

## ***AMA Code of Medical Ethics***

### ***7.2.1 Principles for Disseminating Research Results***

Physicians have an ethical responsibility to learn from and contribute to the total store of scientific knowledge. When they engage in biomedical or health research, physicians have obligations as scientists, which include disseminating research findings. Prompt presentation to scientific peers and publication of research findings are foundational to good medical care and promote enhanced patient care, early evaluation of clinical innovations, and rapid dissemination of improved techniques.

To fulfill their ethical responsibilities with respect to sharing research findings for the ultimate benefit of patients, physicians should:

- (a) Advocate for timely and transparent dissemination of research data and findings. Physicians should not intentionally withhold information for reasons of personal gain.
- (b) Report the results of research accurately, including subsequent negative findings. This is particularly important where the findings do not support the research hypothesis.
- (c) Maintain a commitment to peer review.
- (d) Disclose sponsorship and conflicts of interest relating to the research, in keeping with ethics guidance.
- (e) Be responsible in their release of research results to the media, ensuring that any information the researcher provides is prompt and accurate and that informed consent to the release of information has been obtained from research participants (or participants' legally authorized representative when the participant lacks decision-making capacity) prior to releasing any identifiable information.

In rare circumstances, the potential for misuse of research results could affect the decision about when and whether to disseminate research findings. Physician-researchers should assess foreseeable ramifications of their research in an effort to balance the promise of benefit against potential harms from corrupt application. Only under rare circumstances should findings be withheld, and then only to the extent required to reasonably protect against misuse.

***AMA Principles of Medical Ethics: I,II,III,V,VII***