

Reply to the Letter to the Editors by Tang et al.

Resposta à Carta às Editoras de Tang et al.

Respuesta a la Carta a los Editoras de Tang et al.

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We thank Tang et al. ¹ for the comments and for honoring our study entitled *COVID-19 Infection in Pregnant Women, Preterm Delivery, Birth Weight, and Vertical Transmission: A Systematic Review and Meta-analysis* ². We reinforce the limitations of our review, especially due to being constructed based on initial studies on the subject, while recognizing its informative significance in the face of the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In view of this aspect, we clarify our awareness that duplicate studies or those with overlap of participants should not be included in systematic reviews and, above all, in meta-analyses. For this reason, specially, Table 1 of our review (presenting only the studies included in the meta-analysis) shows information about the place of recruitment of the included pregnant women.

Regarding the other studies presented in Table 2 of the systematic review, we were careful to include the recruitment period of each research to reduce the possibility of including duplicate studies. The characteristics of the participants included in the studies were also observed and described in detail, mainly due to the studies that were conducted in the same institutions in China but that included neonates or women with a certain route of delivery (vaginal or cesarean).

However, we recognize that the references commented in the letter ¹ (9 and 30) have samples (n = 7 and n = 9, respectively) recruited in overlapping periods, which was a mistake on the part of the authors. Thus, the study of reference 30 ³ should be disregarded from the qualitative review framework. Similarly, references 26 and 27 ^{4,5} have overlapping samples (n = 3 and n = 19, respectively). This first (reference 26) should be disregarded from the qualitative review. We also recognize that the references 9 and 35 ^{6,7} are misplaced in the same table.

Finally, note that these mistakes do not influence the qualitative evaluation of the evidence described, nor the quantitative results of the study, since the references were not included in the meta-analysis.

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