



Review Article

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Does the Timing of Intubation and IMV Impact Clinical Outcomes in Adult COVID-19 Patients with ARDS: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis



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Background/Aim: COVID-19 can rapidly develop into acute lung injury, and even acute respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS), which has a high $risk \ of \ death. \ Patients \ with \ ARDS \ of ten \ require in tubation. \ However, the \ timing \ of intubation \ and \ its \ effect \ on \ clinical \ outcomes \ in \ COVID-19 \ ARDS$ (CARDS) patients remains unclear. Thus, the authors explored the impact of intubation time on clinical outcomes in COVID-19 patients with ARDS through a systematic review and meta-analysis.

Materials and Methods: Research articles from PUBMED, CINAHL, MEDLINE, ProQuest Covid database, and Web of Science were searched through December 2021. All patients in the research met the Berlin criteria for ARDS. For the purposes of this review, "Early" intubation was defined as intubation within 24 hours of an ARDS diagnosis, while "Late" was defined as 24 or more hours after diagnosis. The primary outcome was ICU mortality, and secondary measures included length of ICU stay and duration of mechanical ventilation. The meta-analysis was performed using a random-effects model. The quality of cohort studies was assessed using the Newcastle-Ottawa Scale. The methodological quality of the overall evidence in this review was evaluated using the GRADE approach.

Results: After an extensive search, six cohort studies were ultimately included in the systematic review, altogether encompassing 2,739 patients with CARDS. A meta-analysis revealed statistically significant differences in mortality [risk ratio (RR)=0.78; 95% confidence interval (CI),0.69-0.88; Z=3.91, P < 0.0001)]. The mortality rate was 36.2% (817 deaths) in the early group and 48.2% (229 deaths) in the late group, respectively. Results of the narrative analysis showed that early intubation resulted in shorter ICU stays, which was statistically significant. However, no statistical difference was found in the duration of mechanical ventilation.

Conclusions: Early intubation can reduce mortality and length of ICU stay in adult COVID-19 patients with ARDS. However, the timing of intubation did not affect the duration of continuous mechanical ventilation.

Keywords: COVID-19; ARDS; Timing of Intubation; Invasive Mechanical Ventilator; Systematic Review; Mortality

Introduction

In December 2019, COVID-19 was identified as a new clinical syndrome caused by a novel coronavirus. The virus is transmittable through the respiratory tract and is highly contagious. Despite significant efforts to control the spread of COVID-19, it triggered a global pandemic [1-4], an epidemic of scale across international borders [5]. COVID-19 pneumonia may develop rapidly into acute respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS) with a high risk of death [6]. ARDS is an acute respiratory failure caused by increased pulmonary capillary permeability secondary to inflammatory

oedema. It leads to alveolar flooding and subsequent deep hypoxemia, in which intrapulmonary shunt is the most important underlying mechanism [7]. However, ARDS caused by COVID-19 is different from ARDS with any other underlying cause. According to Huang et al. (2020) [8], the onset of ARDS associated with COVID-19 is between 8-12 days. There are two distinct phenotypes of COVID-19-associated ARDS (CARDS), L-type and H-type. Type L presents as pneumonia and is limited to mild inflammation of the subpleural interstation.

It is characterized by low elasticity, atelectasis, normal compliance, and low lung weight. On the other hand, patients with Type H meet typical ARDS criteria, including decreased lung compliance, hypoxemia, bilateral lung infiltration, and increased lung weight [9]. Li and Ma [10] have been reporting on respiratory support strategies for patients with CARDS during the past two years, but how exactly the timing of tracheal intubation and use of invasive mechanical ventilation impacts clinical outcomes is still unclear in patients with CARDS. Delayed intubation can cause autologous lung injury (SILI) due to high respiratory drive pressure [11]. However, intubating patients too early can also be associated with some complications, including ventilatorassociated pneumonia, airway injury, ventilator-induced lung injury, and hemodynamic disorders due to positive pressure ventilation [12]. Six primary studies [13-18] have indicated different results regarding the timing of intubation for patients with CARDS, and currently there is no systematic review relevant to this topic. Therefore, a systematic review is necessary to further explore how the timing of intubation impacts outcomes for these patients.

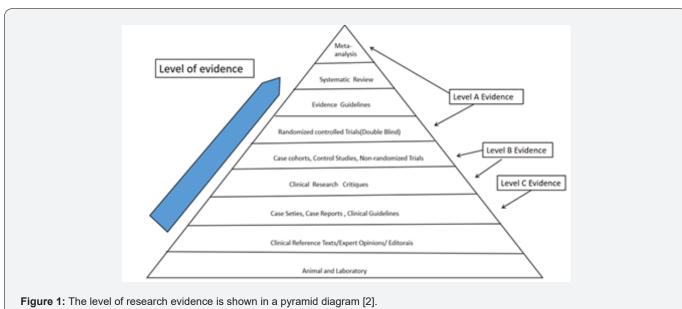
Materials and Methods

The PRISMA statement, which contains a 27-item checklist

and four-phase flow chart [19], is used to help authors report systematic reviews and meta-analyses.

Eligibility Criteria

The population included in this systematic review was defined as adult patients (≥18 years old) with PCR-confirmed COVID-19 diagnoses who also had ARDS. ARDS was defined by the Berlin Criteria or American-European Consensus Conference (Table 1) [20]. Early intubation was defined as being intubated within 24 hours of being diagnosed with ARDS; Late intubation was defined as being intubated 24 or more hours after an ARDS diagnosis. The timing of intubation was also defined by authors of four original studies [21]. Systematic reviews and meta-analyses are in the upper echelon of the evidence-based medicine hierarchy of evidence, followed by randomized, controlled, double-blind studies, followed by cohort studies, case-control studies, case series, and case reports [2] (Figure 1). Randomized trial studies were not permitted due to potential ethical issues regarding the timing of intubation of COVID-19 ARDS patients [22]. Therefore, existing cohort studies and case-control studies were sought out to provide high-quality research evidence for this systematic review [23], (Figure 1).



Search Strategy

The authors only searched relevant scientific databases, which included PUBMED, CINAHL, MEDLINE, ProQuest Covid Databases, and Web of Science. Articles were retrieved from December 2019 to December 2021, and the language was restricted to English. In this systematic review, the search strategy developed by the authors consisted of a combination of keywords, medical subject headings (MeSH), free-text words, wildcards, acronyms,

synonyms, and transatlantic terms. Boolean operators ("AND" "OR" and "NOT") were used to combine the terms entered in each search field. Search strategy and keywords are described as follows (Table 2).

Study Selection

Two authors independently searched for relevant literature by executing the above search strategy and browsing abstracts or full texts to find potential articles. Detailed inclusion and exclusion criteria were used to screen the articles, and six primary research articles were finally selected as suitable for review.

Data Extraction and Risk of Bias Assessment

Two reviewers independently extracted and examined data from each included study. Extracted data included article title, author name(s), the date of publication, language, country, characteristics of participants, type of study, and data pertaining to the study's outcome. Outcomes included mortality, length of ICU stay, and duration of ventilator use. The Newcastle-Ottawa Scale (NOS), developed by the University of Newcastle in Australia and the University of Ottawa in Canada, is a quality assessment tool for the systematic evaluation of non-randomized studies, especially for cohort and case-control studies [24]. The NOS

cohort study version consists of eight multiple-choice questions involving topic selection and comparability, as well as outcome assessment or exposure. A star rating system is used to indicate the quality of the study, up to a maximum rating of nine stars. One star is awarded for each criterion if the reporting methodology is appropriate. Separate scales have been developed for cohort and case-control studies, which can help authors identify low-quality studies and inform sensitivity analyses or meta-regression [25]. NOS developers have examined NOS face and standard validity, reliability among evaluators, and evaluator burden. Surface validity has been assessed as strong by comparing each assessment item with its stem problem [26]. Therefore, NOS can be a helpful tool in assessing the quality of studies included in systematic reviews.

Table 1: Berlin Definition of acute respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS).

