Author’s response to reviews

Title: Sleep Duration, Vital Exhaustion and Perceived Stress Among Pregnant Migraineurs and Non-Migraineurs

Authors:

Michelle A. Williams (mwilliam@u.washington.edu)
Sheena K. Aurora (sheena.aurora@swedish.org)
Ihunnaya O. Frederick (Ihunnaya.Frederick@swedish.org)
Chunfang Qiu (Chun-fang.Qiu@swedish.org)
Bizu Gelaye (bizu@u.washington.edu)
Swee May Cripe (smtang@u.washington.edu)

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Author’s response to reviews: see over
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Melissa Norton, MD
Editor-in-Chief
BMC Pregnancy and Childbirth

Re: MS: 465215437331260--Sleep Duration, Vital Exhaustion and Perceived Stress Among Pregnant Migraineurs and Non-Migraineurs

Dear Dr. Norton,

Thank you for your prompt attention to our manuscript entitled “Sleep Duration, Vital Exhaustion and Perceived Stress Among Pregnant Migraineurs”. We have revised our manuscript to be responsive to all but one the comments and suggestions provide by the reviewers.

We have highlighted all the changes with yellow highlight.

Below we provide point-by-point responses to each comment and suggestion.

Thank you for again for providing us to with the opportunity to revise and improve our manuscript.

Sincerely,

Michelle A. Williams, ScD
Professor of Epidemiology and Global Health
Director, Multidisciplinary International Research Training Program
Director, Reproductive, Perinatal and Pediatric Training Program
Co-Director, Center for Perinatal Studies, Swedish Medical Center

Mwilliam@u.washington.edu
Referee 1:
The questions posed by the authors of “Sleep Duration, Vital Exhaustion and Perceived Stress Among Pregnant Migraineurs and Non-Migraineurs” are meant to address significant gaps in medical literature regarding sleep disturbances among pregnant migraineurs. The authors’ hypotheses are based upon sleep disturbance and migraine studies conducted among nonpregnant patients. The importance of their questions is supported by a brief review of the problem of migraine in pregnant and reproductive age women.

We thank the reviewer for this comment. No changes made to the manuscript.

Discretionary Revision: As a matter of style, I might edit the comma out of the following sentence in your background section: “We hypothesized that pregnant women with a history of migraines were more likely than women with no history of migraines to have shorter sleep durations, and to have higher risks of excessive daytime sleepiness, vital exhaustion and perceived stress.”

We have revised the sentence as suggested. Thank you.

The approach to data collection is well described, as are the statistical methods utilized. The reporting of results is appropriate.

Thank you. No changes made to manuscript.

Discretionary Revision: The initial part of the discussion compares the study results with literature on sleep disturbances and stress levels among nonpregnant patients. The authors state that their observations are consistent with the literature, and give good examples of how their results complement existing literature on nonpregnant migraine patients. This section concludes with the statement, “Overall, our observations of higher odds of reported short sleep duration, excessive daytime fatigue, vital exhaustion and stress are consistent with previous studies.” However, the next part of the discussion regarding neuroendocrine alterations seems disjointed from the rest of the paper. Please help clarify how this section relates to the body of your paper, specifically the question of sleep disturbances, anxiety and fatigue in pregnant patients.

We have amended the manuscript. Specifically, we now add a transition sentence to help readers recognize our intention to transition from (a) discussing our results in the context of the existing literature; to (b) discussing of biologically plausible explanation for our observed statistical findings.

Limitations are well thought out and presented.

Thank you. No changes made to manuscript.

The conclusions of the paper are appropriate. I think the authors are correct in saying that their limited study may provide the groundwork for a more comprehensive examination of migraines and sleep disorders in pregnancy. They have made a good case for the importance of additional research in this area.

Thank you. No changes made to manuscript.

Referee 2:

Discretionary revisions

Overall, I thought this manuscript was interesting, however, it would help if a stronger case could be made as to why it is important to study these variables in a pregnant population. More specifically, why would one expect that pregnant women with migraines might differ from non-pregnant women with migraines on the outcome variables.
We have amended our manuscript to more clearly discuss the importance of studying pregnant women.

There were also a couple of references to sleep disorders yet it is unclear to me whether the outcome variables in isolation can be indicative of a sleep disorder or whether such a diagnosis might require other present factors. Given that, it may be important to ensure that terminology is accurate in the manuscript.

We have amended the text to avoid confusion. Specifically, we make a clear point that future studies will have to carefully specific parameters of sleep disorders (e.g., sleep disordered breathing, restless legs syndrome, insomnia, circadian rhythm disorders) in relation to maternal migraine status.