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LETTER TO THE EDITOR – OPEN ACCESS

The COVID-19 Vaccine and Current Debate on Vaccination Policies

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Dear Editor,

We read with interest the Letter to the Editor entitled "COVID-19 vaccine prioritization must be driven by science" by Yale et al., published recently in the Erciyes Medical Journal (1). It is well known that the new human viral pathogen, severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus-2 (SARS-CoV-2), is the etiologic agent of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). After the emergence of COVID-19 in December 2019 in Wuhan, China and its subsequent rapid spread around the world, vaccine development studies were initiated in many countries (2). In less than a year, intense scientific work has resulted in the development of numerous vaccines with different mechanisms of action. However, the speed and process of vaccine development and administration have raised concerns regarding their efficacy and safety.

To allay these concerns, two different points need to be considered: First, one of the most important reasons for such rapid vaccine development was the world's preparedness for an infectious respiratory viral pathogen in terms of science and laboratory infrastructure. Second, the experience gained from the MERS and SARS-CoV epidemics contributed greatly in the fight against COVID-19 (2).

Scientific data released by the Centers for Diseases Control and Prevention indicate that COVID-19 morbidity and mortality may increase in the future (3). All vaccines in use have successfully completed preclinical and clinical testing (3, 4). Considering these factors, as well as the disease's rapid spread, we advise vaccination of all individuals regardless of age. Implementation of infection control measures and vaccination are essential for global prevention considering the lack of effective antiviral agents.

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