Criteria	Rationale		
Onset within 7 days after a known clinical insult or new or worsening respiratory symptoms	Observational data suggest that ARDS will develop within 72 hr in the majority of patients at risk for the syndrome and within 1wk. in nearly all patients at risk		
Bilateral opacities that are "consistent with pulmonary ede- ma" on chest radiographs or chest CT	There is poor interobserver reliability in interpreting the chest radiograph for the presence of edema. To address this issue, the Berlin definition offers more explicit criteria (e.g., opacities should not be fully explained by effusions, lobar or lung atelectasis, or nodules or masses), with illustrative radiographs provided		
Categorization of ARDS severity	A patient-level meta-analysis validated three thresholds for hypoxemia, all consisting of a Pao2:Fio2 ratio ≤300 mm Hg		
Mild	Pao2: Fio2, 201 to 300 mm Hg; mortality, 27% (95% CI, 24–30)		
Moderate	Pao2: Fio2, 101 to 200 mm Hg; mortality, 32% (95% CI, 29-34)		
Severe	Pao2: Fio2, ≤100 mm Hg; mortality, 45% (95% CI, 42–48)		
Minimum PEEP setting or CPAP, 5 cm of water; Pao2:Fio2 assessed on invasive mechanical ventilation (CPAP criterion used for the diagnosis of mild ARDS)	Estimates of Fio2 are not accurate with oxygen-delivery systems other than invasive or noninvasive ventilation (with a tight-fitting mask), except for nasal high-flow oxygen delivery systems (at flow rates ≥45 liters per minute); requiring higher PEEP settings does not increase predictive validity of the Berlin severity strata and adds complexity		

^{*} The definition and the quotation about opacities are from Ferguson et al. [20] CI denotes confidence interval; CPAP, continuous positive airway pressure; Pao2: Fio2, ratio of the partial pressure of arterial oxygen to the fraction of inspired oxygen; and PEEP, positive end-expiratory pressure.

Table 2: Search Strategy and Keywords.

Population (P)	"coronavirus2019" OR "COVID-19" OR "2019-nCoV" OR "SARS-CoV-2" OR "novel coronavirus" OR "SARS-CoV-2" OR "nCoV disease" OR "COVID19" OR "2019nCoV" OR "coronavirus disease-19" OR "coronavirus disease 2019" OR "2019 novel coronavirus"
	"Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome" OR "ARDS" OR "Severe pneumonia" OR "Respiratory Distress Syndrome" OR "acute respiratory failure" OR "acute lung injury" OR "ALI"
Intervention (I)	"Intubation" OR "tracheal Intubation" OR "tracheal tube" OR "Endotracheal intubation" OR "mechanical ventilation" OR "invasive mechanical ventilation" OR "IMV" OR "MV" OR "Non-invasive ventilation" OR "high flow"
	Tim* OR early OR late OR delay
Design of Study (D)	"Cohort study" OR "Study" OR "Randomized Controlled Trials" OR "Randomized Controlled Trials as Topic" OR "Randomized Controlled Trials" OR "Controlled Clinical Trials, Randomized"

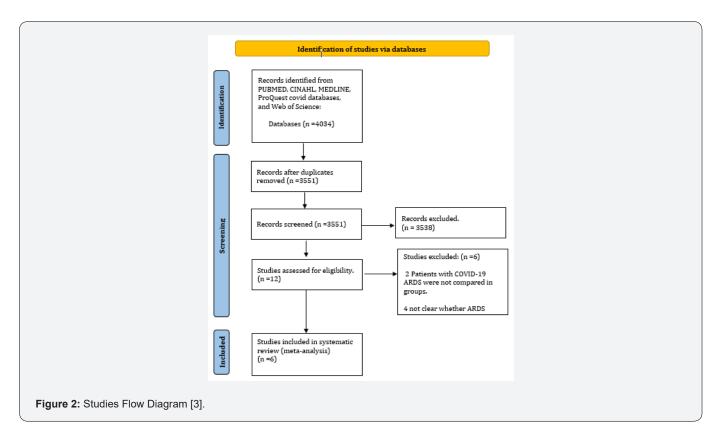
Data Synthesis

Stroup et al. published criteria for conducting and reporting meta-analyses of observational studies to improve the quality of reporting. Dichotomous data and risk ratio (RR) were chosen for data synthesis. The most common, a 95% confidence interval, is

used to analysed mortality and favourable outcomes. Narrow confidence intervals are used to indicate that treatment estimates are relatively accurate [27]. In the second stage, the pooled (combined) intervention effect estimates are calculated as a weighted average of the estimated intervention effects in a single

study. There are four methods for binary results meta-analysis, including three fixed-effect methods (Mantel-Haenszel, Peto, and inverse variance) and one random-effects method (Der Simonian

and Laird inverse variance) [28]. For this systematic review, Rev Man software from the Cochrane Review was used for data analysis. The results were presented using forest maps.



Results

Study Selection

Table 3: Characteristics of the Six Studies Included in the Systematic Review.

First author	Country	Type of study	Patient populaion (N)	Early definition (h)	Late definition (h)	Early intubation (N)	Late intubation (N)	Mortality (Early)	Mortality (Late)
Lee et al. [13]	Daegu, Korea	Multi-center, retro- spective, observational study	47	<24	>24	23	16	13 (56.5)	7 (43.8)
Schmidt et al.	France, Belgium, and Switzerland	Multi-center, prospec- tive cohort study	2233	<24	>24	2003	230	724(37%)	96 (42%)
United States	United States	Retrospective cohort study	54	4h- 24h	>24	30	24	2 (6%)	7 (29%)
Zirpe et al. [16]	India	Retrospective observa- tional study	147	<48	>48	75	72	45 (60%)	56 (77.7%)
Pandya et al. [17]	United States	Retrospective study	75	≤1.27 days	(>1.27 days)	37	38	17 (45.95%)	20 (54.05%)
Vera et al. [18]	Chile	Observational, prospective, single-center study	183	<48	>48	88	95	16 (18%)	43 (43%)

Six cohort studies met the criteria to be included in this systematic review. In total, these studies encompassed 2,739 patients with COVID-19 ARDS [29-31], (Figure 2). All the studies

compared patients who experienced early intubation with patients who experienced late intubation. The characteristics of all studies are shown in detail in (Figure 2), (Tables 3, 4).

Table 4: Additional Characteristics of Studies that were Included in the Systematic Review.

First author	Country	Type of study	Length of ICU stay, Days (Early)	Length of ICU stay, Days (Late)	MV days (Early)	MV Days (Late)	Male sex (%)	Age (years)	SOFA at ICU admission (Early)	SOFA at ICU admission (Late)
Lee et al. [13]	Daegu, Korea	Multi-center, retrospective, observational study	13 (7-33)	47 (13-74)	10 (4-24)	20 (9–57)	28 (59.6%)	70 (IQR, 63-77)	3 (2-7)	3 (2-4)
Schmidt et al.	France, Belgium, Swit- zerland	Multi-center, prospective cohort study						63 (54–71)	5 (3-8)	
Bavishi et al. [15]	United States	Retrospective cohort study	12 (5-17)	15 (10–19)	10 (5-15)	10 (7-19)	37	60 (42- 69)	6 (3-8)	4 (1-7)
Zirpe et al. [16]	India	Retrospective observational study	14 (9.7–21)	16 (7-21.7)	7 (4–12)	6 (2-12)	109 (74.1%)	59 (51- 67)	1 (1-2)	1 (1-2)
Pandya et al. [17]	United States	Retrospective study	7.38 (3.88- 10.21)	12.31 (7.75- 19.96)	5.86	10.30	43 (57.33%)	65		
Vera et al. [18]	Chile	Observational, prospective, single-center study	31 (17-45)	36 (24–62)	13 (8-25)	16 (9-33)	132	61.5 (53-71)	6 (4-8)	4 (2-8)



Figure 3: Risk of bias assessment using Newcastle-Ottawa Score1. Risk of bias assessment for each study according to its NOS. Plots created using risk-of-bias visualization (robvis) tool [30].

Assessment Quality

The Newcastle-Ottawa Scale was used to evaluate the quality of the six studies [32] (see Appendix 3). There are detailed evaluation records for each study, as well as summary tables for each of the six studies. The traffic-light plots and summary bar plots were created using the robvis tool (Figure 3), which is a web application for visualizing deviation risk assessment as part of a system assessment [33]. Selection criteria, comparability, and outcome (cohort) or exposure (case-control) were scored on a scale up to 9 (Figure 3).

Main Outcome

The forest plot showed that 2,731 participants across six studies were included in the meta-analysis with a combined RR = 0.78 (95% CI 0.69 to 0.88, Z=3.91, P < 0.0001) (Figure 4). Overall, the results showed that the mortality of the early intubation group was lower than the late intubation group, and the difference was statistically significant. Significant heterogeneity was observed (I2=63%), which indicated a large degree of variation between effect sizes in the included studies (Figure 4).

