

Vaccinating adults with new pneumonia vaccine more cost-effective: researcher

February 24 2012, By Karen N. Peart



(Medical Xpress) -- A new study suggests vaccinating adults against one of the most common causes of pneumonia with a new vaccine, which has virtually eliminated this infection in children, is more cost effective than using the current vaccine. Yale researcher Dr. Eugene Shapiro agrees with the study's findings in an editorial published in the current issue of *JAMA*.

Pneumococcal conjugate vaccine has been routinely given to children in the United States since 2000. In December 2011, the government approved this new conjugate vaccine for use in adults, but an older version, pneumococcal polysaccharide vaccine, is still being routinely used.

“This new study may aid policy makers who must review and decide whether to change the current recommendations for vaccinating adults against this common serious kind of [infection](#),” said Shapiro, professor of pediatrics, epidemiology and public health, and investigative medicine. “Cost-effectiveness studies allow experts to assess the costs and benefits of different strategies and decide what strategy is best for preventing or treating a disease.”

Currently a single dose of pneumococcal polysaccharide vaccine, designed to prevent serious infection like [pneumonia](#) and meningitis caused by the pneumococcus bacteria, is recommended routinely for all adults 65 years and older, and for younger persons at risk of this infection because of underlying conditions like chronic heart or lung disease.

In the current issue of JAMA, researchers from University of Pittsburgh and the Centers for Disease Control report that a cost-effectiveness analysis that they conducted indicates that substitution of the new conjugate pneumococcal vaccine for routine vaccine of [adults](#) would be more cost-effective than the current policy of using the older pneumococcal polysaccharide [vaccine](#).

“As pneumococcal vaccines get better and more people get vaccinated, the number of people who get this potentially deadly infection continues to decrease,” said Shapiro.

More information: Citation: *JAMA*, Vol. 37, No. 8 (Feb. 22/29, 2012).

Provided by Yale University

Citation: Vaccinating adults with new pneumonia vaccine more cost-effective: researcher (2012, February 24) retrieved 4 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2012-02-vaccinating-adults-pneumonia-vaccine-cost-effective.html>

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