



Name of Resource person: Dr. Roobhini Sri N.S.K

Podcast Title: **Neglected Tropical Diseases and One Health**

Department: Microbiology

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TRANSCRIPT

Hello and welcome. This is Dr. Roobhini Sri, Assistant Professor, Department of Microbiology talking on: **Neglected Tropical Diseases and One Health** and then **break a few common myths** about them in a simple way.

1. What are Neglected Tropical Diseases?

Neglected Tropical Diseases, or NTDs, are a group of infections that mainly affect poor and marginalized areas in tropical and subtropical regions. They include diseases like dengue, leprosy, rabies, soil-transmitted worms, schistosomiasis, and many others.

More than a billion people worldwide suffer from NTDs, yet these diseases receive very little funding and public attention—which is why they are called “neglected.” They often cause long-term suffering: blindness, disability, deformities, stigma, and loss of education or work opportunities.

NTDs are closely linked to poor sanitation, unsafe water, and crowded living conditions. That means they cannot be solved by medicines alone.

2. What is One Health?

One Health is a simple but powerful idea: **human health, animal health, and environmental health are deeply connected.**

NTDs often depend on animals, insects, and degraded environments to spread. For example:

- Mosquitoes breed in stagnant water and transmit dengue and chikungunya.
- Stray dogs can spread rabies.
- Dirty water and soil can carry worms and parasites.

One Health brings together doctors, veterinarians, ecologists, urban planners, and communities to work as a team. It means protecting people, animals, and the environment together, instead of treating them separately.

Myth: NTDs are rare and not a big problem.

Fact: NTDs affect more than a billion people worldwide. They are “neglected” not because they are harmless, but because they mainly affect the poorest and are often ignored. Many cause long-term damage that can ruin lives.

Myth: NTDs are only in rural or poor countries.

Fact: NTDs can appear in slums, construction sites, and even cities wherever there is poor sanitation, unsafe water, or crowded conditions. Dengue outbreaks and rabies from stray animals are common in our own neighbourhoods.

Myth: Staying at home means I'm safe from NTDs.

Fact: Many NTDs live right where we live. Mosquitoes breed in nearby drains, water containers, and construction sites. Rabies can come from local stray dogs or cats. The risk is often in our immediate surroundings.

Myth: Doctors and hospitals can control NTDs by themselves.

Fact: Doctors are essential, but they cannot stop NTDs if we ignore mosquitoes, animals, and polluted environments. One Health shows that sanitation, vector control, animal vaccination, and community action are equally important.

Myth: One Health is only for scientists and experts.

Fact: One Health is very practical. It means simple actions:

- Cover water containers and remove stagnant water.
- Vaccinate dogs and avoid bites or scratches.
- Drink safe water, wash hands properly, and manage waste.

Students and the common public can support One Health by learning about NTDs, sharing correct information, and avoiding stigma towards affected people.

Neglected Tropical Diseases are **not rare**, **not only someone else's problem**, and **not only a medical issue**.

By understanding what NTDs are and how One Health connects humans, animals, and the environment, each of us can take small, everyday steps that add up to safer, healthier communities.

Thank you for listening, and stay healthy.



Signature of the Resource Person



Signature of the HOD