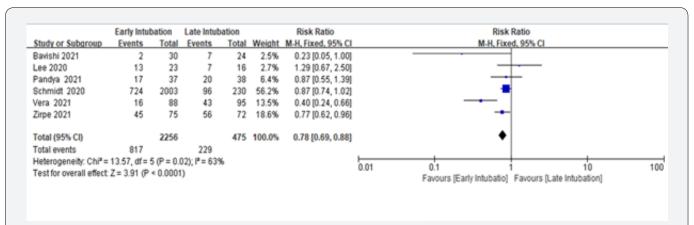


Figure 4: The mortality of all patients with CARDS in the 6 studies undergoing early intubation versus (VS) late intubation. Pooled risk ratio (RR) and 95% confidence intervals (CI) were calculated using a random effects model. I2: Heterogeneity.

Length of ICU Stay

Schmidt et al. failed to extract the length of ICU stay of participants. No statistically significant differences were found between groups regarding the number of days spent in the ICU in three of the other studies (P > 0.05) [34,35]. Two studies indicated that there were significant differences between the groups (P < 0.05). Overall, since analysis found that early intubation results in shorter ICU stays, this was seen as statistically significant (Table 5).

Duration of Ventilation

Ventilation time was not extracted for the participants in one study Schmidt et al. The other five studies reported no significant difference in the duration of mechanical ventilation between the early intubation group and the late intubation group (P \boxtimes 0.05). Overall, the timing of intubation does not appear to impact the duration of mechanical ventilation of CARDS patients in the ICU (Table 5).

Complications

Patient complications were not reported separately in one study. Lee et al. observed that among patients treated with MV, the incidence of ventilator-associated pneumonia (VAP) in the early

intubation group was often higher than that in the late intubation group, but no statistical significance was found (30.4%; N = 7 vs 6.2%; N = 1; P = 0.109). In research by the secondary infection rate was 13.3% in the early intubation group, while it was 22.2% in the late intubation group (P = 0.6). Additionally, AKI/RENAL failure was 21.3% in the early group and 18% in the late group (P = 0.1). A total of 16% of patients underwent tracheostomy in the early group, while the percentage rose to 25% in the late group (P = 0.1). Therefore, no statistically significant differences were found regarding secondary infection, Acute kidney injury (AKI), and interventional tracheotomy between intubation within 48 hours (early group) and intubation 48 hours after ICU admission (late group). Two studies did not describe patient complications.

Discussion

The purpose of this systematic review was to explore the effects of intubation time on clinical outcomes in COVID-19 patients with ARDS. Questions to investigate included whether late intubation increases ICU mortality, length of ICU stay, and duration of ventilator use. Results indicated that early intubation could reduce mortality and length of ICU stay in patients with CARDS. However, intubation time did not affect the duration of continuous mechanical ventilation in patients. There were obvious differences between the definitions of early intubation

and late intubation in the six included studies. In three studies early intubation was defined as intubation within 24 hours after diagnosis of ARDS. Two studies defined early intubation as within 48 hours of diagnosis, while defined it as within 1.27 days. Most studies defined the early intubation time as within 24 hours after admission to an ICU [36,37]. However, according to the systematic review reported by the definition of early/late intubation time had

no statistical difference in all-cause mortality between the two groups and did not influence the clinical outcomes of COVID-19 patients. Therefore, for the sake of homogeneity, early intubation group and late intubation group data was extracted for analysis according to the respective definitions included in the current study. However, the definition of early/late intubation time directly affected the number of participants between the two groups.

Table 5: The Length of ICU Stays Among Patients in the Six Included Studies.

First author	Country	Type of study	Patient population (N)	Early definition (h)	Late definition (h)	Early intu- bation (N)	Late in- tubation (N)	Median length of ICU stays (IQR) (Early)	Median length of ICU stays (IQR) (Late)	P-Value
Lee et al. [13]	Korea	Multi-center, retrospective, observational study	47	<24	>24	23	16	13 (7-33)	47 (13-74)	0.101
Schmidt et al.	France, Belgium, Switzerland	Multi-center, pro- spective cohort study	2233	<24	>24	2003	230			
Bavishi et al. [15]	United States	Retrospective cohort study	54	4-24	>24	30	24	12 (5-17)	15 (10–19)	0.13
Zirpe et al. [16]	India	Retrospective observational study	147	<48	>48	75	72	14 (9.7–21)	16 (7-21.7)	0.9
Pandya et al. [17]	United States	Retrospective study	75	≤1.27 days	>1.27 days	37	38	7.38 (3.88- 10.21)	12.31 (7.75- 19.96)	0.001
Vera et al. [18]	Chile	Observational, prospective, sin- gle-center study	183	<48	>48	88	95	31 (17-45)	36 (24-62)	0.003

The Effects of Early and Late Intubation

The high mortality associated with late intubation may be related to lung injuries (P-SILI) unintentionally caused by the patients themselves. When COVID-19 patients' respiratory support was insufficient, their lung function deteriorated in the first week [38]. ARDS is characterized by non-cardiogenic pulmonary oedema, decreased exchange volume of hypoxic blood, and normal gas related to V/Q imbalance, which leads to low respiratory compliance. Hypoxemia may cause patients to inhale spontaneously and violently, leading to lung injury caused by high trans-pulmonary pressure. Early intubation with pulmonary protective ventilation can prevent P-SILI [39]. In a study including 457 ARDS patients, the 60-day mortality rate of the late intubation subgroup (56%) was significantly higher than that of the early intubation group (36%) [40]. The mortality rate of the late intubation group continued to rise during the 2-year follow-up period, which was consistent with the results of the current study.

Chinese critical care experts also suggested that tracheal intubation should be done when critically ill patients are

asymptomatic (persistent respiratory distress and/or hypoxemia) after standard oxygen therapy, which was also referred to in the COVID-19 guidelines for patient treatment [41]. Given the high risk of non-invasive respiratory support failure and the risk of virus particle atomization [42], Brown et al. also recommended that early tracheal intubation be performed for patients with respiratory failure who need ventilation support. Other factors influencing death included BMI, age, Sequential Organ Failure Assessment (SOFA) Score, and (Acute Physiology, Age, and Chronic Health Evaluation 2(APACHE2)); however, no statistical difference was found between the two groups in the early/late stage. In a study by Pandya et al. The included population was characterized by a nasopharyngeal swab-confirmed COVID-19 patient with a mean age of 65 years. A median BMI of 31 was observed in the study, and all patients were more than 50% of the standard BMI and could be categorized as 'obese'.

These were risk factors associated with mortality. In this study, the mortality rate of patients with mechanical ventilation was as high as 49%. The median age of non-survivors was higher than that of survivors (70 VS 59, p = 0.0006). The median ages of

patients in the six included studies were 70, 63, 60, 59, 65, and 61.5, all of which were higher than 59. Therefore, elderly COVID ADRS patients were found to have a higher mortality rate. Compared with the United States, whose patients had a mortality rate of 16.6%, India's mortality rate was much higher at 68.7%, which may be related to the level of economic development and medical care [43]. Overall, this systematic review found that patients with early intubation were prone to more severe illness, organ dysfunction, and higher SOFA and APACHE scores when diagnosed with ARDS compared to those with late intubation. These results may have great significance in clinical practice, by providing strong evidence for researchers and clinicians to consider when choosing when to intubate COVID-19 ARDS patients. This can assist in rationalizing the allocation of medical resources and reduce the mortality of patients.

Agreements and Disagreements with Other Studies and Reviews

No similar systematic reviews were found pertaining to the topic of this article. Navas-Blanco and Dudaryk (2020) agreed that early intubation can prevent adverse consequences due to delayed intubation in patients with CARDS. Two studies recommend early intubation for COVID-19 ARDS patients. However, a recent review by Papoutsi et al. found no statistically detectable difference in all-cause mortality between patients undergoing either early or late intubation (3981 deaths; 45.4% versus 39.1%; RR 1.07 $\boxed{0}$ 95% CI 0.99-1.15 p = 0.08). The same was true of MV duration (1892; MD-0.58 days, 95% CI -3.06 to 1.89 days, p = 0.65). Intubation time may have had no effect on the mortality and morbidity of critically ill COVID-19 patients, which was inconsistent with the results

summarized in this systematic review. In a study by Papoutsi et al. (2021), participants were critically ill patients with COVID-19. However, the population in this systematic review included ARDS patients with COVID-19.

Critique and Limitation

There are a few notable limitations to this study. For one, the reviewers only searched English-language articles, which can potentially lead to language bias. There may perhaps be articles related to this topic in other languages, but if so, these would have been excluded from the current review. In terms of secondary outcome data extraction, we contacted the authors of the six included studies by email, but failed to obtain specific data on length of ICU stays and MV duration. Therefore, the reliability of secondary measurement results may be reduced.

