Difficulties That Can Be Faced During The Fight With Malaria

The outbreak in Franklin village

In this carefully drafted and well-thought-out essay, I will be addressing the terrible outbreak of a dangerous disease called malaria in Franklin village. Franklin Village is a village in Kenya. This village is populated by around 500 people. A quarter of them are families with at least 2 children under the age of 5. Due to research, I have realized that children under 5 are the most vulnerable group to malaria. One-fifth of the population is pregnant. Pregnant women are also vulnerable to malaria and so are travelers or tourists that come from places without exposure to malaria. Tourists cover a twentieth of the population. It may sound little but that is 25 people. The remaining half, or 250 people, are villagers who are between the age of 6 and 100. About 390 people had died due to malaria in this small, rural village. That is shocking news. We need to find a way to cleanse people of this disease or some way or, many people in this village are at high risk of catching malaria and if left untreated, it will cause death.

Introduction to Malaria

Malaria is a dangerous, irregular, and remittent fever caused by a protozoan parasite that invades all the red blood cells and is transmitted by female mosquitoes in many tropical and subtropical destinations. There is unfortunately no known or created a vaccine for safety and protection against malaria. The parasite that lives within the mosquito causes malaria. Not the mosquito its self. Did you know that some female mosquitoes are not even carrying the malaria parasite? So you will get lucky if you are bitten by one of those. Nevertheless, if a mosquito, that is not infected, bites a person who has developed the disease, it too can obtain malaria and spread the parasite to others.

Previously, I mentioned the protozoan parasite. A protozoan is a single-celled microscopic animal. The protozoan that causes malaria is the plasmodium. Plasmodium is a genus, a category that ranks above species and below family, of unicellular eukaryotes (single-celled microorganisms with a defined nucleus, mitochondria, and other organelles) that are obligate parasites of vertebrates and insects. Obligate parasites are parasitic organisms that are unable to complete their life-cycle without benefitting from an animal or plant in which it can live in otherwise known as a host.

As you probably may have gathered, only female mosquitoes bite. But only the female anopheles can cause malaria. This is the only breed of mosquito that can spread or give you malaria. Heat, light, sweat, body odor, lactic acid, and carbon dioxide attract the female mosquito to the skin. The female needs a “blood meal” (the protein in the human blood) to lay her eggs so, therefore, she bites you inserting the tip of her mouth into a tiny blood vessel. Her

saliva, which contains the dangerous parasite, is transferred into the bloodstream of her mammalian host. Then she sucks one's blood and she is off to lay her eggs.

There are five types of malaria parasites and they consist of; P.Falciparum, P. Malariae, P.Vivax, P.Ovale, and P.Knowlesi. The “P” in all of the different types of parasites stands for plasmodium. Apart from the P.Knowlesi, all of these different types of parasites are infectious to humans. The plasmodium falciparum is the most dangerous of them all.

Difficulties we face

This disease outbreak is going to be very difficult to put an end to because the World Health Organisation, as much as we want to, unfortunately, cannot get rid of all the female mosquitoes (especially the ones containing malaria) in the village. But luckily what we can do is try to reduce the rate (and hopefully stop) in which people in Franklin village are developing malaria. Some of the reasons malaria is difficult to end are that:

• We cannot stop mosquitoes from biting people.

• There is still a chance you can develop malaria even from the bite of a mosquito containing the plasmodium knowlesi.

• malaria is caused by a single-cell parasite that has the ability to evolve in ways that evade the human immune system

• The malaria parasite is very good at becoming resistant to the medicines that we use.

Another challenge that we face while trying to prevent malaria is the symptoms associated with this deadly disease. The symptoms are too common for you to suspect the slightest thing let alone malaria. The first symptoms are fever, headache, and chills. Unfortunately, other diseases cause these symptoms as well, so it can be difficult to be absolutely sure if the person has malaria at this particular stage. To enhance this point further, the reason malaria is difficult to prevent is because symptoms do not occur until, for most people, 7 to 18 days depending on the parasite you are infected with. For some people, in certain cases, the symptoms unusually develop as late as one year after being bitten. If left untreated, malaria can escalate to more serious and severe symptoms such as yellow skin, comas, seizures, or the most extreme and unfortunate case, death.

Malaria needs to be prevented immediately or we will be losing a lot more of the world’s population. In 2016 alone, malaria was the reason for around 216 million cases in 91 countries, causing more than a staggering 400,000 deaths.

Ways to prevent Malaria from spreading

Despite the grueling challenges, as unbelievable as it may seem at first, malaria is a disease

that is indeed preventable and curable. We have come up with ways to try to prevent it from spreading. They consist of:

- More trained doctors in the village.

With more trained doctors that know what they are doing, they can know what to do when they come across a person with malaria. If they understand how to treat this disease, they will be able to pass the knowledge on to others so they too know how to prevent malaria.

Bed nets

Bed nets are sheets that go over your bed or your sleeping place. They have miniature holes that the mosquito cannot fit through due to their size. Mosquitoes are very small, but these holes are much, much smaller. Bed nets are effective because they keep mosquitoes away at night. You know you are protected from them because at night, it is the female mosquitoes' pick period to bite because you are asleep.

- Sleep in dark and slightly cold places.

This is because; mosquitoes are one of the many animals that hibernate. They are cold-blooded. They prefer temperatures over 80 degrees Celsius. In temperatures below 50 degrees, they shut down and cannot function. This is why you should take the advice of the World Health Organisation because we have got your back against Malaria.

- Take antimalarial drugs

Antimalarial drugs are tablets that you take to prevent developing malaria. They also help treat malaria. You should always make it essential to take antimalarial drugs when traveling to places with malaria. Expanding the tip I gave about taking the antimalarial drugs before traveling, antimalarial drugs can reduce the risk of catching malaria by up to a whopping 90%

- Holding a meeting once in a while.

Because Franklin village is a rural village only consisting of around 500 people, it would be possible to hold meetings every now and then to talk about malaria, how many people are being affected by it, if what we are doing to prevent it is working and what are the plans for the future. By coming together and talking about it, we can solve this big problem that may be costing our Franklin village the next generation of young people. This disease needs to get stopped

immediately.

Interventions for malaria only

Our interventions and ideas will work because they have been tested on similar things and they have ended triumphantly. Our solutions and ways around problems like this have been and are being tested regularly and have succeeded. Therefore if there was a default in our ways we, the World Health Organisation, would have discovered that by now.

Our methods cannot work for other disease outbreaks as our ways of thinking were specifically crafted to resolve this malaria outbreak and malaria in general. So that is what we did. We had a problem so we made a plan to solve that problem. In doing so, we did not come up with interventions to treat all of the diseases that exist. As I said before, our ways of thinking were specifically crafted to resolve the malaria outbreak. When we have a problem, we deal with that problem.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I feel that malaria is a really difficult disease to tackle but I’m sure we will come out victorious in the end. I am coming to the end of my essay. But first, I would like to give you a fact that you probably didn’t consider. Did you know that mosquitoes are the second deadliest animals on the planet after humans? Surprised?