OPEN PEER REVIEW

Open Peer Review (OPR)

As a new feature for progressing towards transparency, we decided to open a new window for all of our editors as well as authors titled "**Open Peer Review**". We hope by this new facility, our reviewers will be more motivated and authors will be more satisfied with the review process. We believe that publishing our peer review reports could make a transparent and clear environment for all our efforts within a journal, but not all reviewers tend to publish their comments.

What is "Open Peer Review" process?

An "Open Peer Review" process is making the details of all review process (including reviewers, associate editors, and EICs comments) as "Public" as it is agreed by EIC, Authors, and reviewers.

Advantages of "Open Peer Review" process

- More transparency, constructiveness and tactful comments of the peer review process: leads to an increase in the quality of reviews
- More motivations for all involved roles in the review process
- Authors' satisfactions from the review process: Increases honesty between authors and reviewers
- Education of both authors and new students
- Prevents reviewers from following their individual agendas and leading to the detection of reviewers' conflicts of interests

You can find out more at:
https://brieflands.com/briefland/knowledgebase/category/tree.html#opr.html

Health Scope
Article DOI: https://doi.org/10.5812/jhealthscope-129121
Published in: Health Scope: 11(4); e129121

Peer Review Report for "The Effect of Face Mask, Air Temperature, and Humidity on COVID-19 Transmission: A Systematic Review and Meta-analysis"

Author(s): Saba Majidi, Awat Feizi, Yaghoub Hajizadeh

Review Timeline:

Submit Date: 12 Jul 2022
Revised Date: 26 Sep 2022
Accepted Date: 19 Oct 2022

Revision (0)

Here, you can see the **Reviewers**, **Associate Editors** and **EICs'** comments from the beginning to the end of the revision process.

khodadad sheikhzadeh: Reviewer | Revision (0) 13 Aug 2022

Hello & thanks
Regarding the above article, please consider the following:
1. Scientific writing and English grammar are not acceptable at all
2. Many paragraphs and sentences are incomprehensible
3. In some sentences, words are repeated incorrectly (line 10)
4. The title of the article is not very clear
5. Some technical terms need to be replaced with appropriate terms (for example: in line 12, "inclusion criteria" instead of "entry indexes"
6. The term "face mask" seems to be a better term than wearing-mask
7. Research justification, in the introduction section, is not good
8. Search strategy needs to be edited (all the probable keywords, should be used)
9. Using unpublished studies, any contacts with authors?
10. Some references are used in the results section that seems to be related to the discussion section

11. The titles of the columns in Tables 1 and 2 need to be corrected
12. Due to the incomprehensible of some paragraphs, it was not possible to judge the quality of the text in some parts
13. Strengths and weaknesses of the research?
Potential biases in the review process, confounding?

Hossein Ansari: Reviewer | **Revision** (0) 15 Aug 2022

1. Why have not the authors searched in other databases and grey literature?
2. in the abstract section of the results the lower limit for humidity RR is more than the upper limit. please check
3. Lower limits for CI are more than point estimates. Is it possible?
4. On page 9, the section"4.1.1", at the end of the paragraph the authors pointed to" all four serum lipids".I wonder if it is not related to this manuscript.
5. In the statistical analysis section the authors have mentioned ORs but they reported RRs
6. In figure 2. the number 153 is strange in abscissa

Hossein Ansari: Associate Editor | **Revision** (0) 28 Aug 2022

First reviewers' comments
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Ramazan Mirzaei: EIC | **Revision** (0) 8 Sep 2022

Dear Author

Thanks for submitting your valuable manuscript to the journal. As a result of this, we would like to inform you that the review of your manuscript is finished, and based on the editorial decision, you need to do a "Major Revision" on your manuscript. Even though this manuscript has enough quality to enter the review process, it needs some significant (major) revisions from some points of view.

Best Regards

OPEN PEER REVIEW

Revision (1)

Reply to Reviewers

Ideally, the reviewing process can significantly improve the submitted manuscripts by allowing the authors to take into account the advice of reviewers. Author(s) must reply to all reviewers' comments in a separate Word file, point by point. A "**Reply to Reviewers**" document is submitted along with revised manuscript during submission of revised files, summarizing the changes that the authors made in response to the reviewers' comments. The responses to reviewers' comments specifies how the authors addressed each comment the reviewers made.

You can read the authors' responses to the reviewers' comments in the next page.

Response to the reviewer's comments:

Reviewer 1

Thank you for your useful comments and suggestions for the manuscript. We have modified the manuscript accordingly, and detailed corrections are listed below point by point.

1. Why have not the authors searched in other databases and grey literature?

When the search started from various sources of this study (until May 20, 2020), the number of articles was minimal, and due to the contradiction in the information, we preferred to extract the articles only from reliable scientific sources.