Conclusion

The findings of this systematic review conclude that early intubation for mechanical ventilation is beneficial to patients with COVID-19 ARDS. However, it appears that early intubation cannot reduce the overall duration of mechanical ventilation. The authors recommend immediate tracheal intubation for patients with moderate to severe COVID-19 ARDS. The treatment and management strategies of ARDS patients have been the continuing focus of researchers. In the face of COVID-19 pandemic, decreasing COVID-19 ARDS patients' mortality remains an unsolved problem that needs further investigation. Further work is needed to improve research design and solve the problem of high heterogeneity and provide higher quality evidence.

Appendix 1

Cinahl Search Strategy

Search ID#	Search Terms	Search Options	Last Run Via	Results
S24	S6 AND S10 AND S17 AND S23	Expanders - Apply related words; Apply equivalent subjects. Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Data- bases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - CINAHL Complete	29
S23	S18 OR S19 OR S20 OR S21 OR S22	Expanders - Apply related words; Apply equivalent subjects. Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Data- bases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - CINAHL Complete	1,096,190
S22	"delay"	Expanders - Apply related words; Apply equivalent subjects. Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Data- bases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - CINAHL Complete	39,485
S21	"late"	Expanders - Apply related words; Apply equivalent subjects. Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Data- bases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - CINAHL Complete	72,941
S20	"early"	Expanders - Apply related words; Apply equivalent subjects. Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Data- bases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - CINAHL Complete	345,693
S19	"Time-to-Treat- ments"	Expanders - Apply related words; Apply equivalent subjects. Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Data- bases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - CINAHL Complete	0
S18	(MH "Time") OR "time"	Expanders - Apply related words; Apply equivalent subjects. Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Data- bases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - CINAHL Complete	768,665
S17	S11 OR S12 OR S16	Expanders - Apply related words; Apply equivalent subjects. Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Data- bases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - CINAHL Complete	29,372
S16	S11 AND S15	Expanders - Apply related words; Apply equivalent subjects. Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Data- bases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - CINAHL Complete	637
S15	S13 OR S14	Expanders - Apply related words; Apply equivalent subjects. Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Data- bases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - CINAHL Complete	2,480
S14	"High flow nasal cannula"	Expanders - Apply related words; Apply equivalent subjects. Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Data- bases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - CINAHL Complete	769
S13	"Noninvasive ventilation"	Expanders - Apply related words; Apply equivalent subjects. Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Data- bases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - CINAHL Complete	1,821
S12	(MH "Ventila- tors, Mechani- cal") OR "inva- sive mechanical ventilation"	Expanders - Apply related words; Apply equivalent subjects. Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Data- bases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - CINAHL Complete	4,356

S11	(MH "Intubation, Intratracheal") OR "intubation"	Expanders - Apply related words; Apply equivalent subjects. Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Data- bases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - CINAHL Complete	25,428
S10	S7 OR S8 OR S9	Expanders - Apply related words; Apply equivalent subjects. Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Data- bases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - CINAHL Complete	17,318
S9	(MH "Acute Lung Injury") OR "Acute Lung Injury"	Expanders - Apply related words; Apply equivalent subjects. Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Data- bases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - CINAHL Complete	3,768
S8	"Acute respi- ratory distress syndrome"	Expanders - Apply related words; Apply equivalent subjects. Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Data- bases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - CINAHL Complete	11,266
S7	(MH "Respira- tory Distress Syndrome") OR (MH "Severe Acute Respirato- ry Syndrome")	Expanders - Apply related words; Apply equivalent subjects. Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Data- bases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - CINAHL Complete	6,126
S6	S1 OR S2 OR S3 OR S4 OR S5	Expanders - Apply related words; Apply equivalent subjects. Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Data- bases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - CINAHL Complete	51,948
S5	"Sars-cov-2"	Expanders - Apply related words; Apply equivalent subjects. Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Data- bases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - CINAHL Complete	9,333
S4	"Coronavirus 2019"	Expanders - Apply related words; Apply equivalent subjects. Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Data- bases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - CINAHL Complete	512
S3	"Covid-19 pan- demic"	Expanders - Apply related words; Apply equivalent subjects. Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Data- bases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - CINAHL Complete	32,864
S2	(MH "SARS- CoV-2")	Expanders - Apply related words; Apply equivalent subjects. Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Data- bases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - CINAHL Complete	582
S1	(MH "COVID-19")	Expanders - Apply related words; Apply equivalent subjects. Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Data- bases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - CINAHL Complete	19,567

Medline Search Strategy

Search ID#	Search Terms	Search Options	Last Run Via	Results
S25	S6 AND S11 AND S18 AND S24	Expanders - Apply related words; Apply equivalent subjects. Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Databases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - MEDLINE	174
S24	S19 OR S20 OR S21 OR S22 OR S23	Expanders - Apply related words; Apply equivalent subjects. Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Databases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - MEDLINE	6,009,819

S23	"delay"	Expanders - Apply related words; Apply equivalent subjects. Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Databases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - MEDLINE	194,650
S22	"late"	Expanders - Apply related words; Apply equivalent subjects. Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Databases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - MEDLINE	450,850
S21	"early"	Expanders - Apply related words; Apply equivalent subjects. Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Databases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - MEDLINE	1,707,963
S20	(MH "Time-to-Treatment")	Expanders - Apply related words; Apply equivalent subjects. Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Databases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - MEDLINE	8,957
S19	(MH "Time") OR "time"	Expanders - Apply related words; Apply equivalent subjects. Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Databases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - MEDLINE	4,411,143
S18	S12 OR S13 OR S17	Expanders - Apply related words; Apply equivalent subjects. Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Databases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - MEDLINE	93,573
S17	S12 AND S16	Expanders - Apply related words; Apply equivalent subjects. Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Databases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - MEDLINE	966
S16	S14 OR S15	Expanders - Apply related words; Apply equivalent subjects. Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Databases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - MEDLINE	4,027
S15	"High flow nasal cannula"	Expanders - Apply related words; Apply equivalent subjects. Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Databases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - MEDLINE	1,483
S14	(MH "Noninvasive Ventila- tion")	Expanders - Apply related words; Apply equivalent subjects. Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Databases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - MEDLINE	2,867
S13	(MH "Ventilators, Mechani- cal") OR "invasive mechani- cal ventilation"	Expanders - Apply related words; Apply equivalent subjects. Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Databases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - MEDLINE	12,659
S12	"intubation" OR (MH "Intu- bation, Intratracheal")	Expanders - Apply related words; Apply equivalent subjects. Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Databases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - MEDLINE	82,217

S11	S7 OR S8 OR S9 OR S10	Expanders - Apply related words; Apply equivalent subjects. Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Databases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - MEDLINE	56,467
S10	(MH "Acute Lung Injury") OR "Acute Lung Injury"	Expanders - Apply related words; Apply equivalent subjects. Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Databases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - MEDLINE	16,754
S9	"Acute respiratory distress syndrome"	Expanders - Apply related words; Apply equivalent subjects. Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Databases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - MEDLINE	36,176
S8	(MH "Severe Acute Respira- tory Syndrome")	Expanders - Apply related words; Apply equivalent subjects. Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Databases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - MEDLINE	5,619
S7	(MH "Respiratory Distress Syndrome")	Expanders - Apply related words; Apply equivalent subjects. Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Databases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - MEDLINE	21,903
S6	S1 OR S2 OR S3 OR S4 OR S5	Expanders - Apply related words; Apply equivalent subjects. Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Databases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - MEDLINE	156,116
S5	""sars-cov-2"	Expanders - Apply related words; Apply equivalent subjects. Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Databases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - MEDLINE	116,207
S4	"Coronavirus 2019"	Expanders - Apply related words; Apply equivalent subjects. Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Databases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - MEDLINE	1,269
S3	"Covid-19 pandemic"	Expanders - Apply related words; Apply equivalent subjects. Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Databases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - MEDLINE	55,842
S2	(MH "SARS-CoV-2")	Expanders - Apply related words; Apply equivalent subjects. Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Databases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - MEDLINE	87,085
S1	(MH "COVID-19")	Expanders - Apply related words; Apply equivalent subjects. Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Databases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - MEDLINE	111,529

