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Vaccination rates in rheumatic diseases: a cross-sectional register study on the role of patient beliefs and physician engagement

This study looked at vaccination attitudes and vaccination uptake among 2,446 people in Switzerland with autoimmune inflammatory rheumatic diseases, including rheumatoid arthritis, axial spondyloarthritis, and psoriatic arthritis. Most patients considered vaccination important, and many reported having discussed vaccination with their rheumatologist. However, vaccination uptake was still relatively low: only 48% had their vaccination status checked in the previous 24 months, 51% reported influenza vaccination, and 33% reported pneumococcal vaccination. Discussions with the rheumatologist, before starting or during treatment, were associated with higher vaccination uptake. Belief in the importance of vaccination was also linked to better influenza vaccination coverage and more frequent vaccination status checks.

These findings are important because patients with inflammatory rheumatic diseases may be more vulnerable to infections, partly due to their disease and treatments. For rheumatologists, the study highlights the value of routinely discussing vaccination and checking vaccination status. For patients, it shows that clear information and shared decision-making may help improve protection against preventable infections.

Link to the publication: Vaccination rates in rheumatic diseases: a cross-sectional register study on the role of patient beliefs and physician engagement at <https://academic.oup.com/rheumatology/article/doi/10.1093/rheumatology/keag123/8524534>