

13 September 2019

# Army Public Health Weekly Update

Army Public Health Center



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We're sorry for the inconvenience.

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If you wish to be added to the APH Weekly Update mailing list, removed from the mailing list, or if you have comments or questions about the update, please [contact us](#). We welcome your comments. Please feel free to share this update with others who may be interested.



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## U.S. MILITARY

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### Army releases a Public Health Alert for severe lung illness associated with e-cigarette use

10 September - As of Sept. 6, 2019, more than 450 possible cases of a severe lung illness associated with e-cigarette products have been reported across multiple states. Five people have died from the illness. All of the patients reported recent use of e-cigarette products, and many stated using devices containing cannabinoid products such as tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) or cannabidiol (CBD). Symptoms of the illness appear over the course of a few days to several weeks and include difficulty breathing, coughing, and shortness of breath and/or chest pain. Some individuals also reported mild to moderate vomiting, diarrhea and fatigue. Although the specific cause of the illness remains unknown, all reported cases include recent e-cigarette or vaping product use. The aerosol from e-cigarettes and vaping products can contain a variety of harmful or potentially harmful ingredients. Also, the contents of e-cigarette and vaping liquids are not highly regulated and can vary from product to product. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration is working with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and state health departments to collect information on products used by individuals affected by this outbreak. Until a cause is determined, Soldiers and their family members who do not currently use tobacco products are encouraged to avoid all e-cigarette or vaping products, particularly those sold off the street or modified to add any substances not intended by the manufacturer. [Army.mil](http://Army.mil)

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### I learned how to retrain my brain to manage chronic pain

3 September- Approximately 50 million Americans live with chronic pain, according to a report from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and many of those suffering have served in the armed forces. The National Health Interview Survey found that military veterans are more likely to experience chronic pain than people who've never worn the uniform. Pain can take many forms: sharp, dull, strong, mild, intermittent, and constant. Acute pain is sudden, usually brought on by illness or injury. With time, it resolves. Chronic pain is the result of increased sensitivity of the nerves. And it can be unrelenting in terms of frequency and severity. Chronic pain may even lead to anxiety, depression, and a reduced quality of life. According to the CDC, many people rely on prescription medications to manage their pain. I did, too, after breaking my back during a training accident early in my Navy career as a parachute rigger and jumper. I spent some time recuperating but once back on the job, I was still hurting. There were many days I'd wake up, take medication to mask the pain, and then push through the day. Other mission-related injuries exacerbated the pain. I worked with my doctors to adjust medications and dosages. But at some point, I realized it didn't make sense for me to continue living life this way. The meds were clouding my mind, preventing me from being fully present for my family. Moreover, they were ultimately adding to the problem. Let's say my back hurt. I'd take a couple of pills and then,

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**Data to Support the  
Development of  
Wildlife Toxicity  
Reference Values for  
Per- and  
Polyfluoroalkyl  
Substances**

Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are compounds manufactured for use in paints, cleaning agents, fire suppressants, nonstick cookware and food containers, and water-impermeable products in general. PFAS are also key ingredients in highly efficient fire suppressant agents known as Aqueous Film Forming Foams (AFFFs), which have been used by the Department of Defense (DOD) since approximately 1970 for fire-training and emergency response activities.



feeling no pain, continue working past the point when I should have stopped. The overexertion would leave me almost completely debilitated for a day or two afterward, when the pain medication wore off. And the body can develop a tolerance to medication over time, according to the National Institute on Drug Abuse I put off back surgery because of potential risks, including paralysis and infections. Several years after retiring and well into my second career as a senior scientist for Naval Air Systems Command, I had a spinal fusion procedure. After recuperating, I approached my doctors about learning how to retrain my brain so that I could taper off the meds and take a holistic approach to managing my pain. Tools for retraining the brain include physical therapy, yoga, and dietary changes. [Health.mil](#)

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## **Veterans with PTSD, anxiety turn to beekeeping for relief**

11 September- Gently lifting a wooden frame containing dozens of Italian honeybees, Vince Ylitalo seemed transfixed as he and several other veterans inspected the buzzing insects. "This is really cool," he said, pointing to a bee with blobs of orange pollen on its hind legs. Ylitalo, who has battled PTSD after serving nearly 40 years in the military including two tours in Iraq, didn't seem bothered by the bees swarming around his head or crawling all over the entrance to their hive. Instead, the 57-year-old logistics expert said the several hours spent working on the two hives each week at the Manchester VA Medical Center in New Hampshire was a respite of sorts from his anxiety and depression. Known as an apiary, the hives are located next to a lilac garden off a busy street. "I'm in this program to help me get out of the thought process of all those problems that I have," said Ylitalo, who has struggled since leaving the Army in 2017. "It helps me think of something completely different. ... I'm just thinking about bees." Researchers are beginning to study whether beekeeping has therapeutic benefits. For now, there is little hard data, but veterans in programs like the one in Manchester insist that it helps them focus, relax and become more productive. The programs are part of a small but growing effort by Veterans Affairs and veteran groups to promote the training of soldiers in farming and other agricultural careers. Standing near Ylitalo in her white bee suit, Army veteran Wendi Zimmermann said bees have helped her deal with the anxiety she feels outside her home — even though she initially feared being stung. She and Ylitalo are among 12 veterans that have taken part in beekeeping since the program started in May. "It gives you a chance to shut down and not think about the outside world. It shows me there is a way to shut my brain down to get other things accomplished," Zimmermann said. "Before, my mind would be filled with thoughts constantly and I wasn't accomplishing daily tasks." [Military Times](#)

