

Response to concerns on “Incidence and prognosis of olfactory and gustatory dysfunctions related to SARS-CoV-2 Omicron strain infection in China”

Dear Editor, we appreciate the insightful comments and concerns raised by Hinpetch Daungsupawong and Viroj Wiwanitkit regarding our recent publication on the incidence and prognosis of olfactory and gustatory dysfunctions related to SARS-CoV-2 Omicron strain infection in China. We would like to address the specific points raised:

1. **Reliance on Self-Reported Data:** While self-reported data can introduce bias, the large sample size of our study helps mitigate individual inaccuracies. We agree that incorporating standardized smell and taste tests in future studies would provide more objective data.
2. **Representativeness of Data:** Our choice of Grade-A tertiary hospitals was based on their capacity to manage large datasets and ensure high-quality responses. Additionally, we published the questionnaire on social media platforms, allowing participation from a broad audience, not just hospital patients. This approach was intended to reduce selection bias in retrospective studies. We acknowledge the need for future research to include a wider range of hospital types to enhance population representativeness.
3. **Confounding Factors:** Our study employed multivariate logistic regression analysis to control for several confounding factors. Nonetheless, we recognize the importance of considering additional variables and recommend that future studies explore these further.
4. **Exclusion of Other Symptoms and Long-Term Effects:** The focus of our study was on olfactory and gustatory dysfunctions due to their notable impact on patients' quality of life. We agree that future research should encompass a broader range of symptoms and investigate long-term effects.
5. **Need for Objective Assessments and Control Groups:** We concur with the suggestion to include objective assessments and control groups in future studies to validate self-reported data and enhance the robustness of the findings.

We thank the authors for their valuable feedback, which will undoubtedly guide future research directions to improve our understanding of COVID-19's impact on sensory functions.

KEYWORDS

epidemiology studies, incidence, olfactory disorders, prognosis, SARS-CoV-2, taste disorders

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Jian-Feng Liu authored the reply article, and the other authors agree with the viewpoints expressed in this article.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors have nothing to report.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

There is no new data.

ETHICS STATEMENT

Ethics statement is not applicable to this study.

Meng-Fan Liu¹ 
 Rui-Xia Ma²
 Xian-Bao Cao³
 Jian-Feng Liu¹
 Lei Cheng⁴
 Yu-Cheng Yang⁵

¹Department of Otorhinolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery, China-Japan Friendship Hospital, Beijing, China

This is an open access article under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/) License, which permits use, distribution and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited and is not used for commercial purposes.

© 2024 The Author(s). *World Journal of Otorhinolaryngology - Head and Neck Surgery* published by John Wiley & Sons Ltd on behalf of Chinese Medical Association.

²Department of Otorhinolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery,
The First People's Hospital of Yinchuan, Yinchuan, China

³Department of Otorhinolaryngology,
The First People's Hospital of Yunnan Province, Kunming, China

⁴Department of Otorhinolaryngology & Clinical Allergy Center, The First
Affiliated Hospital,
Nanjing Medical University, Nanjing, China

⁵Department of Otorhinolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery,
The First Affiliated Hospital of Chongqing
Medical University, Chongqing, China

Correspondence

Jian-Feng Liu, Department of Otorhinolaryngology Head and
Neck Surgery, China-Japan Friendship Hospital, Beijing, China.

Email: mmconfucius@163.com

ORCID

Meng-Fan Liu  <http://orcid.org/0009-0009-1303-2363>