



EDITORIAL

The ups and downs of the impact factor: “Every cloud has a silver lining”[☆]

A subida e descida do fator de impacto: «Cada nuvem tem um revestimento de prata»

According with our projections the next impact factor (IF) of the *Portuguese Journal of Pulmonology (PJP)* will be around 0.25. This means that it decreased around 28%. The ups and downs of the IF, both in small and big medical journals have been previously reported^{1–3} and it is estimated that the relative standard deviation of the year-to-year variation of the IF is likely to be between 10 and 20%.⁴ Moreover the IF variation is directly correlated with the size of the journal, with small journals having 40% variations and large journals showing fluctuations of 15%.³ The decrease in the IF of the *PJP* is also due to the increase in the number of published papers in 2009 and 2010 (the denominator of the IF) and the reduction in self-citations. The high self-citing rate of a journal may affect positively its impact factor⁵ but this may be negatively viewed by ISI-Thomson Reuters as they recently have penalized one of the three Spanish medical journals with higher IF (and with more than 50% self-citation) by removing it from the 2010 list of Journal Citation Reports. We expect that with the increase in the quality of articles in the *PJP* and the author pool (as result of better international visibility of the journal) the journal self-citation will decrease even more but the impact factor will increase.

The impact factor is slow to reflect improvements made to a journal. In fact, the impact factor of 2011 reflects a period starting in 2009, just before we started as editors. So we have to wait until 2014 to see the 2013 IF, that will mirror the contents of our journal of 2011 and 2012 and so reflecting the changes we have implemented as editors. So we are looking forward for the year-to-year variation in the IF, expecting that this trend may be positive on the long run.

Quality of a journal directly reflects the quality of its reviewers. Our journal has substantially improved its peer review process by inviting an extensive number of reviewers all over the world. Moreover to improve the impact factor reviewers have to become more selective in the manuscripts

they recommend to publish and authors need to submit their best articles.

In this number

In the current number we start a new type of articles called “New perspectives in Pulmonology”, with two international key-opinion leaders revisiting the topic of Long-term Oxygen Therapy.^{6,7} We published for the first time a non-commissioned review article, a very interesting meta-analysis from Andrade de Sá Feitosa et al. about the diagnostic accuracy of exhaled nitric oxide in exercise-induced bronchospasm.⁸

We are convinced that despite the ups and downs of the impact factor, the *Portuguese Journal of Pulmonology* is making its journey as a respected small medical journal progressively gaining reputation in the international respiratory community. So in every cloud we have to look for its silver lining...

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