Video abstracts in dermoscopy: Moving beyond text

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Editorial

Video abstracts are defined as a video presentation corresponding to a specific science research article, which typically communicates the background of a study, methods used, study results and potential implications through the use of images, audio, video clips, and text [1]. Though a traditional abstract serves a similar purpose, video abstract provides an opportunity to communicate the research through more media rich medium which may have a greater impact [1,2]. Since its first appearance in 2007 in Journal of Visualised Experiments (JoVE), neither much of a progress has been seen, nor there has been any systematic research published about its development.

Dermoscopy is an evolving field of dermatology and aids in non-invasive diagnosis of dermatological diseases. Dermoscopy is done with the help of a dermatoscope, contact and/or non-contact. This field is mainly centered around the dermoscopic image analysis and now, with the introduction of video-dermatoscopes, dermoscopic video analysis as well. The text of dermoscopy related scholarly articles is full of descriptive terms which are almost impossible to comprehend without the aid of an image. Sometimes it becomes difficult to understand the perspective of the author with one or two images. In such a scenario, the reader loses interest in the article and goes on to search for an alternative research work. This way the articles lose their impact on the readers.

The dermoscopic features are better perceived and comprehended in an image or video, rather than in text description. In dermoscopy, for procedure based learning, teaching and publication, the most effective way is a video demonstration of various findings and techniques. Video based presentations not only maximize teaching efficiency and efficacy; but also enhances the reader's attention and retention. In addition, it improves the dermatologist-to-patient and dermatologist-to-dermatologist interaction. Video manuscript with or without text is the need of the hour for dermoscopy based research. Video manuscript production involves: video capturing and archiving, storyline preparation, video editing and publication. With the introduction of in-built video capturing dermatoscopes, the first step has become easier. These dermatoscopes can be connected to a computer with video capturing and editing software. In case the authors want to comment on the demonstration, an external microphone can be used while recording the video.

The major limitation at present is that only a handful of publishers provide the option of video manuscripts. The options are lesser in the field of medicine and dermatology. The lack of proper video abstract guidelines further creates confusion. Protecting patient's confidentiality is another area of concern with video abstracts.

As a mechanism for communicating research work in dermoscopy, video abstract seems to have a lot of potential. Since dermoscopy is more of a visual field, more of images and video; and less of text can actually increase the readership of a particular article. It would be useful to conduct a deep analysis of available sample of video abstracts. This will help understand its better usage and application in the field of dermoscopy.

References

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