



**Many vaccines are for diseases that don't appear to exist anymore. Why is it important to vaccinate against them?**

MARY BETH KOSLAP-PETRACO, DNP(c), CPNP: These germs are just sleeping giants. We've seen that in other countries, we've even seen that here in our country. When we don't vaccinate children, we see disease. When we don't give them measles vaccine, we see measles.

MARK SAWYER, MD: And with modern air travel, it's just one plane ride away before a disease that you think isn't around suddenly is. For example, recently we had an outbreak of measles in San Diego that started because somebody came back from Europe where measles is still occurring more frequently than it is here and we suddenly had an outbreak of measles on our hands.

PAUL A. OFFIT, MD: There are some diseases that are much less common but still kind of bubble under the surface: measles, mumps, still occur in the United States. So when there are pockets of children who are relatively under-vaccinated, you see those outbreaks occur.

MARY BETH KOSLAP-PETRACO, DNP(c), CPNP: My mom had polio when she was a little girl, my sister almost died when she had measles when we were children. And I remember sitting there watching her and watching the tears in my mother's eyes and I was very small at the time and thinking to myself, 'I don't think my sister's going to live, and what do I do if my sister doesn't live?' So I think we forget those kinds of personal experiences because we've done such a good job in controlling vaccine-preventable disease. But if we don't vaccinate, we're going to see those very same things again.

MARK SAWYER, MD: In fact, the young doctors of the current generation are totally inexperienced to deal with some of the infections that I learned about when I was in medical school and in my residency and that's all the more reason why we need children to be protected against them because doctors who recognize these diseases are beginning to retire and they're not as familiar as they used to be.

PAUL A. OFFIT, MD: You know, you don't want to have to relive history. We certainly know that if you let your guard down, if immunization rates drop, those diseases will come back. And one can only hope that we don't have to resort to human sacrifice as a way to get some people to pay attention to vaccines.