How to Create and Deliver a Winning Poster

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Purpose of a Poster

To communicate/publicize to others your:

- research/experiment results
- study reports
- project outcomes
- organization features
- business plans

in a way that is:

- clear
- effective
Effective and Clear Visual Communication

- Is able to catch as many viewers’ attention as possible
- Is pleasing to the eye
- Is able to capture viewers’ interest in less than 15 secs
- Is readable, succinct, and well organized
- Is informative
- Is legible from 3-6 feet
- Is a conversation starter
Types of Posters

Horizontal and vertical panels

Multiple vertical panels
Types of Posters
Types of Posters
Three Panel Poster is Most Common

**EFFECT OF HEMODIALYSIS ON HEMOSTATIC PLATELET FUNCTION IN UREMIC PATIENTS**

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**Introduction**

Anemia and platelet dysfunction are major contributors to the hemorrhagic diathesis seen in patients with end-stage renal disease (ESRD). Following hemodialysis, there is frequently a clinical improvement in bleeding. However, such clinical improvement is not typically accompanied by any consistent change using standard clotting assays. Evaluation of platelet function has shown a decrease in platelet-derived growth factors (PDGF) and a functional improvement in GPIb/IIa following hemodialysis. Currently used laboratory tests separate the effects of primary hemostasis (platelet response) from secondary hemostasis (coagulation cascade) and therefore are not sensitive to the effect of platelet procoagulant activity and platelet microparticle formation. We evaluated the effect of hemodialysis on microparticles using a new laboratory instrument, the Crit Signature Analyzer (CSA) (Nexcel Corporation, Danvers, NJ).

**Results**

Screening tests of secondary hemostasis (prothrombin time, partial thromboplastin time, and thrombin times) were not significantly different following dialysis. Post-dialysis values of factor VII and von Willebrand factor were significantly higher than pre-dialysis values (figure 2).

Microparticle formation was evaluated using flow cytometry in two patients. In response to a stimuli, microparticle formation (PS positive) was significantly increased in patients microparticles following hemodialysis (figure 3).

**Discussion**

The bleeding diathesis of ESRD and the effect of hemodialysis on it are incompletely understood. Traditional measures of platelet function show a decrease in platelet GPIb activity following hemodialysis. Current laboratory tests are hindered by the fact that they evaluate primary hemostasis from secondary hemostasis and therefore do not evaluate the role played by platelets in the coagulation cascade through their procoagulant activity and microparticle formation. The CSA instrument shows a strong trend toward shedding of the time to platelet-dependent clot formation for whole blood. This assay is sensitive to detect in platelet procoagulant function and platelet microparticle formation. Improvement in these parameters is, therefore, a possible mechanism by which hemodialysis produces an improvement in the bleeding diathesis of ESRD. Frequency data on platelet microparticle formation from the two patients supports this hypothesis. Studies are ongoing to assess platelet procoagulant function following hemodialysis.

**Conclusions**

- Shear-dependent platelet plug formation is defective in ESRD patients.
- Hemodialysis results its decreased GPIb activity mediated by decreased GPIb mediated platelet aggregation in response to stimuli even in the presence of increased von Willebrand factor levels.
- Platelet-dependent clot formation is defective in ESRD patients despite normal recovering studies of secondary hemostasis (prothrombin time, partial thromboplastin time).
- Platelet-dependent clot formation is improved by hemodialysis, which may be related to improvement in platelet procoagulant activity or platelet microparticle formation.

![Diagram]

- Baseline CSA: platelet plug formation was abnormally prolonged in 5 patients and platelet-dependent clot formation was abnormally prolonged in 7 patients. In 3 patients, a clot did not form after the 50 minute observation period. Following dialysis, the time to platelet-dependent clot formation was shortened in 3 of the 6 patients for whom data could be analyzed (figure 3).
Before starting

- Know the intended audience
- Decide what the main message is
- List text, diagrams, tables, photos, etc. to be included
- Budget the space needs for various elements
- Sketch a layout
Who is the audience?

- People in your specialty
  (may use jargon and other professional shortcuts)
- People in related fields
  (minimize jargon but may assume basic knowledge)
- People in unrelated fields
  (assume no prior knowledge; use the most basic terms)
What is the message?

