

Sawbones 478: Sawbones Classic: Santa is Sick

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Justin: Hey, everybody. It's Justin McElroy here. I'm one half of Sawbones. Uh, you probably knew that already. Uh, we have a classic to help get you in the holiday spirit this week. It was really... This is really my wife at her most wildest. Um, it is an episode called Santa is Sick.

It is from 2016 and, uh, if you need to start worrying about Santa Claus, this is the podcast for you. Uh, I hope you enjoy and, uh, I love you very much! Okay, here you go!

[audience cheers]

Intro (Clint McElroy): Sawbones is a show about medical history, and nothing the hosts say should be taken as medical advice or opinion. It's for fun. Can't you just have fun for an hour, and not try to diagnose your mystery boil? We think you've earned it. Just sit back, relax, and enjoy a moment of distraction from that weird growth. You're worth it.

[theme music plays]

[audience cheers]

Justin:

Hello everybody, and welcome to Sawbones, a marital tour of misguided medicine! I'm your co-host, Justin McElroy.

[audience cheers]

Sydnee:

And I'm Sydnee McElroy!

[audience cheers significantly louder]

Justin:

Every time. Every single time.

[audience laughs]

Justin:

Okay. I just had to press record. It's a high tech op we got going.

Sydnee:

Justin, I'm gonna need you to do me a favor. Um, Santa is... [laughs] short.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

Do you know how to adjust him? Could you real quick? This is important. This is, uh—

[audience cheers and laughs]

Sydnee:

[laughs] Thank you!

Justin:

He's all better.

Sydnee:

It's important. This is an anatomical specimen... [laughs]

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

... For today's demonstration.

Justin:

Sydnee—

Sydnee:

I was talking to both of these.

Justin:

What?

Sydnee:

I have never been so mic'd. [laughs]

Justin:

Here. I think just this one.

Sydnee:

Just this? Okay.

Justin:

Yeah.

Sydnee:

Just making sure.

Justin:

Yeah. Merry Candlenights!

Sydnee:

Thank you. Merry Candlenights to you! I don't know much of anything about Candlenights.

Justin:

Okay. Uh, I've talked with you a couple times but—

Sydnee:

Mm-hmm.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

But I keep forgetting, or maybe I wasn't listening. Either way, the

important thing is, I know about Santa.

Justin:

Okay. I mean, I will say, Christmas is the main target of Candlenights. It's the one we're most looking to, sort of, incorporate.

[audience laughs]

Justin:

So, uh, what, uh, what about Santa? Why do you bring up Santa? Why is Santa on the stage?

Sydnee:

Well, because I thought, for Candlenights, since Santa is what I know the most about, we could maybe talk about him from, like, a medical standpoint. I could kind of dissect, like, his health problems...

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

... and his health history. Because, I mean, you know, we all kinda know Santa's not the healthiest guy, so.

Justin:

Ho-ho-ho sick?

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

I'm not saying ho-ho sick. I'm just saying...

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

... Ho-ho doesn't always make the best choices.

Justin:

Ho-ho is sick?

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

I... To be fair, I wanted it to be balanced. So there's some, some good points, some good things going for ho-ho, and some questionable habits.

Justin:

It seems like a little bit of a bummer, but...

Sydnee:

[laughs]

[audience laughs]

Justin:

... You're the expert, Syd. Let's do it!

Sydnee:

Uh, I want to thank my mom for coming up with this topic. [laughs]

[audience laughs and cheers]

Sydnee:

She's just—

Justin:

Oh, she's here.

Sydnee:

She's in the dressing room.

Justin:

Yeah.

Sydnee:

I'm not—

Justin:

Thanks, Mary!

Sydnee:

[laughs] Thank you, mom. Because she came up with this, so.

Justin:

Okay.

Sydnee:

Yeah. All right. So first of all, age. Santa is about, like, 550-ish.

Justin:

Infinite. Infinite and eternal.

Sydnee:

And infinite eternal years old.

[audience laughs]

Justin:

Yes.

Sydnee:

So, I mean that tells us two things. On, on one hand, I mean, he's still hanging in there. [laughs]

Justin:

Yeah. What?

[audience laughs]

Justin:

Yes, he's still hanging in there. What are you talking about?

Sydnee:

Well, I'm just saying. Like, on one hand, like, obviously, good genes. Uh, on the other hand, like, he's getting up there.

