

comparing percentages and a p value <0.05 was considered as statistically significant.

Results:

A total of 200 patients were included with a mean age of 54.4 ± 12.7 years. The willingness to receive influenza and COVID-19 vaccine were respectively of 39.0% and 35.0%. A higher proportion of 69.0% was observed for the willingness to receive vaccines against other infectious diseases. Among surveyed patients, the high majority (81.0%) agreed with the fact that there is no need to be vaccinated because native immunity exists and or because vaccines are unsafe. This belief was significantly associated to patients' unacceptance of COVID-19 (91.3% vs 63.8%, $p < 0.001$), influenza (86.8% vs 72.7%, $p = 0.013$) and other infectious diseases vaccines (93.5% vs 75.9%, $p = 0.003$).

Conclusions:

This study reported low acceptance proportions of influenza and COVID-19 vaccines and that false beliefs constitute a threat to vaccine acceptance. Healthcare professionals should educate and encourage cancer patients to be vaccinated, especially against COVID-19, influenza and pneumococcal infections.

Key messages:

- Low acceptance proportions of influenza and COVID-19 vaccines, were found in this study.
- Improving communication strategies in order to redress false beliefs and increase vaccine acceptance is recommended.

Attitudes and beliefs regarding current vaccines among Tunisian cancer patients

Ines Cherif

I Cherif¹, H Khari², F M'ghirbi³, R Mallekh¹, A Mezlini³, M Hsairi²

¹Faculty of Medicine of Tunis, Tunis, Tunisia

²Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics, Salah Azaiz Institute, Tunis, Tunisia

³Medical Oncology Department, Salah Azaiz Institute, Tunis, Tunisia

Contact: ines.cherif1993@gmail.com

Background:

Vaccines constitute a successful and cost-effective public health tool. Whereas, skepticism regarding their safety and efficacy remains prevalent. We aimed in this study to assess attitudes and beliefs regarding current vaccines among cancer patients in a national Tunisian center for cancer care.

Methods:

A cross sectional study was conducted, during the month of February 2021, among hospitalized patients in the oncology unit of the Salah Azaiez Institute of cancer. We included patients who were aged 18 years and over and who were able to respond to the questionnaire. A standardized questionnaire was administered to patients to assess their attitudes and beliefs regarding current vaccines. Chi square test was used for