



CONSENSUS

Consensus document for the prevention of respiratory infections in adults



KEYWORDS

Prevention;
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Flu vaccination;
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vaccination

PALAVRAS-CHAVE

Prevenção;
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Vacina da gripe;
Vacina pneumocócica

Abstract Infectious diseases are one of the principle causes of morbidity, mortality and drain on health resources worldwide. In recent years there has been an increase in the impact of respiratory infections, particularly in the Portuguese population. It is for this reason that the Portuguese Respiratory Society has presented a series of recommendations for the prevention of respiratory infections in adults. These recommendations include both general measures and vaccinations for flu and pneumococcal pneumonia.

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Documento de Consenso para a prevenção das infeções respiratórias no adulto

Resumo As infeções respiratórias são uma das principais causas de morbilidade, mortalidade e consumo de recursos de saúde a nível global. Nos últimos anos tem-se assistido a um crescente impacto das infeções respiratórias, nomeadamente na população portuguesa. Assim, a Sociedade Portuguesa de Pneumologia apresenta um conjunto de recomendações para a prevenção das infeções respiratórias no adulto. Estas recomendações englobam medidas gerais e de vacinação antigripal e antipneumocócica.

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Respiratory infections are among the principal causes of morbidity, mortality and of demands on health resources at a global level.¹ Apart from the direct and indirect costs, what is of major concern is the associated high consumption of antimicrobial drugs and the consequent increased growth in resistance to this class of medicines, which could affect the use of some types of antibiotics in the near future.

In continental Portugal, recently published data relating to the period of 2000–2009 document the significant impact of respiratory infections and, in particular, of pneumonias. In this period hospital admissions for Community Acquired

Pneumonia (CAP) represent 3.7% of the total number of adult hospital admission for all causes in National Health Service institutions.² In the age groups ≥ 50 and ≥ 65 , hospitalization for CAP represents 5.5% and 7.0% of total admissions respectively.²

Given this national situation, there is a general consensus about the necessity for a rapid implementation of measures to prevent respiratory infections in adults.

These preventive measures against respiratory infection cover general measures and specific measures: vaccination against flu and antipneumococcal.

Table 1 Recommendations for adult antipneumococcal vaccination.

Age	Groups at risk of invasive pneumococcal disease	VPC13		VPP23
		Vaccination	Vaccination	Revaccination (after 5 years)
≥18	<i>Immunocompromised:</i> Congenital or acquired immunodeficiency HIV/AIDS Chronic renal failure Nephrotic syndrome Neoplastic diseases (e.g., haematological malignancies, lymphomas, multiple myeloma) Iatrogenic immunosuppression (e.g., long-term systemic corticotherapy, chemotherapy and radiotherapy) Solid organ transplant	Recommended	Recommended	Recommended
	<i>Anatomical or functional asplenia</i> (e.g., sickle cell anaemia and other hemoglobinopathies, congenital or acquired asplenia)	Recommended	Recommended	Recommended
	Cerebrospinal fluid leaks	Recommended	Recommended	Recommended
	Cochlear implants	Recommended	Recommended	Recommended
≥50	<i>Chronic co-morbidities:</i> Chronic respiratory diseases (includes chronic asthma under inhaled corticosteroid) Chronic cardiac diseases (excludes hypertension alone) Chronic liver diseases (e.g., cirrhosis) Diabetes mellitus (excludes patients controlled by diet only)	Recommended	Recommended	Recommended
≥65	<i>Individuals aged ≥65</i>	Recommended	Recommended	Not recommended

General measures

In the general measures, related to host defences, the following are recommended³:

- smoking cessation;
- control of chronic illnesses (diabetes mellitus, COPD, congestive heart failure, chronic renal failure, chronic liver disease, HIV/AIDS infection, etc.);
- judicious use of immunosuppressive therapies (including corticosteroids);
- alcohol counselling (including acute intoxication and chronic alcoholism);
- advice about dealing with cases of drug addiction;
- adequate nutritional status;

- gamma globulin IV immunotherapy in selected patients (IgG deficiency, multiple myeloma, chronic lymphocytic leukaemia, transplant patients).

Anti-flu vaccination

This endorses the Directorate-General of Health recommendation for vaccination against seasonal flu for the current season.⁴ Health professionals and other professionals involved in front-line health care are a priority group for vaccination, because of the increased risk of contracting the illness and transmitting it to their families and their patients. Setting an example and the counselling about vaccination given by health professionals represent one of the principle success factors in keeping to vaccination targets.

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