Justin:

Yeah, I suppose Santa is getting up there.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

Now, on the flip side, he's looked, sort of, like, this is my pointer.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

Um, I didn't steal it from one of the curtains upstairs.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

This—he's looked pretty much like this since Coke made him up, so...

[audience laughs]

Justin:

Right?

Sydnee:

In, like, the thirties.

Justin:

Okay.

Sydnee:

So, we're pretty much...

Justin:

Well, congratulations Sydnee. You went to college. You know that Coke

invented Santa.

Sydnee:

[laughs]

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

Uh, now let's talk about his disposition.

Justin:

Cheery.

Sydnee:

Right.

Justin:

Joyful.

Sydnee:

Jolly. One might say.

Justin:

This can't be bad.

Sydnee:

No.

Justin:

There's nothing bad about that.

Sydnee:

This is a good thing. This— Santa has this going in his favor. Yeah, laughter, a positive attitude. These are associated with lower blood pressure, and, like, general wellbeing is improved with these things.

Justin:

Okay. Good. So, Santa's on the road to well-ville. That's my boy!

Sydnee:

Yeah. Well, yeah. I mean, He—

Justin:

That's my guy, Santa.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

Either way, even if he is fighting some sort of chronic debilitating disease, he has a positive attitude about it.

[audience laughter]

Sydnee:

And that's a good thing.

Justin:

What?

[audience laughter]

Justin:

This is Candlesnights, Sydnee!

Sydnee:

Well—

Justin:

You can't dissect everyone's hero, Santa Claus!

Sydnee:

That's exactly what I'm gonna do on the show. [laughs]

[audience laughs]

Justin:

Oh, okay. Well, go ahead.

Sydnee:

Okay, so, the reason that's important though, is because, let's move on to Santa's lungs. Which are about in this red region...

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

... Right in there.

Justin:

Just like where they would be with a normal person.

Sydnee:

Right. Exactly.

Justin:

Okay. Got it.

Sydnee:

[laughs]

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

As far as I know, Santa has the anatomy of a standard human. I don't know that, for sure.

Justin:

Yeah.

Sydnee:

We're assuming. Uh, now a couple things about that. So, first of all, he's exposed to a lot of chimney smoke.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

That's not great. Uh, secondly, I don't know if you remember this, but Santa used to smoke.

Justin:

Yeah, like back in the day he had a pipe.

Sydnee:

Mm-hmm.

Justin:

And he... Then he got clean, got on that vape.

[audience laughs and cheers]

Justin:

[laughs]

Sydnee:

What? I had—

Justin:

That's what his... That's what his beard's made of.

[audience laughs and cheers]

Justin:

[laughs] I know it's not. But what if it was? [laughs]

[audience laughter]

Sydnee:

Uh, I have no evidence that Santa vapes. He—

[audience laughs]

Justin:

Prove to me Santa doesn't vape.

[audience laughs]

Justin:

Okay.

Sydnee:

That one's not.

Justin:

Fair enough.

Sydnee:

Okay.

Justin:

That particular Santa is not vaping.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

So, no. But he did smoke a pipe. You may remember, because the smoke encircled his head like a wreath.

Justin:

Right. Right.

Sydnee:

Right. So, smoke, like, really was smoking on that pipe.

Justin:

Just wailing on that bad boy.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

So, [laughs], so I'm concerned about chronic lung problems, like COPD with Santa, you know? Chronic bronchitis emphysema.

Justin:

I guess that's possible. What else you got?

Sydnee:

Okay. Also I would say that Santa's neck looks kind of large...

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

... Um, from this perspective. And he, he, he is in the category of obesity, which may put him at risk for sleep apnea. I have a concern of sleep apnea with Santa.

Justin:

Okay. The good news about that is, if my boy doesn't sleep well, he doesn't do anything 364 days of the year.

Sydnee:

[laughs]

[audience laughs]

Justin:

So, like, homie can definitely cat nap. No problem.

Sydnee:

Also, if you think about such things, and I do, he would probably be a difficult intubation. Like, if you had to intubate Santa—

Justin:

What?!

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

I don't know his Mallampati score, but I would just guess. And then I...
When I look at that beard, I think, even, even like a bag and mask
ventilation could be tricky...

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

... Because of the big beard. So... Just, I mean, if you're thinking about,
like, in an emergency situation, you gotta save Santa.