ProQuest Search Strategy

Set#	Searched for	Databases	Results
S1	main subject (COVID-19)	Coronavirus Research Database	51710
S2	SARS-CoV-2	Coronavirus Research Database	46791
S3	covid-19 pandemic	Coronavirus Research Database	77037
S4	coronavirus 2019	Coronavirus Research Database	55624
S5	main subject (COVID-19) OR SARS-CoV-2 OR (Covid-19 pandemic) OR (coronavirus 2019)	Coronavirus Research Database These databases are searched for part of your query.	102656
\$6	main subject (coronavirus 2019Respiratory Distress Syndrome) OR main subject (severe acute respiratory syndrome)	Coronavirus Research Database	20723
S7	acute respiratory distress syndrome	Coronavirus Research Database	12883
S8	main subject (Acute Lung Injury) OR (acute lung injury)	Coronavirus Research Database	8946
S9	(Main subject (coronavirus 2019Respiratory Distress Syndrome) OR main subject (severe acute respiratory syndrome)) OR (acute respiratory distress syndrome) OR (main subject (Acute Lung Injury) OR (acute lung injury))	Coronavirus Research Database These databases are searched for part of your query.	31230
S10	main subject (Intubation, Intratracheal) OR Intubation	Coronavirus Research Database	4198
S11	main subject (Ventilators, Mechanical) OR (invasive mechanical ventilation)	Coronavirus Research Database	3795
S12	(Noninvasive ventilation) OR (high flow nasal cannula)	Coronavirus Research Database	2017
S13	(Main subject (Intubation, Intratracheal) OR Intubation) AND ((noninvasive ventilation) OR (high flow nasal cannula))	Coronavirus Research Database These databases are searched for part of your query.	947
S14	(Main subject (Intubation, Intratracheal) OR Intubation) OR (main subject (Ventilators, Mechanical) OR (invasive mechanical ventilation)) OR ((main subject (Intubation, Intratracheal) OR Intubation) AND ((noninvasive ventilation) OR (high flow nasal cannula)))	Coronavirus Research Database These databases are searched for part of your query.	6593
S15	main subject (Time) OR Time	Coronavirus Research Database	94492
S16	Time-to-treatment	Coronavirus Research Database	141
S17	early	Coronavirus Research Database	63514
S18	late	Coronavirus Research Database	69675
S19	delay	Coronavirus Research Database	14656
S20	(Main subject (Time) OR Time) OR Time-to-treatment OR early OR late OR delay	Coronavirus Research Database These databases are searched for part of your query.	103112

95.	T		
S21	(main subject(COVID-19) OR SARS-CoV-2 OR (covid-19 pandemic) OR (coronavirus 2019)) AND ((main subject(coronavirus 2019Respiratory Distress Syndrome) OR main subject(Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome)) OR (acute respiratory distress syndrome) OR (main subject(Acute Lung Injury) OR (acute lung injury))) AND ((main subject(Intubation, Intratracheal) OR Intubation) OR (main subject(Ventilators, Mechanical) OR (invasive mechanical ventilation)) OR ((main subject(Intubation) OR (high flow nasal cannula)))) AND ((main subject(Time) OR Time) OR Time-to-treatment OR early OR late OR delay)	Coronavirus Research Database These databases are searched for part of your query.	4304
S22	(main subject(COVID-19) OR SARS-CoV-2 OR (covid-19 pandemic) OR (coronavirus 2019)) AND ((main subject(coronavirus 2019Respiratory Distress Syndrome) OR main subject(Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome)) OR (acute respiratory distress syndrome) OR (main subject(Acute Lung Injury)) OR (acute lung injury))) AND ((main subject(Intubation, Intratracheal) OR Intubation) OR (main subject(Ventilators, Mechanical) OR (invasive mechanical ventilation)) OR ((main subject(Intubation, Intratracheal) OR Intubation) AND ((noninvasive ventilation) OR (high flow nasal cannula)))) AND ((main subject(Time) OR Time) OR Time-to-treatment OR early OR late OR delay) AND steeplejack("Scholarly Journals")	Coronavirus Research Database These databases are searched for part of your query.	4023
S23	(main subject(COVID-19) OR SARS-CoV-2 OR (covid-19 pandemic) OR (coronavirus 2019)) AND ((main subject(coronavirus 2019Respiratory Distress Syndrome) OR main subject(Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome)) OR (acute respiratory distress syndrome) OR (main subject(Acute Lung Injury) OR (acute lung injury))) AND ((main subject(Intubation, Intratracheal) OR Intubation) OR (main subject(Ventilators, Mechanical) OR (invasive mechanical ventilation)) OR ((main subject(Intubation, Intratracheal) OR Intubation) AND ((noninvasive ventilation) OR (high flow nasal cannula)))) AND ((main subject(Time) OR Time) OR Time-to-treatment OR early OR late OR delay) AND (stype. exact("Scholarly Journals") AND pd(20191201-20211028))	Coronavirus Research Database These databases are searched for part of your query.	3973
S24	(main subject(COVID-19) OR SARS-CoV-2 OR (covid-19 pandemic) OR (coronavirus 2019)) AND ((main subject(coronavirus 2019Respiratory Distress Syndrome) OR main subject(Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome)) OR (acute respiratory distress syndrome) OR (main subject(Acute Lung Injury) OR (acute lung injury))) AND ((main subject(Intubation, Intratracheal) OR Intubation) OR (main subject(Ventilators, Mechanical) OR (invasive mechanical ventilation)) OR ((main subject(Intubation, Intratracheal) OR Intubation) AND ((noninvasive ventilation) OR (high flow nasal cannula)))) AND ((main subject(Time) OR Time) OR Time-to-treatment OR early OR late OR delay) AND (stype.exact("Scholarly Journals") AND la.exact("ENG") AND pd(20191201-20211028))	Coronavirus Research Database These databases are searched for part of your query.	3971
S25	(Cohort study) OR (Randomized Controlled Trials)	Coronavirus Research Database	30239
S26	((main subject(COVID-19) OR SARS-CoV-2 OR (covid-19 pandemic) OR (coronavirus 2019)) AND ((main subject(coronavirus 2019Respiratory Distress Syndrome) OR main subject(Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome)) OR (acute respiratory distress syndrome) OR (main subject(Acute Lung Injury)) OR (acute lung injury))) AND ((main subject(Intubation, Intratracheal) OR Intubation) OR (main subject(Ventilators, Mechanical) OR (invasive mechanical ventilation)) OR ((main subject(Intubation, Intratracheal) OR Intubation) AND ((main subject(Intubation) OR (high flow nasal cannula)))) AND ((main subject(Time) OR Time) OR Time-to-treatment OR early OR late OR delay) AND (stype.exact("Scholarly Journals") AND la.exact("ENG") AND pd(20191201-20211028))) AND ((Cohort study) OR (Randomized Controlled Trials))	Coronavirus Research Database These databases are searched for part of your query.	3033

Web of Science Search Strategy

```
$24 #5 AND #10 AND #17 AND #23 to 1 TimeSpan: 2019-12-01 to 2021-10-29 (Publication Date)
     Web of Science Core CollectionShow editionS464
$23 #18 OR #19 OR #20 OR #21 OR #22 OR #22 OR #22 OR #20 OF Science Core CollectionShow edition$1,754,072
\textbf{S22 ALL=(delay)}_{\text{\tiny COSC NV}} \text{ Web of Science Core CollectionShoweditionS}
S21 ALL=(early) : Web of Science Core CollectionShoweditionS
S20 ALL=(late):....Web of Science Core CollectionShoweditionS
$19ALL=(Time-TO-Treatment) Web of Science Core CollectionShow
     editionS4, 211
S18ALL=(Time):...Web of Science Core CollectionShow editionS8,727,652
$17#11 OR #12 OR #16....Web of Science Core CollectionShoweditionS
$16 #15 AND #11 Web of Science Core CollectionHide edition$2,007
$15 #13 OR #14 ....Web of Science Core CollectionShow editionS10, 955
S14ALL=(high flow naSal cannula) .......Web of Science Core CollectionShow editionS2, 302
S13ALL=(NoninvaSive Ventilation)
   Show editionS9.2
$12(ALL=(VentilatorS, Mechanical)) OR ALL=(invaSive mechanicalventilation)
     CollectionShow editionS18, 124
S11(ALL=(intubation)) OR ALL=(Intubation, Intratracheal)
   editionS47,894
$10#6 OR #7 OR #8 OR #9 Web of Science Core CollectionShow
   editionS99,930
S9ALL=(Acute Lung Injury) Research of Science Core CollectionShow editionS42, 195
\textbf{S7ALL=(Severe Acute ReSpiratorySyndrome)}_{\texttt{inn}} \texttt{wWeb of Science Core CollectionShow editionS33}, 104
S5 #1 OR #2 OR #3 OR #4 ON Web of Science Core CollectionShoweditionS200,600
S4 ALL=(coronaviruS 2019) .... wWeb of Science Core CollectionShoweditionS40, 642
S3ALL=(covid-19 pandemic)
   editionS94, 203
S2 SARS-CoV-2 (All FieldS) ... wWeb of Science Core CollectionShoweditionS56, 088
S1 COVID-19 (All FieldS) 100 NWeb of Science Core CollectionShoweditionS186, 863
```

