**Abstract**

Extracorporeal membrane oxygenation (ECMO) was first used in adults in 1972 in a young patient with posttraumatic acute respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS). The technology is derived from the cardiopulmonarybypass machine used for cardiac surgery, modified for a longer-term support of respiratory and/or cardiac function. There are two major types of support that may be provided with ECMO, veno-venous ECMO (VV-ECMO) andveno-arterial ECMO (VA-ECMO). The former is used in patients with good cardiac function, in an effort to supportlung function, while the latter is used in patients with poor cardiac function, in an effort to support the failingheart. Significant advances continue to be made in the field of extracorporeal life support (ECLS) and the modality promises to supplement the management options available for the niche role in management of patients withsevere cardiac and respiratory disease. In this review, we discuss the latest developments and usage of ECMO inrespiratory diseases in adults.

**Key words**

Extracorporeal membrane oxygenation, respiratory diseases, adults.