Justin:

No, I'm not. I wasn't.

[audience laughs]

Justin:

I am now, I guess.

Sydnee:

You have to be prepared.

Justin:

To save Santa?

Sydnee:

He's a...

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

He's a 500 plus year old man who's climbing down your chimney.

[audience laughs]

Justin:

Okay, everybody. Just be ready to save Santa's life if he tries to die in your house.

[audience laughs]

Justin:

Or else, you're gonna get Tim Allen's Santa Claus. And nobody wants that.

[audience laughs]

Justin:

What else is killing Santa, Syd?

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

Okay. Let's talk about Santa's heart.

Justin:

[laughs]

Sydnee:

Um—

[audience laughs]

Justin:

It's huge. And has room for all the children of the world.

Sydnee:

Exactly.

[audience laughs]

Justin:

Next!

Sydnee:

That's a condition called cardiomegaly. That concerns me.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

Although... [laughs]

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

I'll give— I'll give him the benefit of the doubt. That's probably metaphorical. Um, but, um, I do worry that he's at higher risk for coronary artery disease.

Justin:

Do you?

Sydnee:

Um, he seems to carry his weight more centralized and that is a risk factor. So.

Justin:

For what?

Sydnee:

For heart disease. For heart attack. For Santa having a heart attack, is what I'm saying.

Justin:

Okay. Yeah, that... Yeah. What else you got?

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

All right.

Justin:

Probably a good one at this point, wouldn't you think?

Sydnee:

Let's move beyond the obvious, 'cause I know we've all thought about that. Um, let's talk about, kind of, like, Santa's cognitive abilities, mental status.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

Um, now we know that he makes a list. And I think we can cut him some slack on that, because he's got a lot of people to keep track of, right?

Justin:

Right.

Sydnee:

He also checks it twice, though. So, is this a sign that Santa is thorough? Does he have memory problems, perhaps we're dealing with some early dementia?

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

Could this be obsessive? That's a long list to check twice.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

Are we worried that Santa has OCD that he's not being treated for?

Justin:

I mean, I wasn't.

[audience laughs]

Justin:

But that, maybe that's a positive story, though. That's not necessarily negative. Maybe he's, like, a hero for people who are dealing with those sorts of mental health issues. Loads of guys keep at it. One day you could have to deliver presents to everybody forever.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

That's a great way of looking at it. And, uh, and again on that positive side, he also has the ability to know when every child on earth is sleeping, and awake, and if they've been bad, and if they've been good. And remember all that.

Justin:

That's true. That's incredible.

Sydnee:

So, that's some high level functioning, like, memory wise and...

Justin:

Okay.

Sydnee:

So, even savant, like, abilities I think.

[audience laughs]

Justin:

Okay. No, no, no. No, no, no. I refuse to believe your, your, um, Snowman hypothesis.

Sydnee:

[laughs]

[audience laughs]

Justin:

You got me. It's a thinker. Let it grow on you. You'll get it.

[audience laughs]

Justin:

On the way home, you're gonna really bust a gut.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

Oh, I just got it. Okay.

Justin:

Yeah.

Sydnee:

[laughs] Uh, let's talk about Santa's diet.

Justin:

Like Rain Man?

Sydnee:

Yeah, no, I...

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

Thank you. It's like a weather related joke. Those are my favorite.

Justin:

Yeah.

Sydnee:

Yeah.

Justin:

It's festive.

Sydnee:

Okay. So, let's talk about Santa's diet. Uh, we don't know much about what he eats most of the year. Uh, I don't think that's documented anywhere. But we do know that on Christmas, he tends to eat a lot of milk and cookies, right?

Well, that's obviously not your best choice if that's his standard diet. You know, we're worried about his sugar. We're worried about high fat levels. That's a lot of carbohydrates. Um, eating that late at night is not really great for acid reflux.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

And I mean, he's just eating milk and cookies all night long.

Justin:

I wouldn't imagine that's his day... Like that can't be his day-to-day. That's, like, his treat, right?

Sydnee:

I would have to assume, because if you... Let's do some calculations. Let's say that, of the 75 million homes that Santa visits, only 1% leave out one glass of milk and one cookie.

Justin:

That seems under, but fine.

Sydnee:

Right. But this is, this is like a very low estimate. Like, we're all very stingy. Only 1% of us left one cookie and one glass of milk for Santa. And he eats

and drinks all that, right?

