

Publication

Adult vaccination for pneumococcal disease: a comparison of the national guidelines in Europe

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Pneumococcal disease constitutes a major global health problem. Adults aged over 50 years and younger adults with specific chronic health conditions are at risk for invasive pneumococcal disease, associated with substantial morbidity and mortality. In Europe, two vaccine types are used in adults for pneumococcal immunization: pneumococcal polysaccharide vaccine (PPV23) and pneumococcal conjugate vaccine (PCV13). To provide an overview and to compare the national guidelines for pneumococcal immunization for adults in Europe. In November 2016, national guidelines on pneumococcal vaccination for adults of 31 European countries were obtained by Google search, the website of European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, and contacting public health officials. In our analysis, we distinguished between age-based and risk-based guidelines. In October 2017, we used the same method to retrieve guideline updates. We observed great variability regarding age, risk groups, vaccine type, and use of boosters. In age-based guidelines, vaccination is mostly recommended in adults aged over 65 years using PPV23. Boosters are generally not recommended. An upper age limit for vaccination is reported in three countries. In the immunocompromised population, vaccination with both vaccines and administration of a booster is mostly recommended. In the population with chronic health conditions, there is more heterogeneity according vaccine type, sequence, and administration of boosters. Asplenia is the only comorbidity for which all countries recommend vaccination. The great variability in European pneumococcal vaccination guidelines warrants European unification of the guidelines for better control of pneumococcal disease.

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