



## Comment on “Chlamydia Infection as a Risk Factor for Cervical Cancer: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis”

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### Dear Editor-in-Chief

We read with interest the review entitled ‘Chlamydia Infection as a Risk Factor for Cervical Cancer: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis’ (1). This is an interesting research topic, but if the following points in the “Methods” and “Results” sections of systematic reviews were considered, the quality of reporting would be improved.

1. First of all, “Methods” is the most important section of the systematic reviews, because poor methodology can lead to results that are suspect. A clear method would allow more comprehensive and reliable results (2, 3). In this review, the “Methods” is concise and the subsections of it such as the risk of bias within studies do not adequately represent.
2. Another concern is about the hazards of quick searches, which can have yielded fewer evidence. In this review, only two major databases, including Cochrane Library and PubMed was searched. Some evidence will be missed if they are published in a journal not indexed by Cochrane Library and PubMed; so, to find all relevant evidence, it is highly recommended that all available sources be searched (3).

3. No attempt was made to assess gray literature sources such as thesis, hand searching, or reference lists.
4. Typically, describing how many records were identified by the search, how many were exclusions or dropouts at each stage, and how many records were eligible for analysis, should be a part of the Results section (3, 4). However, in this review, the literature selection process (PRISMA flow diagram) was addressed in the “Methods” section; that is incorrect.
5. Another point is about the quality assessment tool. In this review, authors presented data through quality assessment via the Newcastle-Ottawa tool. This scale has been found to be a relatively good measure of transparency of research practice and reporting standards, but relatively less suitable to detect of bias in design, conduct and analysis of the evidences. Others appropriate and validated scales are available such as the Joanna Briggs Institute (JBI) Critical Appraisal checklist (4).

Many of the errors that we found revealed a lack of knowledge regarding the reporting of systematic reviews. Following the PRISMA guideline to improve the conducting and re-



porting further systematic reviews is recommended (3).

## Conflict of interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

## References

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