Justin:

Right.

Sydnee:

I mean, he always does.

Justin:

Sure.

Sydnee:

Right? It's always gone on Christmas morning.

Justin:

Right.

Sydnee:

And Santa ate that, right?

Justin:

Yeah, that's where Sa— Yeah, Santa got it, sweetie.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

Okay. Just making sure. That's about 750,000 cookies, and give or take, 46,875 gallons of milk...

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

... that Santa's consuming in that night. Now, if we think that each serving of milk has about 25% of your daily recommended vitamin D intake...

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

... That's about 18,750,000% of his daily recommended intake of vitamin D that Santa is getting all at once.

Justin:

Oh, all the vitamin D is the issue.

Sydnee:

And I mean, you know, some vitamin D is good. That much vitamin D begins to get problematic. Unlike a lot of—

Justin:

Okay. So, a million percent is problematic?

Sydnee:

Yeah.

[audience laughs]

Justin:

[laughs] I... You gotta help me. I'm a layman. So, some of that is...

Sydnee:

I mean, we've talked about it before. Like, vitamin C, vitamin B. People like to take that. That's fine. You're probably gonna pee it out. But vitamin D actually starts to accumulate. So you can actually get hypervitaminosis D from all that, which I have to assume Santa is at risk for. Um, and all of—

Justin:

If he's not, who is?

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

All this extra calcium in his blood is gonna make him nauseous. He's gonna throw up. He's gonna be weak. He's gonna be peeing all the time, which is a

problem when you're riding around in a sleigh all night, you know? He's going to have kidney problems. He's going to be dizzy. He's going to be confused. He could get disoriented. He could fall down. [laughs]

[audience laughs]

Justin:

Yeah, he could fall down.

Sydnee:

He's on a sleigh in the sky.

Justin:

He's an old man, Sydnee. What do you want? Yes, he can fall down. He doesn't though.

[audience laughs]

Justin:

He pulls it off every time.

Sydnee:

Now, he does pull it off every time, but he also spends an awful lot of time sitting in a sleigh. And then, throughout the month of December, he's also spending a lot of time sitting in malls.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

And all of that sitting, and not moving—

Justin:

Those are his... Those are his helpers.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

Uh, puts him, puts him at risk for a blood clot forming somewhere down in the leg area. Uh, I have a big concern with deep vein thrombosis and blood clots in Santa.

Justin:

Those are his helpers. Dad told me that those are his helpers.

[audience laughs]

Justin:

That's why that one smelled like whiskey.

Sydnee:

Okay.

[audience laughs]

Justin:

They're his... They're just his helpers.

Sydnee:

Well, now to be fair, in some places, instead of milk, um, some kids leave brandy for Santa. So.

Justin:

The chill kids.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

Right.

Justin:

The chill kids who can hang.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

Which is another big concern, because that's... You know, that's a lot of alcohol too, in one night, you know?

Justin:

Yeah. Yes, Syd. I guess it is. That's, like, bajillion percent of his recommended USDA whatever, huh?

[audience laughs]

Justin:

It's, like, a lot of Brandy.

[theme music plays]

[ad break]

Sydnee:

So, I think some occupational health hazards need to be addressed as well. Um, the sleigh that I have seen depicted for Santa, does not have seatbelts.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

Uh, nor does it have air bags.

Justin:

Here they go. Alright, here we go. Rules and regulations. Here they come. Here comes the boss. Here comes OSHA. Sorry, Santa.

[audience laughs]

Justin:

No more fun for kids in the world.

Sydnee:

OSHA has actually done an— Like, a report on the occupational health

hazards of Santa [laughs] in case you're ever interested.

[audience laughs]

Justin:

Yeah. I guess you guys—

Sydnee:

This exists out there. [laughs]

Justin:

You guys sort of read it, your monthly means to kill, kill joy, people.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

Well, we did.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

All right. So, he climbs up and down chimneys. That's rough, especially at his age. Um, and he's carrying a very heavy sack of toys. I'm really worried about his lower back, his lumbar spine, the lower part of Santa's back, this area down here.

He's really at risk for bulging discs. Um, he's at risk for sciatica. For just arthritis in general, from all of this climbing and lifting and carrying. And who knows? Does Santa use proper lifting technique?

