

Impact of articles reflected by the journal's impact factor

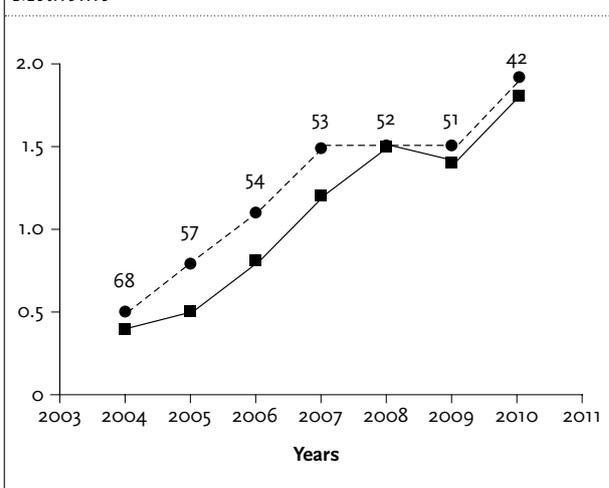
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The impact factor of a journal depends on the citations of articles in the first two years after publication. Obviously, this is a debatable criterion, which has generated a lot of discussion in the literature.^{1,2} Indeed, citations may not reflect the quality of a paper, may also be used to disqualify previously published articles, or can be subject to (excessive) self-referencing.³ On the other hand, it has been shown that journal impact factors correlate with Hirsch factors of board members and impact of articles, as judged by experts in the field.⁴ Other factors that may determine relevance, such as downloads of full-text articles from a journal's website, seem to correlate well with the impact factor, as has also been shown for the Netherlands Journal of Medicine.⁵ Taken together, the journal's impact factor is something that is related to the (perceived) quality of a medical journal and probably an important issue for authors when considering where to submit their paper to. In view of the above, I am pleased to be able to report that the impact factor of the Netherlands Journal of Medicine increased to 1.89 in 2010. In fact, this is the highest impact factor the journal has achieved in its history. As shown in *figure 1*, the impact factor has steadily risen over the past few years, but the more than 25% jump as compared with 2009 is reassuring that the Journal is doing well. With its 42nd position in the list of clinical journals, the Netherlands Journal of Medicine has entered the top 50. This position fits well with the broad orientation and relatively productive position of clinical science in the Netherlands.⁶ However, the goal of the editorial team for 2011 is to achieve an impact factor of more than 2, as this will put the journal in the ranks of the truly discerning scientific journals in clinical medicine.

Impact factors are determined by the mean number of citations that articles in the journal attract. However, this mean number may obscure the fact that some articles generate a relatively high number of citations, whereas others seem to be totally ignored. *Table 1* shows the five

Figure 1. Impact factor of the Netherlands Journal of Medicine



The official impact factor of the Netherlands Journal of Medicine (based on two-year citations) is shown with the bullets, whereas the less common five-year impact factor is shown with squares. The figure above the symbols represents the relative position in the ranking of clinical journals.

highest cited papers from 2009 and 2010, respectively. The authors of these papers are to be commended for their articles, which have attracted so much attention in a relatively short time span.

The editorial team of the Netherlands Journal of Medicine is very grateful to the many authors who submitted their papers to our Journal, to the reviewers who were very helpful in judging the submitted articles, and to the editorial board members who helped to keep the journal in good shape. We are very pleased with the increase of our impact factor and we will do anything we can to further improve the status of our Journal.

Table 1. Top 5 cited papers in 2009 and 2010

2009		2010	
Author / Title	Citations	Author / Title	Citations
Van der Klis <i>et al.</i> ⁷ Second national serum bank for population-based seroprevalence studies in the Netherlands	14	Anas <i>et al.</i> ⁸ Recent insights into the pathogenesis of bacterial sepsis.	8
Kuipers <i>et al.</i> ⁹ Hypomagnesaemia due to use of proton pump inhibitors--a review.	12	Kolesnyk <i>et al.</i> ¹⁰ Effects of angiotensin-converting enzyme inhibitors and angiotensin II receptor blockers in patients with chronic kidney disease	7
Van Meerten & Hagenbeek ¹¹ CD20-targeted therapy: a breakthrough in the treatment of non-Hodgkin's lymphoma	9	Levi <i>et al.</i> ¹² Bleeding in patients using new anticoagulants or antiplatelet agents: risk factors and management	6
Khan ¹³ Rhabdomyolysis: a review of the literature	8	Lowenberg <i>et al.</i> ¹⁴ Platelet-vessel wall interaction in health and disease	5
Hoeks <i>et al.</i> ¹⁵ Adult issues in phenylketonuria	7	Seger ¹⁶ Chronic granulomatous disease: recent advances in pathophysiology and treatment	5

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ERRATUM

Unfortunately, in the articles in *Neth J Med*. 2010 Dec;68(12):424-429 and in *Neth J Med*. 2011 Jan;69(1):39-40, the name of one of the authors was cited as 'W. Gamal'. This should have been W.G. Ibrahim. We apologise for any inconvenience.