Reviewer’s report

Title: Methodological challenges when estimating the effects of season and seasonal exposures on birth outcomes

Version: 3 Date: 1 March 2011

Reviewer: Rupa Basu

Reviewer’s report:

Major Compulsory Revisions
Thanks for highlighting the changes to the most draft of the manuscript. I still did not see enough discussion about the fixed cohort bias being a greater potential problem for cohort studies than time-series studies (and the references you used to address the first previous question: Suh et al. and Meister and Schaefer), as well as the fact that a small number of influential observations before/after the gestation period would not affect the entire results. These are important concepts that need to be addressed in your discussion section.

Minor Essential Revisions
On P 8, please add the following recent citation to your discussion of heat and adverse birth outcomes:


Please add the p-value that when comparing the t-statistics between the HRs in July and May—it doesn’t sound like a big difference, so the statistical significance is especially important to include here.

The manuscript ends rather abruptly. I suggest incorporating the public health implications to finish it off.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests