

Determinants of maternal acceptance of respiratory syncytial virus vaccination: knowledge gaps and influence of healthcare professionals

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Objective. This study aims to evaluate women's readiness to receive the new respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) vaccine and identify factors associated with greater adherence.

Materials and Methods. This prospective observational study enrolled 290 pregnant women at Mangiagalli Hospital, Milan, who completed a short questionnaire on demographic maternal characteristics, medical history and vaccines acceptance and knowledge. Logistic regression is used to identify factors influencing vaccination predisposition.

Results. Overall, 259/290 (89.3%) women expressed willingness to receive pertussis vaccination and only 209/290 (72.1%) for RSV vaccination ($p < 0.001$). For RSV, positive determinants of vaccination acceptance included a higher educational level ($p < 0.001$; OR 7.1, 95%CI 2.8-17.6) and receiving information from a healthcare professional ($p < 0.01$; OR 2.7, 95%CI 1.4-5.1). Conversely, the primary barrier reported by women unwilling to receive RSV vaccination was

the lack of prior communication on the topic (52/80, 65%). Indeed, 50/80 (62.8%) women not favouring RSV vaccination reported having no prior knowledge of this infection. Additionally, 42/80 (52.5%) were unaware that maternal antibodies can be transferred to the foetus during pregnancy, and 50/80 (62.5%) did not know that this transfer could also occur during breastfeeding. Moreover, 217/290 (74.8%) women expressed a desire for further information on this topic. However, 236/290 (81.4%) supported the administration of both vaccines simultaneously.

Conclusions. RSV vaccination programs will soon be available in Italy, and appropriate counselling is essential to increase vaccination acceptance. Therefore, the role of gynaecologists will be crucial in informing patients about the fundamental role of vaccination in preventing serious complications of the neonatal RSV infection. The combination of vaccine administration will represent a potential strategy.