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

I don't know.

Justin:

If he didn't at first, one has to assume he probably learned by the, like, the

1800s, at least, right?

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

I would also advise, maybe Santa wouldn't carry the entire giant sack of toys down the chimney every time.

Justin:

It shrinks magically, I'm pretty sure.

Sydnee:

Mm-hmm.

Justin:

That's what I... That's what—

Sydnee:

That wasn't— That wasn't covered in the literature.

Justin:

No. Okay.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

All right. Uh, other issues. So, Santa is traveling all over the world. Uh, he's going through all of the time zones in one night. And as you can imagine, that could lead to some jet lag.

Justin:

That's fine. I've had jet lag. You know, Santa can hang.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

Well, but my question is this. So with all that... With all those circadian

rhythm problems with him, you know, never... His body never quite knows what time it is, or when he should be sleeping. Is Santa using stimulants?

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

I'm not saying he is. I'm just saying he quit smoking, so he doesn't have the nicotine anymore.

Justin:

[singing] I feel so festive. I feel so festive!

Sydnee:

[laughs]

[audience laughs]

Justin:

I feel so... scared!

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

And the temptation for that has got to be large, because of the amount of work stress that Santa's under. I mean, you think about that level of job stress. So, for most of the year, he's unemployed, right? I mean, what does Santa do? He's got elves to do all the toy building. He's just checking a list.

Justin:

Yeah, twice.

Sydnee:

Twice.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

And then he pulls an all-nighter once a year. And also, it's on a super tight schedule, and that's a huge workload. That adds up to a lot of stress for Santa.

Justin:

We can all agree that it's pretty... It's okay with us if Santa's jacked up on trucker speed.

Sydnee:

[laughs]

[audience laughs]

Justin:

For the whole time, right? Like, we've accepted that probably... If you believe in Santa, you believe he's bumblebee'd out the brain.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

[laughs] Hey, as long as he's bringing me my micro machines, I don't care.
[laughs]

Justin:

[laughs]

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

Uh, I'm also a little worried about the climate change. So, we know Santa lives at the North Pole, of course. And that's the climate that he's accustomed to. Um, you can tell that, because Santa wears this fur lined suit. As you can see here.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

Um, when you're used to that temperature all year long, and then one night out of the year, he's gonna be spending time, you know, around the equator and the tropics. That's really hard to acclimatize to that kind of heat really quickly. And especially in tight enclosed spaces, in chimneys, and wearing, said fur suit. Um, I'm really worried he's at high risk for heat exhaustion.

Justin:

[sighs] Go on.

Sydnee:

[laughs]

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

Are you okay? Can you handle this?

Justin:

Yeah. Just like, let's just power through. I can take it.

Sydnee:

Okay. Let's talk about some ergonomics in Santa's life. Now [laughs] we, uh... Let's assume that at some point during the rest of the year, he doesn't just sit there checking a list. Maybe he pitches in and helps with toys.

Justin:

Unlikely.

Sydnee:

Um, instructs maybe, in the workshop. Well, is a workshop built for elves? And we know that elves are smaller than Santa. Because we've seen it in all the cartoons and books. [laughs] So, all of these—

Justin:

That's canon, folks.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

Santa, although not here, is typically estimated to be about five foot seven, 260 pounds. I don't know whoever estimated that. But, uh, he's not gonna be comfortable at those little elf workbenches.

Um, he is not going to be in proper position if he is working with heavy equipment, working with tools, building things. That's going to be a constant strain, again, on his lumbar spine. He's at risk for carpal tunnel syndrome.
[laughs]

[audience laughs]

Justin:

No, go on. I'm inured to it now. I'm inured to this soon-to-be-corpse that brings me gifts.

[audience laughs]

Justin:

What else you got? Just bring it on. Come on.

Sydnee:

Which is another question about Santa. Does he have a succession plan? I don't know.

Justin:

Next!

Sydnee:

Let's talk about infectious diseases.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

Now, my biggest concern for Santa, maybe, was unfounded. Because it would be all of the little children who sit on his lap.

Justin:

Yeah, those are helpers, though. I'm gonna counter that one right now.

Sydnee:

Okay.

Justin:

I'm gonna stop you right there.

Sydnee:

All right. So, we'll say that all of the little snotty noses are not at risk for Santa. However, Santa is known to sometimes kiss mommies.

