Author's response to reviews

Title: Mothers impose physical activity restrictions on their asthmatic children: an analytical cross-sectional study

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Cover Letter

We are very grateful for the valuable Reviewer’s suggestions and observations. We hope that all the questions were answered properly.

Answer to the Reviewers:

Reviewer: Cristina Jacob

1. “The study design is appropriate, but it would be interesting to have included in the questionnaire for mothers the question about maternal asthma. The fact of the mother has had the experience of feeling dyspnea could be a factor associated to physical activity restriction.”

A: We agree but we did not include this query in the questionnaire. We included this comment on our discussion on bias.

2. “Regarding the age of patients, in the table 1 is observed that the patients are above 10 years of age, without children in the study. This fact should be considered in the title of the study.”

A: As there are two children with 9 years, so not all are adolescents (by WHO definition), we adopted the word “children” as the definition of the 8th edition of the Oxford Dictionary to indicate “son or daughter of any age”. But we agree with reviewer and modified the title.

3. “In the same Table 1, it is observed that there are more patients with moderate and severe asthma that the number of patients on prophylactic treatment. What is the importance of this fact in the analysis of the physical activity?”

A: An adequate treatment and counseling and control of the disease could have led mothers to be more confident about physical activities and this is one of the points addressed in the final remarks of discussion.

4. “About all patients- 43/115 received the EIB diagnosis? It is the experience of the unit?”

A: In a previous series we observed a fall in FEV1 ≥ 10% from basal values after treadmill running in 52% of 196 asthmatics aged between 8 and 18 years. (Rizzo JA, Sarinho ESC, Rego A. Asma e exercício. In: Cruz AA. Asma, Um grande desafio. São Paulo: Editora Ateneu; 2004.p.265-284.)

5. “The level of depression was also assessed by an expert in this area?”
A: Yes. Prof. Everton Sougey MD, PhD, from the Neuropsychiatry Post-Graduation department of Universidade Federal de Pernambuco advised us about the appropriate questionnaire to adopt.

6. “Regarding obesity and overweight, as both may have interfered with the physical activity restriction?”

A: There was no association between BMI and mothers attitude (p>0.99, OR 0.89; 95%CI 0.28-2.79). Information added in Results.

Reviewer: Herberto Jose J. Chong Neto

1. “Major Compulsory Revisions: Table 2 should appear just "yes" response as a exactly number followed by (%). It will became reading more easy. Eliminate negative response as "no", <5, <9, etc…”

A: Done

2. As a reader, I would like to known why other variables were not used in the univariate and multivariate analysis: gender, weight, BMI, medication use, family income? This variables could be influenced to the others evaluated?

A: There were no associations between the mentioned variables and mothers’ attitudes. Included in the text.

Asthma is a disease that affects millions of people, many of them children and adolescents. As a disease that compromises the respiratory tract, the parent’s most feared symptom is breathlessness that may also occur during physical activities. Our study evaluates the relationship between mother’s perception and attitudes towards their asthmatic offspring physical activities. Our findings show that many of them, although declaring that exercise is good for children and adolescents health, impose restrictions or are worried about their children doing physical activities.

We believe that our results contribute to the understanding of this relationship and call attention to the need of educational approaches by health professionals with parents and caregivers as negative beliefs may lead to conflicts and prejudiced attitudes that could discourage children’s involvement in physical activities and sports. We also believe that our paper in line with BMC public health journal scope.

Authors declare no competing interests in relation to this study.