➤ State the main point(s) and conclusion(s) succinctly
   (a catchy but descriptive title, an effective abstract or introduction)

➤ Focus everything else on those points and conclusions
   (do not try to include everything in a poster)
Should you use text, diagrams, tables or photos?

- Utilize all but be strategic and space-conscious.
- Follow: “A picture is worth ten thousand words”
- Tables are more effective than text, figures are better than tables.
- Use short sentences
- Check spelling and grammar
- Include titles and legends
Three Panel Poster Layout

Banner (Title)

1. Introduction
2. Methods
3. Results
4. More Results
5. Discussion/Conclusion

Numbering the panels to guide readers with the flow
Three Panel Poster Layout

Use of arrows instead of numbers
Three Panel Poster Layout

Use of elements of different sizes, shapes, and proportions.
Poster Templates, Pictures and Graphics

**Balance and White Space**

Your poster should have a good visual balance of figures and text, separated by white space. Balance occurs when images and text are reflected (at least approximately) across a central horizontal, vertical, or diagonal axis of symmetry.

**Horizontal Symmetry**

**Horizontal & Vertical Symmetry**

**Diagonal Symmetry**

**Asymmetry**

(text-heavy on left, image-heavy on right)

**Text Blocks**

Keep text blocks to below 50 words.
Banner (Title box)

- A banner shows the title, author(s), and affiliation. The banners should be 10–12 inches tall and 4 feet wide with 1-inch margins on all sides.

- The title should be concise and depict the project. It should be legible at 20 feet.
Abstract

- Optional on a poster depending on the desire of the author or the requirements of the organization.
- It must accurately summarize the hypothesis or research question, methods and data, conclusions described in the other sections of the poster.
The introduction should address the question:
- Why did you start this project?
- It defines the topic and explains the rationale and importance of your study.

It includes your research question(s) and/or the hypotheses you tested.
Significance and originality of the work should be clear.
Methods, materials, equipment

- Explain what you did. Ideally, this section gives enough information to allow another researcher to replicate the study.

- Provide enough detail to allow another researcher to judge if the study design was adequate (and thus to judge the validity of your study).

- Flow diagrams work well instead of written text. List major materials and equipment used.
Results

- This section presents what you have found in your research or the outcome of your project.
- It may include statistical analyses, tables and/or figures showing your data.
- Arrange your results in a logical order according to the point(s) you want to get across.
- Present only enough data to support your conclusions.
Discussion/Conclusion

- What do your results mean?
- Present supporting evidence from published reports.
- Any contradictory findings should be addressed, and any limitations of your study.
- The conclusion section should directly relate to the research question and hypotheses and supported by the results.
General suggestions

Layout

 Use headings to help readers find key sections.
 Balance the placement of text and graphics.
 Use white space creatively to grab viewers’ attention.
 Follow the normal flow of reading: top to bottom and left to right.
 Use column format to make poster easier to read in a crowd.
General suggestions

Text and Font

- Write simple, easily readable texts.
- Omit extraneous text by using key words and phrases.
- Highlight important words or phrases by switching styles: bold, underline, italic, shadow, etc.
- Do not use all capitals except in headings.
- Do not use too many different font types.
- Use large fonts: 18-point for the smallest text, 24-point for normal text, 28-point for heading, 48-point for title.
General suggestions

Photos, figures and tables

- Should be clear, self explanatory, uncomplicated, and of sufficient size.

- Tables and figures must have titles.

- Figures must include legends.

- Borders on photos and figures can enhance presentation
General suggestions

Color and contrast

- Use color to draw attention to particularly important parts of your poster (but do not use everywhere)

- Use pleasing contrast to reduce eye strain and make the poster more legible and interesting

- Note that printed color may be different from what appear on the computer monitor
Useful Website

http://www.aspb.org/education/poster.cfm

Software

MS Word, MS PowerPoint, Adobe Illustrator, LaTeX, InDesign
On Showcase Day

- Be prepared to give a 2-minute presentation to judges

- Focus on the big picture, explain why the problem is important, and use the graphics to illustrate and support your key points.

- Limit jargon, judges may be from a mix of specialties in the discipline.
On Showcase Day

- Arrive early at the display site. Set up display before 1 pm.
- Bring the poster and all accessories.
- Bring copies of a handout (optional)
- Be there between 3 and 6:30 pm.