Beat: Health

IS A DISEASE DECLARED VANQUISHED 15 YEARS AGO BACK TO THREATEN A HEALTH CRISIS?

VACCINE CRITICS DEFENSIVE OVER MEASLES

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USPA NEWS - Children have been sent home from school, families barred from birthday parties and play dates. Online, people call them criminal. As officials in 14 states struggle to contain a spreading measles outbreak that began near Disneyland , the parents of America's anti-vaccine movement are being blamed .

They are being blamed for incubating a preventable public-health crisis.
Measles anxiety spread thousands of miles beyond its center on Friday as officials scrambled to try to contain a wider spread of the highly contagious disease- which America declared vanquished 15 years ago, before a statisticallygrowing number of parents started refusing to vaccinate their children.
Recently, new measles cases popped up in Nebraska and Minnesota, New York and Marin County in California.
Officials around the country are reporting a rise in numbers of patients who were seeking shots, as well as some pediatricians who were accepting non-vaccinated families but were debating changing their policies.

The White House urged parents to listen to the science that supports inoculations. In Arizona, health officials warned that 1,000 people could have been exposed to measles and urged anyone with symptoms to avoid this weekend's Supere Bowl events in Phoenix.
In California, anti-vaccine parents whose children have endured bouts of cough and chickenpox defended their choice to raise their children on natural foods and no vaccinations.
"There is no reason to get the shot," said C. McDonald, whose 16-year-old daughter was one of the 66 students sent home from school for the next two weeks because they did not have full measles immunizations.

After reading information from a national anti-vaccine advocacy group, Mrs. McDonald and her husband decided to raise their four children without vaccines. She said they ate well and had never been to the doctor, and she insisted that her daughter was healthier than many classmates. But when the school sent her home, Mrs. McDonald's daughter was so worried about missing two weeks of advanced-placement classes that she suggested getting a measles innoculation.
Mrs.McDonald said she'd rather have her dauughter miss the entire semester than to get the shot.
The Centers for Desease Control and Prevention reported that measles cases soared last year to 644, more than any other year in more than a decade.

The people most at risk are babies too young to be vaccinated and the immunologically frail. Measles can transform into something much worse. like encephalitis, and can be deadly. Among the fully vaccinated, the chances of contracting measles are small but do exist. The C.D.C. says the vaccine is effective more than 95 percent.
The issue has been open for debate since 1998. Anti-vaccine movements are present in Europe as well, and of course, their main concern is the health of their children. Religious beliefs, suspicion against pharmaceutical companies and the business behind it is all relative. Parents are responsible for the choices they make on behalf of their children and no one else. The choice is made freely. Pillory limits freedom.

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