

Announcement

World Pneumonia Day — November 12, 2014

The sixth annual World Pneumonia Day is being observed November 12, 2014, to raise awareness about pneumonia's toll and to promote interventions to protect against, treat, and prevent the disease globally. The United States has made great strides in protecting children from the serious, and sometimes deadly, effects of pneumonia through recent vaccination efforts. Tennessee, for example, is experiencing historically low rates of pneumonia hospitalizations in children aged <2 years since pneumococcal conjugate vaccines were introduced in 2000 (1). Data suggest that this progress also is being seen across the country (2). In spite of this success, however, pneumonia still kills approximately 50,000 people in the United States each year, 85% of whom are adults aged ≥65 years. In response, this year CDC recommended pneumococcal conjugate vaccine for adults aged ≥65 years.

Globally, pneumonia kills nearly 1 million children aged <5 years each year (3). In addition to bacterial pathogens, many viruses such as respiratory syncytial virus, influenza, and measles also are major causes of pneumonia globally. Many deaths and illnesses from pneumonia can be prevented with the use of 1) pneumococcal, *Haemophilus influenzae* type b (Hib), influenza, and measles vaccines; 2) appropriate antimicrobial therapy; and 3) supportive health care, among other strategies.

Communities around the world face a range of respiratory disease threats, including reemerging or newly identified pathogens. In late summer, infection with the uncommon enterovirus EV-D68 led to the hospitalization of hundreds

of children in multiple states (4). In and around the Arabian Peninsula, a recently recognized coronavirus (Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus) has been fatal in about one third of reported cases (5). Vaccines are not available to provide protection against these or many of the other pathogens that commonly cause pneumonia, including respiratory syncytial virus, human metapneumovirus, and *Mycoplasma pneumoniae*, highlighting the importance of research into vaccine development as well as effective treatment and diagnostics for viral and bacterial pneumonia. Additional information regarding World Pneumonia Day is available at <http://worldpneumoniaday.org>.

References

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