

## Opinion

# Paediatric Virology and the indisputable value of prevention

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*'Prevention is better than cure'*

Hippocrates

Hippocrates' famous apothegm 'prevention is better than cure' (κάλλιον τὸ προλαμβάνειν, παρά τὸ θεραπεύειν) is one of the most valuable principles of Paediatrics, providing the milestone of all immunisation strategies currently used in neonates, children and adolescents (1). To date, the indisputable value of prevention has been highlighted in all 'workshops on Paediatric Virology' (2-6). Table I presents the titles of all plenary lectures, oral and poster presentations, which were performed during the workshops, focusing on the value of prevention in the management of neonatal and paediatric viral infections. Along with the significant role of human breast milk in the prevention of viral infections during the first years of life (7) and prophylaxis against respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) (8,9), the examined prevention issues included the 60-year-old battle against poliomyelitis (10), the vaccination against hepatitis B in newborns (11-13), the vaccination challenges against human papillomaviruses (HPV) (14-19), the vaccination against mumps, measles and rubella (20), the prevention against influenza including the role of the intranasal live-attenuated influenza vaccines (21-25), the necessity

to implement a vaccination policy in relation to immigration effects (26), the preventative role of probiotics in the management of viral infections in children (27,28), the emerging need for the establishment of prevention strategies against Ebola virus (29) and the overview of the anti-vaccination movement (30).

Interestingly, during the '3rd workshop on Paediatric Virology', which was held in Athens (Greece) on October 7th, 2017, the statements by the Nobel Laureate Professor of Virology Harald zur Hausen (Heidelberg, Germany) on the significant preventative role of breast feeding and the mandatory necessity of male vaccination against HPV (4) attracted the enormous interest of paediatric trainees and junior paediatricians. In the recent '5th workshop on Paediatric Virology', which will take place in Sparta (Greece) on October 12th, 2019, the top key messages of four out of five plenary lectures will also highlight the value and the need of specific prevention strategies and recommendations against RSV in infancy and childhood (Table II). As future therapeutic options and strategies are expected with impatience, prevention remains the principal tool for the management of neonatal and paediatric viral infections.

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Table I. Plenary lectures, oral presentations and posters of the ‘workshops on Paediatric Virology’ during the 2015-2018 period highlighting the value of prevention in Paediatric Virology.

Speaker/presenter	Title of presentation
1st workshop on Paediatric Virology (2015)	
Professor Anne Greenough (United Kingdom)	The impact of viral infections on the long-term outcomes of prematurely born infants
Professor Maria Theodoridou (Greece)	Defeating polio: Vaccine anniversary (1955-2015)
Professor Anna Kramvis (South Africa)	The clinical implications of hepatitis B virus genotypes in Paediatrics
Dr Ioannis N. Mammas (Greece)	Understanding the factors affecting human papillomavirus vaccination acceptance among adolescents
Dr Maria Koutsaki (Greece)	MMR vaccination and autism
Dr Iliana Christaki (United Kingdom)	The challenge of modern biowarfare: ED preparedness for paediatric victims of the Ebola virus
2nd workshop on Paediatric Virology (2016)	
Professor Maria Theodoridou (Greece)	The Greek experience of HIV-1 infection in children
Professor Anna Kramvis (South Africa)	Hepatitis B vaccination in Africa: Current situation and future challenges
Dr Prakash Thiagarajan (British Isles)	Zika Virus in pregnancy and infancy - What do the paediatricians need to know?
Dr Sharryn Gardner (United Kingdom)	It's never just a virus - Experiences from the frontline
Professor Angeliki Melidou (Greece)	Influenza in childhood: A usual suspect
Dr Chryssie Koutsaftiki (Greece)	The antivaccination movement: A brief historical overview
3rd workshop on Paediatric Virology (2017)	
Professor Harald zur Hausen (Germany)	Paediatric Virology and Oncology: Virus persistence and the important first years of life
Professor Anne Greenough (United Kingdom)	The long-term impact of viral infections on prematurely born infants
Professor Anna Kramvis (South Africa)	Mother-to-child transmission of hepatitis B and C viruses
Professor Maria Theodoridou (Greece)	Immigration crisis and vaccination policy
Dr Maria Rusan (USA)	Human papillomavirus infections in children: Should we be vaccinating earlier?
Professor Angeliki Melidou (Greece)	Intranasal live-attenuated influenza vaccination in children: Evidence, limitations and proposals
Dr Paraskevi Korovessi (Greece)	Probiotics and viral infections in childhood
4th workshop on Paediatric Virology (2018)	
Professor Tina Dalianis (Sweden)	Human papillomavirus (HPV) prevalence in youth at a youth clinic after the initiation of HPV-catch up vaccination in comparison to previously obtained HPV prevalence in the same clinic and to that in high school in youth Sweden
Dr Prakash Thiagarajan (British Isles)	Antiviral drugs in the clinical management of children with influenza
Professor Maria Theodoridou (Greece)	Overview of influenza vaccination in children
Professor Angeliki Melidou (Greece)	Epidemiology of influenza types and subtypes in childhood
Dr Paraskevi Korovessi (Greece)	Prevention and management of influenza in childhood: The effect of probiotics
Dr Chryssie Koutsaftiki (Greece)	Participation of paediatric health professionals into the vaccination programme against seasonal influenza
Dr Ioannis N. Mammas (Greece)	Exploring effective interventions to increase adolescents' vaccination against human papillomavirus (HPV)
Professor Apostolos Zaravinos (Cyprus)	HPV as an emerging risk factor in head and neck carcinomas: An additional vaccination target?
Dr Sotirios Doukas (USA)	Laryngeal HPV infection in children: A review of management and treatment of Juvenile Onset Recurrent Respiratory Papillomatosis

Table II. Plenary lectures of the '5th workshop on Paediatric Virology', which will be held in Sparta on October, 12, 2019, highlighting the value of prevention in Paediatric Virology.

Speaker/presenter	Title of presentation
Professor Simon B. Drysdale (United Kingdom)	Management of RSV infection in children: New advances and challenges
Professor Barbara Rath (Germany)	Understanding the burden of RSV and influenza infections in real-time: Partnering for Enhanced Digital Surveillance of Influenza-Like Disease and the Effectiveness of Antivirals and Vaccines (PEDSIDEA)
Professor Maria Theodoridou (Greece)	Prevention of RSV infections: What is new with the vaccines?
Professor George P. Chrousos (Greece)	Viral infections and stress

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