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Discussion Letter

A call to integrate Post-TB Lung Disease into vaccination strategies for chronic respiratory diseases

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Dear Editor,

Post Tuberculosis Lung Disease (PTLD) is a condition attracting much interest, as affecting up to 50% of drug-susceptible and 85% of drug-resistant patients completing anti-TB treatment[1-4].

Beyond affecting the patients' quality of life, PTLD predisposes to multiple lung diseases (e.g. Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease-COPD, chronic pulmonary aspergillosis, bronchiectasis, and COVID-19)[4-7], it increases the risks of cancers and cardiovascular diseases[1,2] and produces a four-fold higher mortality rate compared to the general population[2-7].

PTLD, a well-recognized chronic respiratory condition[8,9], benefits from selected vaccinations as recently emphasized by the Brazilian and Latin American Thoracic Association (ALAT) guidelines[8,9].

A recent national inter-society statement summarized the best vaccination strategies in respiratory disease[10] which included COPD, asthma, bronchiectasis and interstitial lung diseases and, unfortunately, not PTLD.

Vaccination is an important approach to prevent and mitigate the evolution of lung damage, caused by TB, as well as rehabilitation of patients with PTLD is essential to allow them to return to an active and productive life[11,12].

Recent evidence[13] showed how vaccines against influenza, pneumococcal disease, and COVID-19, can be beneficial for PTLD patients who should also receive vaccines recommended for the general population or specific age groups (e.g., tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis, measles, and shingles[13]. These vaccinations are essential to reduce the burden of preventable infections and improve long-term outcomes in this vulnerable population.

We therefore call for including PTLD among the chronic respiratory conditions likely to benefit from a tailored vaccination plan.

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