Eligibility criteria in a meta-analysis

To the Editor,

We read with great interest a meta-analysis by Azam Maleki et al.[1] on the association between prenatal excess of androgen exposure in the offspring of mothers with polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS) and risk of attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) in them. They found that maternal PCOS increases the offspring risk of ADHD. However, we have to point out a deficiency of this study, we noted that one of Six articles that were included in this study did not meet the eligibility criteria as it’s object was different[2]. Herguner et al. aimed to compare ADHD symptoms between women with PCOS and controls [2]. This deficiency may introduce bias and lead to a false conclusion.

References


Hadith Rastad2, Mahnaz Seifi Alan1

1: Cardiovascular Research Center, Alborz University of Medical Sciences, Karaj, Iran.

2: Non-communicable Diseases Research Center, Alborz University of Medical Sciences, Karaj, Iran
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Key message

Inclusion of studies that did not meet the eligibility criteria may introduce bias into the results of meta analysis.

Reply to letter to the Editor

Ensiyeh Jenabi

Assistant Professor of Health reproductive, Autism Spectrum Disorders Research Center, Hamadan University of Medical Sciences, Hamadan, Iran, Hamadan, Iran

en.jenabi@yahoo.com

https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4536-0814

We appreciate your opinion and your suggestions, and I’d like to reply to the points that you mentioned.

We in this meta-analysis assessed the association between polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS) and risk of attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) in offspring compared with women without PCOs (1). Herguner et al. aimed to compare ADHD symptoms between women with PCOS and controls (2). However, Herguner et al. measured ADHD symptoms based on 18 items on DSM-IV criteria for ADHD (2). DSM-IV is a diagnostic criteria for ADHD (3, 4). Therefore, the symptoms of ADHD based on DSM-IV criteria indicate the diagnosis of ADHD. On the other, there was a
significant association between PCOS and risk ADHD in five of six included articles. Therefore, it cannot introduce bias and a false conclusion.

References


