



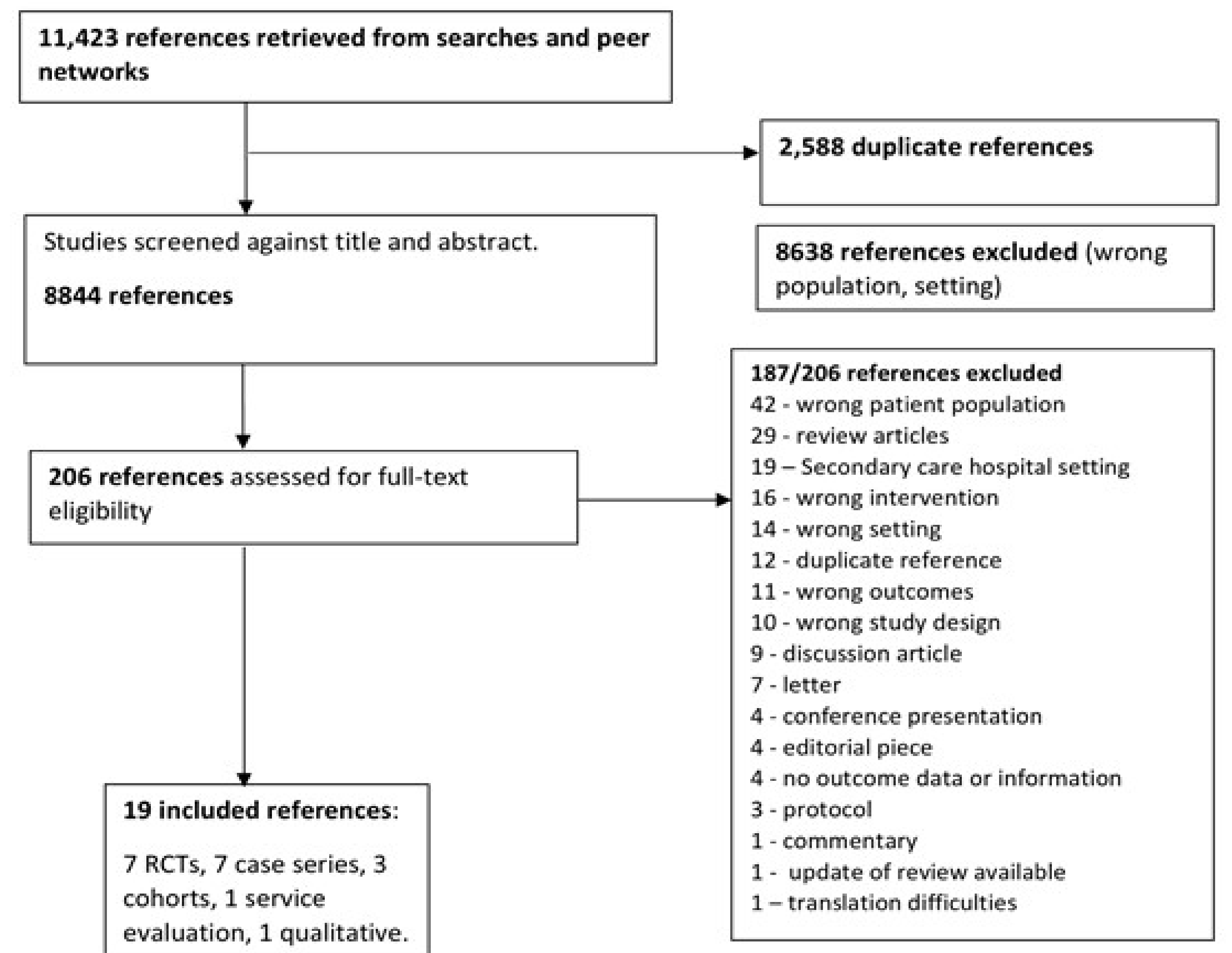
Manual therapy for unsettled, distressed and excessively crying infants: a systematic review and meta-analyses.

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Aim: To conduct a systematic review and meta-analyses to assess the effect of manual therapy interventions for healthy but unsettled, distressed and excessively crying infants, to provide information to help clinicians and parents inform decisions about care.

Methods: We reviewed published peer-reviewed articles in the last 26 years from 9 databases. Our inclusion criteria were: manual therapy (by regulated or registered professionals) of unsettled, distressed and excessively crying infants who were otherwise healthy and treated in a primary care setting. Outcomes of interest were: crying, feeding, sleep, parent-child relations, parent experience/satisfaction and parent-reported global change.

Results: Nineteen studies were selected for full review: 7 randomised controlled trials, 7 case series, 3 cohort studies, 1 service evaluation study and 1 qualitative study.



Results (cont.): We found moderate strength favourable evidence for the effectiveness of manual therapy on: **reduction in crying time -1.27 hours per day (95% CI -2.19, -0.36)**. Evidence for sleep was inconclusive; parent-child relations, inconclusive; and global improvement, no effect.

Reported adverse events was low: 7 non-serious events per 1,000 infants exposed to manual therapy (n= 1308) and 110 per 1,000 in those not exposed.

Conclusions: Some small benefits were found but whether these are meaningful to parents remains unclear as does the mechanisms of action. Manual therapy appears relatively safe.

