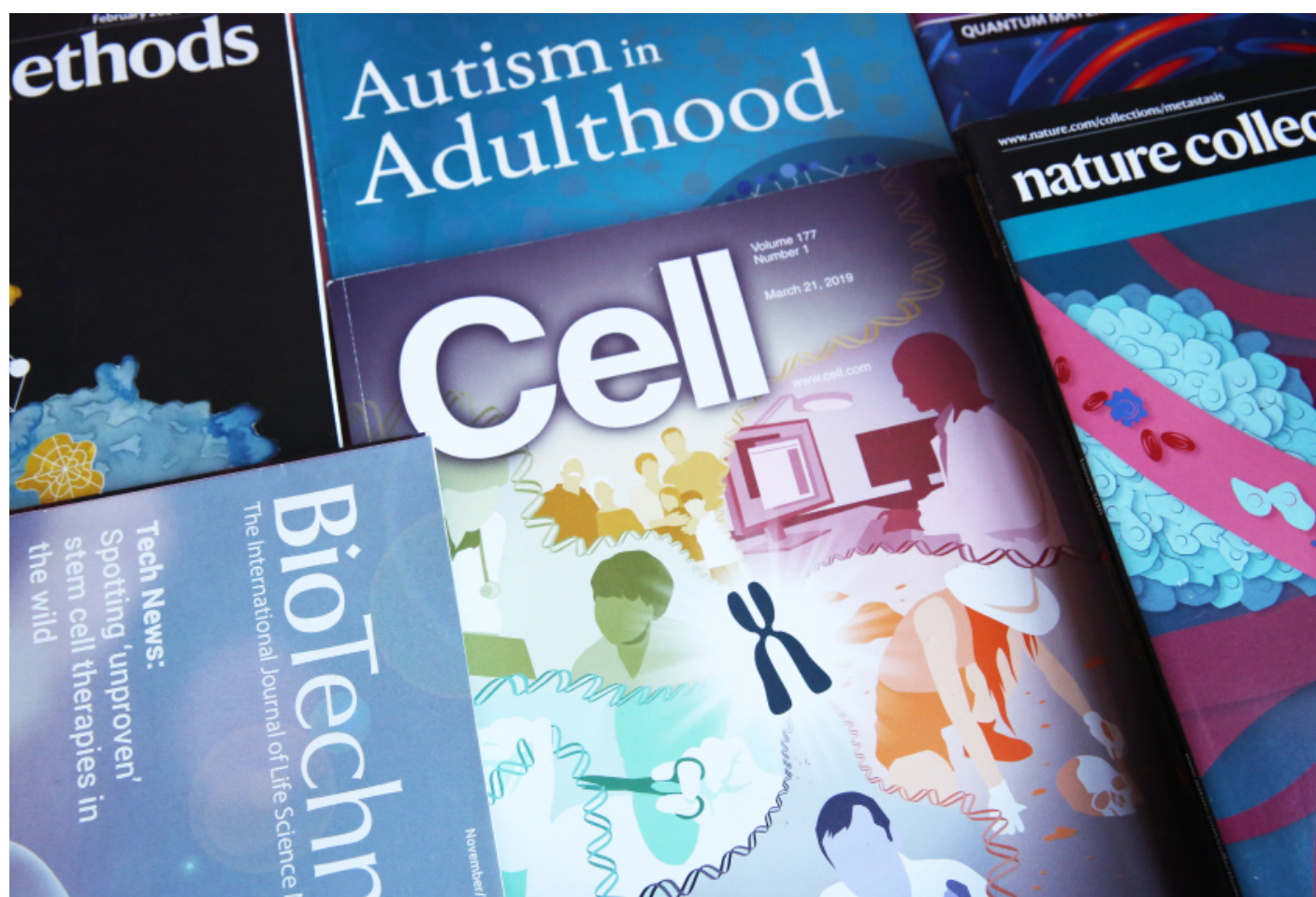


NEWS

# Many science journals have unclear policies on preprints, peer review

BY MARCUS A. BANKS

11 MARCH 2020



Most research journals, including *Cell*, *JAMA* and *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, have unclear policies regarding preprints and peer review, a new analysis finds<sup>1</sup>.

**Preprints** are publicly available versions of research papers that have not yet been peer reviewed. Many preprints are later submitted for publication in scientific journals.

Peer review can take months or even years; preprints allow research results to become public quickly. Researchers can also get feedback to refine their work before publication.

Autism researchers might post preprints to **bioRxiv** or **medRxiv**. Although biologists have traditionally avoided preprints because of fears about getting scooped, preprints have been **gaining broader acceptance**.

```
!function(){"use strict";window.addEventListener("message",function(a){if(void 0!==a.data["datawrapper-height"])for(var e in a.data["datawrapper-height"]){var t=document.getElementById("datawrapper-chart-"+e)||document.querySelector("iframe[src*='"+e+"'"]);t&&(t.style.height=a.data["datawrapper-height"][e]+"px")}})}();
```

According to the analysis — itself posted on bioRxiv — many journals do not specify whether researchers can post preprints of their manuscripts or cite preprints, or whether a link to the preprint version will be available in the published version of the paper.

Peer-review policies, especially those regarding transparency, are also ambiguous at many journals. Fewer than half of journals clarify whether a manuscript's authors are privy to the names of their peer reviewers, and even fewer indicate whether they share reviewers' names with readers.

```
!function(){"use strict";window.addEventListener("message",function(a){if(void 0!==a.data["datawrapper-height"])for(var e in a.data["datawrapper-height"]){var t=document.getElementById("datawrapper-chart-"+e)||document.querySelector("iframe[src*='"+e+"'"]);t&&(t.style.height=a.data["datawrapper-height"][e]+"px")}})}();
```

#### REFERENCES:

1. Klebel T. *et al. bioRxiv* 10.1101/2020.01.24.918995 (2020) **Abstract**