COMMON MISTAKES TO AVOID

✓ **Ignoring reviewer comments**

Failing to respond to a reviewer's concern may lead to rejection or further revisions

✓ **Being defensive or argumentative**

Even if you disagree, be polite and respectful, providing a well-reasoned explanation

✓ **Failing to explain changes clearly**

Explain exactly what was changed and where in the manuscript text

✓ **Making excessively long responses**

Keep responses clear and concise

✓ **Giving inaccurate or false information in response to editorial/reviewer query**

EA TOGETHER
DV FOR BETTER