2. In the abstract section of the results the lower limit for humidity RR is more than the upper limit. Please check

Thanks for your exact attention, reformed.

3. Lower limits for CI are more than point estimates. Is it possible?

Your comment is correct and revised.

4. in page 9, in the section"4.1.1", at the end of the paragraph the authors pointed to" all four serum lipids". I wonder if it is not related to this manuscript.

Your comment is correct and reformed.

5. In the statistical analysis section the authors have mentioned ORs but they reported RRs

Your comment is correct and revised.

6. In figure 2. the number 153 is strange in abscissa

Thanks for your exact attention, when the number of proposed events is low, the odds ratio or relative risk estimated from logistic regression will be obtained very high, particularly the upper bound of the confidence interval. In included studies in our meta-analysis, those people who used a face mask and experienced COVID-19 were very low compared to those who did not use it, accordingly the estimated upper bound of RR was obtained as a big number. Please see the following paper as a reference:

Greenland, S., Schwartzbaum, J.A. and Finkle, W.D., 2000. Problems due to small samples and sparse data in conditional logistic regression analysis. *American journal of epidemiology*, 151(5), pp.531-539.

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Reviewer 2

Thank you for your precious comments and suggestions. We have modified the manuscript accordingly, and detailed corrections are listed below point by point.

1. Scientific writing and English grammar are not acceptable at all

Your comment is correct, scientific writing and English grammar article was reformed.

2. Many paragraphs and sentences are incomprehensible

Your comment is correct *and* revised.

3. In some sentences, words are repeated incorrectly (line 10)

Thanks for your exact attention, reformed.

4. The title of the article is not very clear

Thanks for your exact attention, The title was revised.

5. Some technical terms need to be replaced with appropriate terms (for example: in line 12, "inclusion criteria" instead of "entry indexes"

Thanks for your exact attention, reformed.

6. The term "face mask" seems to be a better term than wearing-mask

Thanks for your exact attention, reformed.

7. Research justification, in the introduction section, is not good

Thanks for your exact attention, reformed.

8. Search strategy needs to be edited (all the probable keywords, should be used)

Your comment is correct and revised.

9. Using unpublished studies, any contacts with authors?

No unpublished studies were used. All reviewed articles have been published.

10. Some references are used in the results section that seems to be related to the discussion section

All the references (articles) used in the results section are related to the selected articles in the meta-analysis review.

11. The titles of the columns in Tables 1 and 2 need to be corrected

Thanks for your exact attention, reformed.

12. Due to the incomprehensibleness of some paragraphs, it was not possible to judge the quality of the text in some parts

Your comment is correct.

13. Strengths and weaknesses of the research?

Strengths: Due to the rapid outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic especially, in the beginning, the use of face masks and controlling environmental factors are the only way of its restraining. The variables investigated in the format of a meta-analysis review can be fruitful for the management and justification of government in countries. Weakness: The period of searching the database was limited, so, expanding the study period to reach more related articles could be useful.

14. Potential biases in the review process, confounding?

Thank you, we evaluated publication bias by using a funnel plot and two formal statistical tests i.e., Begg and Eger and when we found asymmetry in the funnel graph or significance in the statistical test we followed trim and fill analysis for possible adjustment of previous estimated RR or pooled means in our meta-analysis. we also did sensitivity analysis for evaluating the influence of each study on the overall estimated RR or pooled mean by removing each one at a time and estimating the RR and pooled means in the absence of each specific study. Based on the available data in included studies in our meta-analysis we did all possible sound analyses for obtaining reliable results. We evaluated publication bias and did sensitivity analysis and wrote about this process in the statistical analysis subsection (in the methods section) and presented the results of these processes in the results section. we did not do meta-regression as another method for considering continuous confounders, because the included studies in our meta-analysis did not provide any data for doing this process.

We revised the statistical analysis subsection and meta-analysis in the results section for addressing your points and for more clarifications, thanks again for your good comments.

Thanks again for your informative comments.

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Revision (1)

Here, you can see the **Reviewers**, **Associate Editors** and **EICs'** comments from the beginning to the end of the revision process.

Hossein Ansari: Associate Editor | **Revision** (**1**) 8 Oct 2022

The authors have revised the manuscript based on the reviewers' comments.

Ramazan Mirzaei: EIC | **Revision** (**1**) 19 Oct 2022

Dear Author

According to reviewer comments, we congratulate inform you that your article has been accepted for publication in this journal and we thank you for trusting us. As an expert in the field, you are best placed to explain why your article is exciting or impactful to a broader so if you fulfill your other commitments in a timely manner, your article will be published in this journal at the appointed time.

Kind regards