

EULAR
28.10.2022
Kilchberg,
Switzerland

UPDATE: VACCINATION IN CHILDREN WITH AIIRD

EULAR recommendations published in the *Annals of the Rheumatic Diseases*

EULAR – the European Alliance of Rheumatology Associations – has updated its recommendations on safe and effective vaccination and infection prevention in immunocompromised children with autoimmune/inflammatory rheumatic diseases (pedAIIRD).

People with autoimmune or auto-inflammatory rheumatic diseases have an increased risk of infections. This can be due to the underlying disease itself, or may be caused by treatment with immunomodulating or immunosuppressive drugs. Vaccinations play an important role in infection prevention. But children with pedAIIRD require a vaccination schedule that takes into account their disease activity, current treatment, and infection risk, as well as vaccine efficacy and safety.

EULAR first developed recommendations for the vaccination of children with pedAIIRD in 2011. Since then, the volume of evidence has doubled – and the strength of that evidence has increased. Over the same period, new treatments for pedAIIRD have become available.

The updated EULAR recommendations were developed by a multidisciplinary task force from 9 European countries. The people taking part had expertise in paediatric and adult rheumatology, biology, epidemiology, and immunology. The group also included patient representatives. The work was completed in line with EULAR standardized operating procedures.

The paper developed by EULAR and published in June 2022 issue of the *Annals of the Rheumatic Diseases* includes six overarching principles and seven recommendations.

The principles say that the vaccination status must be assessed yearly by the treating specialist, and ideally that they be administered during quiescent disease. If possible, vaccinations should be administered 2–4 weeks prior to commencement of immunosuppression – but caution that necessary treatment should never be postponed. In general, vaccinations should follow the national immunization program and guidelines for travel vaccines. Furthermore, this excludes live-attenuated vaccines in immunosuppressed patients, with a notable exception to measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) booster and varicella vaccination under specific conditions.

The recommendations are simplified from the 2011 version. Previously, recommendations were grouped based on use of immunosuppressive drugs, non-live vaccines, and live-attenuated vaccines – but this created overlap between individual recommendations. In the updated, some recommendations have therefore been combined, and others shifted toward the overarching principles. The resulting recommendations cover vaccination against seasonal ‘flu, pneumococcus, tetanus, human papilloma virus, and yellow fever, as well as MMR and varicella.

EULAR hopes these recommendations will support paediatricians, rheumatologists, national immunization agencies, general practitioners, patients, and national societies in achieving safe

and effective vaccination and optimal infection prevention in immunocompromised children with AIIRDs.

Source

[Jansen MHA, Rondaan C, Legger GE, et alEULAR/PRES recommendations for vaccination of paediatric patients with autoimmune inflammatory rheumatic diseases: update 2021Annals of the Rheumatic Diseases Published Online First: 20 June 2022. doi: 10.1136/annrheumdis-2022-222574](#)

About EULAR

EULAR is the European umbrella organisation representing scientific societies, health professional associations and organisations for people with rheumatic and musculoskeletal diseases (RMDs). EULAR aims to reduce the burden of RMDs on individuals and society and to improve the treatment, prevention and rehabilitation of RMDs. To this end, EULAR fosters excellence in education and research in the field of rheumatology. It promotes the translation of research advances into daily care and fights for the recognition of the needs of people with RMDs by the EU institutions through advocacy action.

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