Should chronic obstructive pulmonary disease patients must be vaccinated?

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Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) patients have 2 or 4 exacerbations in a year, especially during the winter months. Tracheobronchial infections are responsible from the 50% to 70% of acute exacerbations. Exacerbations of COPD cause frequent emergency and hospital admissions, influence health-related quality of life and increase mortality. In this study we aimed to determine the level of knowledge and rates of influenza and pneumococcal vaccination in COPD patients, we investigated the effect of the vaccine about the emergency department and hospital admission rate. 88 COPD patients admitted to our outpatient clinic between September-October 2012 were included. Educational levels of patients, history of vaccination, emergency and hospital admission in one year were questioned. 70% of patients went to the primary school, 24% of middle school / high school, %1 of university graduates, and 5% of the patients were illiterate. 51% of the patients have been vaccinated and 49% of them not vaccinated. There was no relationship between educational level and the rate of vaccine administration. Emergency and hospital admissions were significantly decreased in vaccinated COPD patients (respectively $p<0.001$ and $p=0.016$). Physicians should be more sensitive about the vaccination and recommend influenza and pneumococcal vaccines to COPD patients in order to reduce exacerbations.