

# Letter to the Editor

## Pregnancy as a risk factor for hospitalization due to pandemic influenza A (H1N1) 2009

Gestação como fator de risco para internação hospitalar na influenza pandêmica A (H1N1) 2009

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### To the Editor:

Our study group for infectious diseases would like to congratulate the authors of the article entitled "Pandemic influenza A (H1N1) 2009: risk factors for hospitalization"<sup>(1)</sup> for their findings.

A retrospective study was carried out at our facility between July and August of 2009, a period in which the incidence of 2009 pandemic influenza A (H1N1) virus infection was highest in the *Serra Gaúcha* region, located in northeastern Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil. The study consisted of a review of the cases of patients admitted to a university hospital and diagnosed with 2009 pandemic influenza A (H1N1) virus infection, as confirmed by PCR.

In that study, 64 patients with a confirmed diagnosis of influenza A (H1N1) virus infection required hospitalization. Of the 64 hospitalized patients, 90.6% were over 50 years of age; however, hospitalization was more frequently recommended for individuals under 2 years of age (34%), a finding that is inconsistent with those of the article cited above, in which most of the hospitalized patients were in the 20-29 year age bracket.<sup>(1)</sup> In addition, 6 pregnant women (9.4%), all of whom were in the third trimester of gestation, were hospitalized for influenza A (H1N1) virus infection.

The hospitalization of pregnant women with a confirmed diagnosis of influenza A (H1N1) virus infection is a topic that interests us, and, therefore, we would like to know whether there is any explanation for the fact that pregnancy was not considered a risk factor for hospitalization and whether any preventive measures were taken, given that pregnant women have been reported to constitute an at-risk population.<sup>(2,3)</sup>

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