

Perceived social support of pregnant women and mothers during the COVID-19 pandemic: A systematic review

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Review question

How does the COVID-19 pandemic affect the social support received by pregnant women and mothers?

Searches

We will search the following databases: PubMed/MEDLINE, Web of Science, CINAHL, PsycINFO, PsycARTICLES, Academic Search Complete, SocINDEX, Cochrane Central Register of Controlled Trials, and Grey Literature (WHO, CDC, ECDC, JICA, UNAIDS, among others). We will also hand-search the reference list of articles selected for analysis. We will include all published papers in the English language from November 2019 to March 2021.

Our search strategy will combine both Medical Subject Headings (MeSH) terms and free text terms.

Search strategy

((pregnant women OR mothers OR postpartum women OR newborn mother OR breastfeeding mothers) AND (covid 19 OR sars cov 2 OR severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 OR coronavirus OR covid 19 pandemic OR novel coronavirus OR 2019 novel coronavirus OR 2019-nCoV OR SARS-CoV-2)) AND (social support OR peer support OR emotional support OR instrumental support OR informational support OR appraisal support OR social*)

Types of study to be included

We will include all the original research articles in English of all study designs such as randomized controlled trial (RCT), quasi-experimental, cohort, observational, cross-sectional, and other comparative studies as well as case studies and evaluation reports. We will not include letters, editorials, reviews, conference abstracts, and books.

Condition or domain being studied

Social support refers to being valued, respected, cared about, and loved by others present in one's life. It can be provided by anyone or any social group to which the receiver belongs, such as family, friends, schoolmates, coworkers, among others. Social support can be in any of the following forms: emotional, instrumental, informational, or appraisal support (Marhamah, 2016).

Perceived social support has been related to well-being, as the perceived levels of support, love, and care can provide positive experiences. The systematic reviews suggested that high perceived social support is related to better physical and mental health outcomes (Steese et al., 2006; Uchino, 2006). Little has been studied about mothers' and pregnant women's perceived social support for their health and well-being during the pandemic. Due to lockdown restrictions, it is critical to examine the types and level of social support they receive from their family members, healthcare providers, and community members. In this systematic review, we aim to assess the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on mothers' and pregnant women's perceived social support for their health and well-being.

Participants/population

Participants will include pregnant women, postpartum women, and mothers of children 0-12 years.

Exposure(s)

The exposure of interest is the COVID-19 pandemic.

Comparator(s)/control

Pregnant women, postpartum women, and mothers of children 0-12 years, not exposed to the COVID-19 pandemic

Main outcome(s)

Perceived social support: emotional support, instrumental support, informational support, and appraisal support

Additional outcome(s)

Determinants of perceived social support: Any variable (psychological, social, or environmental) associated with perceived social support in pregnancy, childbirth, and childcare. We place no restrictions on measurement instruments of determinants.

Data extraction (selection and coding)

Two review authors will be involved in the process of literature search, article screening, and data extraction. The databases will be independently searched using the aforementioned search strategy and identify the studies by title and abstract screening. The team will review the list of articles for eligibility. We will discuss disagreements on the eligibility of study until a consensus is reached. If required, we will consult our supervisor for the final decision.

The data to be extracted include:

title, citation (author, publication year, source), objectives, study design, study setting, study population, sample size, types of social support, comparison group, and reported outcomes.

Risk of bias (quality) assessment

We will assess the quality of RCTs using the risk of bias tools from the Cochrane Handbook. For non-RCTs, we will use the following tools: ROBINS-I for quasi-experimental studies, NIH quality assessment tool for observational cohort and cross-sectional studies, Critical Appraisal Skills Program checklist for qualitative studies, and Mixed Methods Appraisal Tool for mixed-method studies. To assess the certainty of the evidence for the included studies, we will apply the GRADE approach.

Strategy for data synthesis

We will follow the PRISMA checklist for appropriate data synthesis. We will construct a PRISMA flowchart to show the search strategy results at each stage of review. We will conduct a descriptive analysis of individual studies according to the type of intervention, sample size, duration, outcome, quality, and risk of bias. We will analyze the types and level of the social support, based on the nature of reported outcomes. If we find enough studies with quality data, we will conduct a meta-analysis to examine the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on the different types of social support received by pregnant women and mothers.

Analysis of subgroups or subsets

None

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Type and method of review

Meta-analysis, Systematic review

Anticipated or actual start date

01 April 2021

Anticipated completion date

30 June 2021

Funding sources/sponsors

Department of Community and Global Health, Graduate School of Medicine, The University of Tokyo, Japan

Conflicts of interest

Language

English

Country

Japan

Subject index terms status

Subject indexing assigned by CRD

Subject index terms

Social support; pregnant women; mothers; COVID-19 pandemic

Date of registration in PROSPERO

Date of first submission

Stage of review at time of this submission

Stage	Started	Completed
Preliminary searches	Yes	No
Piloting of the study selection process	Yes	No
Formal screening of search results against eligibility criteria	No	No
Data extraction	No	No
Risk of bias (quality) assessment	No	No
Data analysis	No	No