Justin:

Okay.

[audience laughs]

Justin:

That's fair. I'll give you that. But I'm sure it's just a cheek thing, no problem.

Sydnee:

Hmm. She tickled him underneath that beard so snowy white. I don't think it was a cheek—

Justin:

Okay. I love you. You're very good doctor. You don't understand how, what that song is about.

[audience laughs]

Justin:

But I will explain it to you after the podcast. [laughs]

Sydnee:

[laughs]

Justin:

Do you think... Hold on. Stop the show. Do you think that song is about a child who sees his mother kissing Santa Claus? Literal Santa Claus?

Sydnee:

Yeah, it's called, I Saw Mommy Kissing Santa Claus. That's what it's about.

Justin:

Okay, but do you think what that song is about, is the literal demigod Santa...

Sydnee:

[laughs]

[audience laughs]

Justin:

... visiting a woman, stealing a smooch, and then dipping out the chimney?

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

I have to—

Justin:

Is that the dystopian Christmas future that you buy into?!

Sydnee:

Well, no. What I always imagined is that, like, this was Santa's true love, but Santa cannot have this mortal woman...

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

... being immortal as he is. And so, like, he steals this one precious kiss, and then has to fly away.

Justin:

Okay.

Sydnee:

You know? And never see her again.

Justin:

So you turn Santa into Twilight, and that's cool.

[audience laughs]

Justin:

I love that. I love... I look forward to reading your fan fiction. I'm gonna head to the boards after this to check it out. But why don't you tell me the next thing that's killing my hero Santa?

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

[laughs] Uh, I'm also concerned about the fact that, if we're talking about infectious diseases, that he's eating other people's food. So, he's flying around to your house. He's eating milk and cookies that have been sitting out for, I don't know how long.

I mean, whose house does he get to first, right? So, the milk's just sitting there. Has it spoiled? I mean, he's, uh, he's at risk for a lot of foodborne illnesses this way. I mean, we don't know that everybody washes their hands. Sorry guys, you all don't. I know it.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

I know you all don't.

Justin:

I wash mine. I'm very sure you're all hands though. You know, I'm gonna

keep it clean.

Sydnee:

[laughs]

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

Some of you guys are in the bathroom for, like, two seconds. And you did not wash your hands in that time.

Justin:

We're counting.

Sydnee:

[laughs] I'm watching.

[audience laughs]

Justin:

All doctors are always counting.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

[laughs] One Mississippi, two mi— No.

Justin:

Nope!

Sydnee:

Mm-mm.

Justin:

Dirty hands.

Sydnee:

Bad hands.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

Uh, you mentioned Twilight. And I will say that, while I do not think that Santa is supposed to, like, like, glimmer in the sunlight, um, his eyes do twinkle, right?

Justin:

Yeah. It's lovely.

Sydnee:

We know that.

Justin:

Yeah.

Sydnee:

Um, and my question is, did Santa have cataract surgery?

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

Because [laughs] sometimes, after you've had cataract surgery, you can see the lens in there kinda twinkles. It's pretty.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

We already got it fixed. It's not a problem. Just wondering.

Justin:

Next.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

Let's talk about Santa's pets. So—

Justin:

Thank goodness.

Sydnee:

So, pets are a good thing. Pets are good for depression. They're, they're good for your general wellbeing. They're good for your mental status. People who have pets tend to be happier. Um, they're good to lower your blood pressure.

So, having this herd of reindeer, if we say those are his pets, that sounds pretty good for Santa. Um, it is bad, I guess, if he's allergic to reindeer. But we have no evidence of that.

Justin:

Right.

Sydnee:

We have no reason to believe that. Now, it is important to know, though, that reindeer do carry some diseases that humans can get. Uh, reindeer can carry tuberculosis. They can carry tetanus. They can carry rabies. Most commonly, though, if, let's say you're going to get a disease from a reindeer, if you are, you're probably gonna get brucellosis.

Justin:

Okay, what's that?

Sydnee:

So, uh, this is an illness that can cause fevers and sweats, and you'll get aches in your muscles and aches in your joints. Um, it can eventually go on to actually, uh, cause problems with your lower back. And your testicles. You can get swelling and inflammation of the testicles, too.