Pubmed Searchhistory

Search nu	Querv	Sort By	Filte	ers	Search Details	Results	Time
	#23 AND #30				((("covid 19"[MeSH Terms] AND 201		16:04:36
30	#24 OR #25 OR #26 C	OR #27 OR #28 OF	from	2019,	(("time"[MeSH Terms] AND 2019/12/	726, 759	16:04:15
29	Time-to-Treatment[N	MeSH Terms]	from	2019,	("time to treatment"[MeSH Terms])	2, 470	16:03:41
28	early		from	2019	("early"[All Fields]) AND (2019/1	217, 184	16:03:14
27	late		from	2019,	("late"[All Fields]) AND (2019/12	47,613	16:02:53
26	delay		from	2019,	("delay"[All Fields] OR "delayed"	66, 484	16:02:38
25	time		from	2019	("time"[MeSH Terms] OR "time"[All	501, 228	16:02:20
24	Time[MeSH Terms]		from	2019	("time"[MeSH Terms]) AND (2019/12	43, 741	16:01:47
23	#6 AND #12 AND #22		from	2019,	((("covid 19"[MeSH Terms] AND 201	788	16:01:02
22	#19 OR #21		from	2019,	(((("intubation, intratracheal"[M	12, 187	16:00:19
21	#14 AND #20		from	2019,	(("intubate"[All Fields] OR "intu	549	15:59:51
20	#17 OR #18		from	2019,	(("noninvasive ventilation"[MeSH	2,664	15:59:27
19	#13 OR #14 OR #15 C	R #16	from	2019	(("intubation, intratracheal"[MeS	12, 187	15:59:04
18	high-flow		from	2019,	("high-flow"[All Fields]) AND (20	2, 082	15:58:44
17	Noninvasive Ventila	tion[MeSH Terms	from	2019	("noninvasive ventilation"[MeSH T	785	15:58:09
16	invasive mechanical	ventilation	from	2019,	(("invasibility"[All Fields] OR "	3, 000	15:57:39
15	Ventilators, Mechan	ical[MeSH Terms	from	2019	("ventilators, mechanical"[MeSH T	664	15:57:02
14	intubation		from	2019	("intubate"[All Fields] OR "intub	9, 154	15:56:18
13	Intubation Intratra				("intubation, intratracheal"[MeSH	2, 321	15:55:46
12	#7 OR #8 OR #9 OR #	10 OR #11	from	2019	(("respiratory distress syndrome"	12, 991	15:55:06
11	acute lung injury				("acute lung injury"[MeSH Terms]	4, 321	15:54:37
10	Acute Lung Injury[M	[eSH Terms]	from	2019	("acute lung injury"[MeSH Terms])	980	15:54:16
9	acute respiratory d	listress syndrom	from	2019	("respiratory distress syndrome"[8, 931	15:53:35
8	Severe Acute Respir	atory Syndrome	from	2019	("severe acute respiratory syndro	1, 173	15:53:06
7	Pagningtony Digtmos	a Sundana [MaS]	fnom	2010	("respiratory distress syndrome"	3, 212	15:52:2
	#1 OR #2 OR #3 OR #				("covid 19"[MeSH Terms] AND 201		
	sars-cov-2	0H /IU F1			("sars cov 2"[MeSH Terms] OR "sa	1	
	coronavirus 2019				(("coronavirus"[MeSH Terms] OR "		
	covid-19 pandemic				("covid 19"[MeSH Terms] OR "covi		
	SARS-CoV-2[MeSH Ter	eme]			("sars cov 2"[MeSH Terms]) AND (
	COVID-19 MeSH Terms				("covid 19"[MeSH Terms]) AND (20		
1	COAID ISTMESH LELMS	> 1	TTOIII	2019	(covid 19 [MeSH TeTHS]) WIND (20	1 114, 27	10.41.2

Appendix 2

Author, Years	The reason of exclusion			
Roedl et al.	It included 163 patients with COVID-19 ARDS, but which did not group these patients and describe the timing and outcomes of intubation			
Hernandez-Romieuet al. [11]	It did not distinguish between patients with COVID-19 ARDS			
Panadero et al.	It mainly included patients with COVID-19 ARDS who underwent endotracheal intubation after HFNC treatment failed			
Zhang et al. [38]	It mainly compared the survival and death groups of PATIENTS with COVID-19 ARDS			
Matta et al.	It included patients with severe COVID-19 and did not identify who met the criteria for ARDS			
Siempos et al.	It included patients with acute hypoxemic COVID-19 and compared patients with early intubation and patients with late intubation, but they were not patients with ARDS.			

Appendix 3

Etailed Newcastle-Ottawa Scale of each included cohort study.

		S	election		Compara	bility		Outcome		
Study	Representativ eness of exposed cohort	Selection of non- exposed cohort	Ascertain- ment	Demonstration that outcome of interest was not present at start of study		•		Follow-up length	Loss to follow-up rate	Total quality score
Lee et al. [2020]	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	8
Schmidt et al [2020]	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	8
Bavishi et al [2021]	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	7
Zirpe et al [2021]	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	8
Pandya et al [2021]	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	8
Vera et al [2021]	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	7

The quality of included studies was assessed by the Newcastle Ottawa scale. A study can be awarded a maximum of one star for each. numbered item within the Selection and Outcome categories and a maximum of two stars for Comparability.

Selection:

- 1) Representativeness of exposed cohort: 1, study population truly or somewhat representative of a community/ population-based study; 0, study population was sampled from a special population, that is, population from a company, hospital patients, data from the health insurance company or health examination organization, nurses.
- 2) Selection of non-exposed cohort: 1, drawn from the same community as the exposed cohort.
- 3) Ascertainment of exposure: 1, Clearly define early intubation time and late intubation time 0, The time of intubation was not clearly. defined.
- 4) Demonstration that outcome was not present at start of study: 1, SOFA score or APACHE II score have not significant difference

Comparability:

1) Whether a study adjusted for the most important factors deliberately.

2) Whether a study adjusted for other important risk factors.

Outcome:

- 1) Assessment of outcome: 1, The mortality events were confirmed by medical records or record linkage; 0, self-reported.
- 2) Was follow-up long enough for outcomes to occur: 1, duration of follow-up >= 3 months; 0 if duration of follow-up < 3 months.
- 3) Loss to follow-up rate: 1, complete follow-up or loss to follow up rate <=20%; 0, follow-up rate <80% or no description of those lost.

Modified Newcastle - Ottawa Quality Assessment Scale

Cohort Studies

Note: A study can be awarded a maximum of one star for each numbered item within the Selection and

Outcome categories. A maximum of two stars can be given for Comparability.

Study1: Lee et al (2020)

No.	Criterion	Decision rule	Score (*=1) no*=0)	Location in text
		SELECTION		
1	Representativeness of the exposed cohort	a) Truly representative of the average (describe) in the community (b) Somewhat representative of the average in the community *\underset c) Selected group of users eg nurses, volunteers d) No description of the derivation of the cohort	1	Data were collected from consecutive hospitalized adults (≥18 years old) with laboratory-confirmed SARS-CoV-2 infection who subsequently were admitted to ICUs at the three tertiary referral hospitals in Daegu, Korea between 17 February and 23 April 2020
2	Selection of the non-exposed cohort	a) Drawn from the same community as the exposed cohort *↓ b) Drawn from a different source c) No description of the derivation of the non exposed cohort	1	Come from ICUs at the same three tertiary referral hospitals
3	Ascertainment of exposure	a) Secure record (e.g., surgical records) *↓ b) Structured interview*↓ c) Written self-report d) No description	1	Early intubation: intubated/mechanically ventilated and meeting ARDS criteria on the same day (within 24 h) late intubation: not intubated on the day of ARDS diagnosis, but intubated on a subsequent study day
4	Demonstration that outcome of interest was not present at the start of the study	a) Yes* b) No or not explicitly stated	1	SOFA score: Early intubation 3 (2-7); -4), P=0.336 Late intubation 3 (2-4), P=0.336 APACHE II score: Early intubation 15 (10-17) Late intubation 15 (10-17), P=0.252 No significant difference
1	Comparability of cohorts based on the design or analysis	 a) Study controls for age and sex (select the most important factor) *↓ b) Study controls for any additional factor various sociodemographic and lifestyle variables *(These criteria could be modified to indicate specific control for a second important factor.) 	1 1	Age, sex, comorbid conditions, and presenting symptoms did not show significant differences between the groups.

