

Vaccination strategies in respiratory diseases

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ABSTRACT

Vaccination remains a cornerstone in preventing morbidity and mortality among older adults and individuals with chronic respiratory diseases such as asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). With the release of the 2025 Malaysian National Vaccine-Preventable Disease (VPD) recommendations, vaccination strategies for this vulnerable population have been further refined. Key updates include universal annual influenza vaccination for all adults aged ≥ 60 years, with preference for high-dose or adjuvanted formulations where available. Pneumococcal protection can now be achieved using a single dose of PCV20, or alternatively, PCV15 followed by PPSV23 after one year. Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) vaccination is recommended for all ≥ 60 years and extended to those aged 50–59 years with comorbidities such as chronic lung disease, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, or immunocompromise. Tdap remains essential, with one adult dose followed by 10-yearly boosters, while recombinant zoster vaccine (RZV) is now recommended for all adults ≥ 50 years, administered in two doses. This presentation highlights the rationale and clinical implications of these updated recommendations, using case-based examples to illustrate practical decision-making. Implementation of these strategies is expected to reduce respiratory-related hospitalisations, improve patient outcomes, and enhance quality of life among older adults and those living with chronic respiratory conditions.

Keywords: Vaccine-Preventable Disease, Influenza, Pneumococcal, COPD, RSV