[audience laughs]

Justin:

He'll never die. He doesn't need children. Next.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

[laughs] So, I would worry about Santa being at risk if he has a lot of contact with the reindeer for brucellosis. Um, you can also get it by drinking unpasteurized milk. This is how it used to be transmitted. But, um, but nowadays it's mostly through contact with animals. Um, now cows are vaccinated against this. All cattle have to be.

Justin:

What's up, vaccines?

Sydnee:

So... Vaccines, I'm looking at you. So, uh, we could, we could theorize that Santa maybe has, or could vaccinate his reindeer against brucellosis.

Justin:

Possibly.

Sydnee:

Can I, also, just on a side note, can I tell you that brucellosis has more names than any disease I've ever encountered. And some of them are the best names ever. Can I tell you some of these?

Justin:

Yes.

Sydnee:

For this... Okay. For this illness, brucellosis. It is also known as backdoor trauma.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

Uh, fist of mercy.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

Five dollar disease. Goat fever. Maltese fever. Milk sickness. Uh, mountain fever. Satan's fever.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

Slow fever, and... Scottish delight. [laughs]

[audience laughs]

Justin:

I can't. I'm... Sydnee, I'm done. I can't. I can't take anymore Santa.

Sydnee:

We're almost done.

Justin:

Okay.

Sydnee:

We got a couple more things to cover. Okay. First of all, skin. Now, we all know that Santa's cheeks are rosy, and that's probably a good thing, right? We assume he's out in the cold. That's why. Um, I would not like to assume that Santa has rosacea. Although he may. He may have, like, you know, an inflammatory condition, where his skin is red and inflamed. That's possible.

Um, we've also noted that Santa's nose is red like a cherry. So, I am concerned about a condition called rhinophyma. Uh, this can happen, sometimes associated with rosacea. You get a lot of fibrosis, like extra tissue on your nose. And it can be very prominent.

People used to think of it as WC Field's nose. And it used to be associated with alcohol. It's not. It has nothing to do... Don't worry, Santa. It has nothing to do with alcohol, Um, but I am a little concerned about the possibility for rhinophyma. But—

Justin:

Gin Blossoms, right? Is that what Gin Blossoms are?

Sydnee:

Yeah. There you go. But—

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

But it really is—

Justin:

Thanks.

Sydnee:

It really is mis... It doesn't have anything to do with alcohol. But—

Justin:

Thanks for your pause everybody. I knew one, one time.

Sydnee:

[laughs]

[audience laughs]

Justin:

Stop. Stop it.

Sydnee:

This is why I think he might be okay. There is a condition called pseudo rhinophyma. Fake rhinophyma, right? Which is when your eyeglasses are too tight on the bridge of your nose [laughs], and you can't get blood and lymph

flow back from your nose. And your nose gets really swollen and red.
[laughs]

Justin:

That's why you need optic grab. You can just... You put...

[audience laughs]

Justin:

It stops right in the bridge of your nose.

Sydnee:

It's a nice little handle.

Justin:

Yeah.

Sydnee:

Nobody's watched The Jerk. [laughs]

Justin:

Okay.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

Uh, finally, though, I... Here, I'll end on a positive note. Santa, as far as we know, has been married to Mrs. Claus for a really long time. And a long, happy marriage can be associated with positive health outcomes. So, he's got that one for him.

Justin:

For some of us, am I right?

[audience laughs]

Justin:

Right? Wink, wink. Guys and ladies, right?

[audience laughs]

Justin:

Any guys and ladies out here?

[audience laughs]

Justin:

Never mind.

Sydnee:

You're not very good at winking. [laughs]

[audience laughs]

Justin:

That was... I'm sorry you killed Santa.

Sydnee:

Try. Do this.

Justin:

Oh, this?

Sydnee:

Yeah. It's like winking. [laughs]

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

Nah, it's like—

Justin:

Right. You know what? You killed Santa. So, why don't you just not criticize

the J-Man anymore? How's that?

[audience laughs]

Justin:

`Cause you killed Santa?

Sydnee:

He's fine.

Justin:

For now!

[audience laughs]

Sydnee:

Well, I just think it's important that Santa considers some of this information and takes some steps to improve his, you know, health.

Justin:

Okay. Well, there... Folks there you have it. Uh, thank you so much for joining us. My name is Justin McElroy.

Sydnee:

I'm Sydnee McElroy.

Justin:

And as always, don't drill a hole in your head.

[audience cheers]

[theme music plays]

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