		OUTCOME		
1	Assessment of outcome	a) Independent or blind assessment stated, or confirmation of the outcome by reference to secure records (e.g., imaging, structured mortality data, etc.) * b) Record linkage (e.g., identified through medical records) * c) Self-report with no reference to original structured injury data or imaging d) No description	1	Mortality data were obtained from medical records by ICU physicians
2	Was follow-up long enough for outcomes to occur?	a) Yes (≥3 months) * b) No (<3 months)	0	Median follow-up duration was 46 days
3	Adequacy of follow up of cohorts	a) Complete follow up – all participants accounted for* b) Subjects lost to follow up unlikely to introduce bias (< 20% lost to follow up, or description provided of those lost) * c) Follow up rate <85% and no description of those lost provided d) No statement	1	At the end of the study period, four patients (8.5%) remained hospitalized, 21 (44.7%) had died in the hospital, and 22 (46.8%) had been discharged
		SCORE		8

Schmidt et al (2020)

No.	Criterion Decision rule		Score (*=1, no*=0)	Location in text
		SELECTION		
1	Representativeness of the exposed cohort	a) truly representative of the average (describe) in the community * b) somewhat representative of the average in the community * c) selected group of users e.g., nurses, volunteers d) no description of the derivation of the cohort	1	COVID-ICU is a multi-canter, prospective cohort study conducted in 138 hospitals in France, Belgium, and Switzerland.
2	Selection of the non-exposed cohort	h) drawn from a different source		Come from ICUs at the same 138 hospitals
3	Ascertainment of exposure	a) secure record (e.g., surgical records) *↓ b) structured interview*↓ c) written self-report d) no description	1	Early intubation: ARDS was reported in 2233 patients on mechanical ventilation (invasive or non-invasive) on ICU Day 1 late intubation: On day-1, non-invasive ventilation were applied to 230/4109 (6%) patients
4	Demonstration that outcome of interest was not present at the start of the study a) Yes* b) No or not explicitly stated		0	SOFA score, APACHE II score: At ICU admission, their SAPS II, and SOFA scores were 37 (28–50), and 5 (3–8),
		COMPARABILITY		

1	Comparability of cohorts on the basis of the design or analysis	a) study controls for age and sex (select the most important factor) *↓ b) study controls for any additional factor various sociodemographic and lifestyle variables *(This criterion could be modified to indicate specific control for a second important factor.)	1 1	At ICU admission, their median age was 63 (54–71) years. Only 4% of patients were active smokers and only 5% had concomitant bacterial pneumonia at ICU admission.
		OUTCOME		
1	Assessment of outcome	a) Independent or blind assessment stated, or confirmation of the outcome by reference to secure records (e.g., imaging, structured mortality data, etc.) * b) record linkage (e.g., identified through medical records) * c) Self-report with no reference to original structured injury data or imaging d) No description	1	Mortality data were obtained from medical records by ICU physicians
2	Was follow-up long enough for outcomes to occur?	a) Yes (≥3 months) * b) No (<3 months)	1	90-day mortality was 820/2233 (37%)
3	a) Complete follow up – all participants accounted for* b) Subjects lost to follow up unlikely to introduce bias (< 20% lost to follow up, or description provided of those lost) * c) Follow up rate <85% and no description of those lost provided d) No statement		1	90-day mortality was 820/2233 (37%), 90-day mortality was 96/230 (42%) in patients who received standard non-invasive ventilation at day-1
		SCORE		8

Bavishi et al (2021)

No.	Criterion	Decision rule	Score (*=1, no*=0)	Location in text
		SELECTION		
1	Representativeness of the exposed cohort	a) truly representative of the average(describe) in the community *↓ b) somewhat representative of the average in the community *↓ c) selected group of users e.g., nurses, volunteers d) no description of the derivation of the cohort	1	All patients intubated for coronavirus disease in Northwestern Memorial hospital ICUs on 2019 between March 2020 and June 2020.
2	Selection of the non-exposed cohort	a) drawn from the same community as the exposed cohort *↓ b) drawn from a different source c) no description of the derivation of the non-exposed cohort	1	Come from the same ICU

3	Ascertainment of exposure	a) secure record (e.g., surgical records) *↓ b) structured interview* ↓ c) written self-report d) no description	1	Data were stratified based on time from hospital admission to time of intubation. The "early intubation cohort" was defined as those subjects intubated between 4 and 24 hours after admission the "late intubation cohort" consisted of subjects intubated between 5 and 10 days after admission
4	Demonstration that outcome of interest was not present at the start of the study	a) Yes* b) No or not explicitly stated	1	There was no difference in Sequential Organ Failure Assessment (SOFA) scores between the cohorts at time of ICU admission
		COMPARABILITY		
1	Comparability of cohorts on the basis of the design or analysis	a) study controls for age and sex (select the most important factor) *↓ b) study controls for any additional factor various sociodemographic and lifestyle variables *(These criteria could be modified to indicate specific control for a second important factor.)	1 0	Age, sex, comorbid conditions, and presenting symptoms did not show significant differences between the groups. Body mass index, Hypertension, Chronic kidney disease, End-stage renal disease and Smoking history show significant differences between the groups
		OUTCOME		
1	Assessment of	a) Independent or blind assessment stated,	1	Data were obtained from the electronic medical record
1	outcome	or confirmation of the outcome by reference to secure records (e.g., imaging, structured mortality data, etc.) * b) record linkage (e.g., identified through medical records)* c) Self-report with no reference to original structured injury data or imaging	1	with a combination of automatic extraction using the electronic data warehouse.
2	Was follow-up long enough for outcomes to occur?	d) No description a) Yes (≥3 months) * b) No (<3 months)	0	length of follow-up is extracted from the time frame (2019 between March 2020 and June 2020.)
3	Adequacy of follow up of cohorts	a) Complete follow up – all participants accounted for* b) Subjects lost to follow up unlikely to introduce bias (< 20% lost to follow up, or description provided of those lost) * c) Follow up rate <85% and no description of those lost provided d) No statement	1	Mortality: Early intubation 2 (6%) Late intubation 7 (29%) P<0.001a

Zirpe et al (2021)

No.	Criterion	Decision rule	Score (*=1, no*=0)	Location in text
SELECTION				

1	Representativeness of the exposed cohort	a) truly representative of the average (describe) in the community *↓ b) somewhat representative of the average in the community *↓ c) selected group of users e.g., nurses, volunteers d) no description of the derivation of the cohort	1	All patients admitted to intensive care unit of a tertiary care hospital in Pune, India between April 1, 2020, and October 15, 2020
2	Selection of the non-exposed cohort	a) drawn from the same community as the exposed cohort *\underset b) drawn from a different source c) no description of the derivation of the non-exposed cohort	1	Come from ICUs at the same intensive care unit
3	Ascertainment of exposure	a) secure record (e.g., surgical records) *↓ b) structured interview* ↓ c) written self-report d) no description	1	Early intubation: within 48 hours of admission to critical care unit late intubation: after 48 hours of admission to critical care unit
4	Demonstration that outcome of interest was not present at the start of the study	a) Yes* b) No or not explicitly stated	1	The median qSOFA score assessed on admission to critical care unit was 1 (IQR, 1–2) and was comparable in both the groups
		COMPARABILITY		
1	Comparability of cohorts on the basis of the design or analysis	a) study controls for age and sex (select the most important factor) *↓ b) study controls for any additional factor various sociodemographic and lifestyle variables *(These criteria could be modified to indicate specific control for a second important factor.)	1 1	Age, sex, comorbid conditions, and presenting symptoms did not show significant differences between the groups.
		оитсоме		
1	Assessment of outcome	a) Independent or blind assessment stated, or confirmation of the outcome by reference to secure records (e.g., imaging, structured mortality data, etc.) * b) record linkage (e.g., identified through medical records) * c) Self-report with no reference to original structured injury data or imaging d) No description	1	Patient data were obtained retrospectively from patient files, nursing charts, and treatment sheets
2	Was follow-up long enough for outcomes to occur?	a) Yes (≥3 months) * b) No (<3 months)	0	length of follow-up is extracted from the time frame
3	Adequacy of follow up of cohorts	a) Complete follow up – all participants accounted for * b) Subjects lost to follow up unlikely to introduce bias (< 20% lost to follow up, or description provided of those lost) * c) Follow up rate <85% and no description of those lost provided d) No statement	1	Mortality was 60% in those intubated within 48 hours of critical care unit admission (early group) compared to 77.7% in those of delayed group

Pandya et al. (2021)

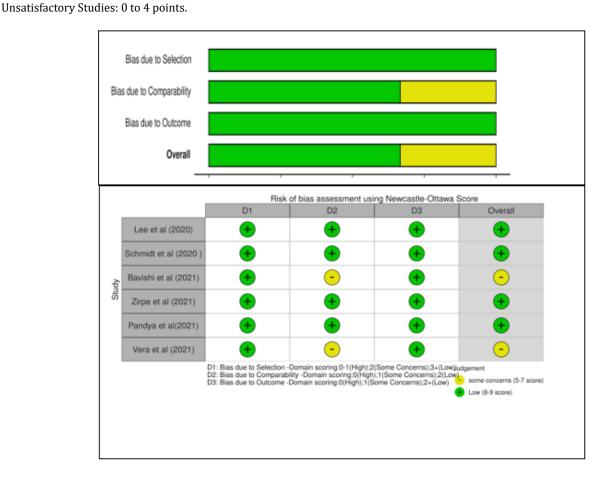
No.	Criterion	Decision rule	Score (*=1, no*=0)	Location in text
		SELECTION		
1	Representativeness of the exposed cohort	a) truly representative of the average(describe) in the community *↓ b) somewhat representative of the average in the community *↓ c) selected group of users eg nurses, volunteers d) no description of the derivation of the cohort	1	This retrospective study includes adult inpatients requiring invasive mechanical ventilation secondary to COVID-19 at Temple University Hospital between February and May 2020. Positive infection status was confirmed by polymerase chain reaction nasopharyngeal swab.
2	Selection of the non-exposed cohort	a) drawn from the same community as the exposed cohort *↓ b) drawn from a different source c) no description of the derivation of the non-exposed cohort	1	Come from the same University Hospital
3	Ascertainment of exposure	a) secure record (e.g., surgical records) *↓ b) structured interview *↓ c) written self-report d) no description	1	Patients were separated into an early intubation (≤1.27 days) or late intubation (>1.27 days) group for analysis.
4	Demonstration that outcome of interest was not present at the start of the study	a) Yes* b) No or not explicitly stated	1	Lower static compliance (34.88 vs 40.68; P = $.311$) and higher VR (1.90 vs 1.57; P = $.078$) was noted in the late intubation group on day 0
		COMPARABILITY		
1	Comparability of cohorts because of the design or analysis	a) study controls for age and sex (select the most important factor) *↓ b) study controls for any additional factor various sociodemographic and lifestyle variables *(These criteria could be modified to indicate specific control for a second important factor.)	1 1	Age and sex did not show significant differences between the groups. Lower static compliance (34.88 vs 40.68; P = .311) and higher VR (1.90 vs 1.57; P = .078) was noted in the late intubation group on day 0, although these values were not statistically significant
		OUTCOME		
1	Assessment of outcome	a) Independent or blind assessment stated, or confirmation of the outcome by reference to secure records (e.g., imaging, structured mortality data, etc.) * b) record linkage (e.g., identified through medical records)* c) Self-report with no reference to original structured injury data or imaging d) No description	1	Data were collected from the electronic medical record
2	Was follow-up long enough for out- comes to occur?	a) Yes (≥3 months) * b) No (<3 months)	0	As of data censoring on June 20, 2020
3	Adequacy of follow up of cohorts	a) Complete follow up – all participants accounted for* b) Subjects lost to follow up unlikely to introduce bias (< 20% lost to follow up, or description provided of those lost) * c) Follow up rate <85% and no description of those lost provided d) No statement	1	As of data censoring on June 20, 2020, 49% of all mechanically ventilated patients had died
		SCORE		8

Study 6: Vera et al (2021)

No.	Criterion	Decision rule	Score (*=1, no*=0)	Location in text				
		SELECTION						
1	Representativeness of the exposed cohort	a) truly representative of the average (describe) in the community *\ b) somewhat representative of the average in the community *\ c) selected group of users e.g., nurses, volunteers d) no description of the derivation of the cohort	1	Patients with laboratory-confirmed SARS-CoV-2 infection and moderate to severe ARDS were consecutively included between March 17 and July 31, 2020.				
2	Selection of the non-exposed cohort	a) drawn from the same community as the exposed cohort *↓ b) drawn from a different source c) no description of the derivation of the non-exposed cohort	1	Came from the same ICU of the Clinical Hospital of the UC-CHRISTUS Health Network in Santiago				
3	Ascertainment of exposure	a) secure record (e.g., surgical records) *↓ b) structured interview*↓ c) written self-report d) no description	1	Early intubation: Eighty-eight patients (48%) were intubated before 48 h (early); late intubation: ninety-five (52%) after 48 h (late). According to ROC curve analyses from our data, the time of intubation was classified as early (<48 h) or late (≥48 h).				
4	Demonstration that outcome of interest was not present at the start of the study	a) Yes* b) No or not explicitly stated	1	SOFA score: Early intubation 6 [4–8]; Late intubation 4 [2–8], P=0.014 APACHE II score: Early intubation 12 [8–15] Late intubation 12 [8–15], P=0.354 Thoracic CT scan showed a predominance of ground-glass opacities, with no difference between groups.				
	(COMPARABILITY						
1	a) study controls for age and sex (selecthe most important factor) *↓ Comparability of b) study controls for any additional factor various sociodemographic and lifestyle variables *(These criteria could be modified to indicate specific control for a second important factor.		0	Early intubation: median age 59 [53–66] late intubation: 64 [55–71] P=0.013 comorbid conditions and presenting symptoms did not show significant differences between the groups.				
		OUTCOME						

1	Assessment of outcome	a) Independent or blind assessment stated, or confirmation of the outcome by reference to secure records (e.g., imaging, structured mortality data, etc.) * b) record linkage (e.g., identified through medical records) * c) Self-report with no reference to original structured injury data or imaging d) No description	1	Data Collection. Data were recorded prospectively by the research team in an electronic worksheet during the patient's stay in the ICU.		
2	Was follow-up long enough for outcomes to occur?	a) Yes (≥3 months) * b) No (<3 months)	0	length of follow-up is extracted from the time frame		
3	Adequacy of follow up of cohorts	a) Complete follow up – all participants accounted for* b) Subjects lost to follow up unlikely to introduce bias (< 20% lost to follow up, or description provided of those lost) * c) Follow up rate <85% and no descrip- tion of those lost provided d) No statement	1	Mortality was higher in patients intubated late [16(18%) versus 43(43%)],		
		SCORE	7			

Cohort Studies: Very Good Studies: 9-10 points; Good Studies: 7-8 points; Satisfactory Studies: 5-6 points.



Appendix 4-data extraction

First author	Coun- try	Type of study	Patient popula- tion(N)	Early defini- tion (h)	Late defini- tion (h)	Early intuba- tion (N)	Late intuba- tion(N)	mortali- ty(early)	mortali- ty(late)	Length of ICU stay, Days (Early)	Length of ICU stay, Days(late)	MV days(ear- ly)	MV Days (late)	male sex, %	Age, years	SOFA at ICU admis- sion(ear- ly)	SOFA at ICU admis- sion(late)
Lee et al (2020)	Daegu, Korea	multi- center, retrospec- tive, obser- vational study	47	<24	>24	23	16	13 (56.5)	7 (43.8)	13 (7-33)	47 (13-74)	10 (4-24)	20 (9–57)	28(59.6%)	70 years (IQR, 63-77 years)	3 (2-7)	3 (2-4)
Schmidt et al (2020)	France, Belgium, Switzerland	multi-cen- ter, prospec- tive cohort study	2233	<24	>24	2003	230	724 (37%)	96 (42%)						63 (54-71)	5 (3-8)	
Bavishi et al (2021)	Amer- ica	Retrospec- tive cohort study	54	4-24	>24	30	24	2 (6%)	7 (29%)	12 (5-17)	15 (10-19)	10 (5-15)	10(7- 19)	37	60(42- 69)	6(3-8)	4(1-7)
Zirpe et al (2021)	India	retrospec- tive obser- vational study	147	<48	>48	75	72	45 (60%)	56 (77.7%)	14 (9.7-21)	16 (7-21.7)	7 (4-12)	6 (2-12)	109 (74.1%	59 (51- 67)	1 (1-2)	1 (1-2)
Pandya et al (2021)	Amer- ica	retrospec- tive study	75	≤1.27 days	>1.27 days	37	38	17 (45.95%)	20 (54.05%)	7.38 (3.88- 10.21)	12.31 (7.75- 19.96)	5.86	10.30	43 (57.33%)65			
Vera et al (2021)	Chile	observa- tional, pro- spective, single-cen- ter study	183	<48	>48	88	95	16 (18%)	43 (43%)	31 (17-45)	36 (24–62)	13 (8-25)	16 (9-33)	132	61.5(53- 71)	6 (4-8)	4 (2-8)

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