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## A breeding ground for a fatal scourge: Nursing homes

11 September- Maria Davila lay mute in a nursing home bed, an anguished expression fixed to her face, as her husband stroked her withered hand. Ms. Davila, 65, suffers from a long list of ailments — respiratory failure, kidney disease, high blood pressure, an irregular heartbeat — and is kept alive by a gently beeping ventilator and a feeding tube. Doctors recently added another diagnosis to her medical chart: *Candida auris*, a highly contagious, drug-resistant fungus that has infected nearly 800 people since it arrived in the United States four years ago, with half of patients dying within 90 days. At least 38 other patients at Ms. Davila’s nursing home, Palm Gardens Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation in Brooklyn, have been infected with or carry *C. auris*, a germ so virulent and hard to eradicate that some facilities will not accept patients with it. Now, as they struggle to contain the pathogen, public health officials from cities, states and the federal government say that skilled nursing facilities like Palm Gardens are fueling its spread. “They are the dark underbelly of drug-resistant infection,” said Dr. Tom Chiller, who heads the fungal division at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, speaking about skilled nursing facilities, particularly those with ventilated patients, but not Palm Gardens specifically. [The New York Times](#)

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## African Swine Fever confirmed in Rizal, Philippines pigs; DOH says not a risk to human health

9 September- In a follow-up report, Philippines agriculture officials announced Monday that samples from pigs in small backyard farms in Rizal province near Manila tested positive for African Swine fever (ASF). Samples were sent to the World Reference Laboratory in Pirbright, England, which also happens to be the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) Reference Laboratory for African Swine Fever. Agriculture Secretary William Dar said during a press conference, “Of the 20 blood samples, 14 are positive with African swine fever”.

[Outbreak News Today](#)

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## AstraZeneca's Imfinzi prolongs survival in aggressive lung cancer

9 September- AstraZeneca’s cancer treatment Imfinzi has been shown to prolong survival in a particularly aggressive type of lung cancer by close to three months, as the British drug maker holds its ground in a crowded field against rival immunotherapy drugs. Imfinzi, when combined with chemotherapy, resulted in a median 13 months survival in a late-stage small cell lung cancer trial, the British drug maker said on Monday, adding trial details to a brief statement published in June. Patients in a reference group on chemotherapy only lived a median 10.3 months in the so-called Caspian trial, it said. “There is a wide recognition that

### The Surgeon General Weekly Read Book

The Surgeon General Weekly Read Book is available with articles classified up to the **SECRET** level on the APHC SIPRNet site:

<https://intelshare.intelink.sgov.gov/sites/medcom-g2/SitePages/Home.aspx>

To access this version, you will need a **SECRET** clearance and a SIPRNet account.

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in small cell lung cancer there is very much a need for new therapies," said Dave Fredrickson, head of the company's oncology business. "There is a clear imperative that chemotherapy alone is not delivering the outcomes that we desire for patients because the disease is so aggressive." AstraZeneca has already carved out a niche for Imfinzi, which enables the immune system to detect and attack certain cancer cells, in the more common non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC) setting, with approval for tumors that have only spread in the chest. [Reuters](#)

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## Eating chicken linked to higher cancer risk, Oxford study finds

8 September- Findings of a new study have shown that people who eat chicken may have increased risk of getting cancer. In the new study published in the Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health, researchers from Oxford University in the UK, tracked 475,000 middle-aged Britons between the years 2016 and 2014. The researchers analyzed the participants' diets as well as their diseases and illnesses. About 23,000 of the participants was later diagnosed with cancer. [Tech Times](#)

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## Esketamine nasal spray eases depression symptoms in suicidal patients

9 September- The depression drug esketamine, marketed as Spravato, appears to offer quick relief to people who are actively considering suicide. Esketamine, a chemical cousin of the anesthetic and party drug ketamine, reduced depression symptoms within hours in two large studies of suicidal patients, the drug's maker announced Monday. The studies, which included 456 patients who were suicidal, found that after 24 hours, patients who got the drug along with standard treatment were less depressed than people who got standard treatment alone. Surprisingly, though, patients who got esketamine were not significantly less suicidal, even though they had fewer symptoms of depression. The finding came from two studies sponsored by the drug's maker, Johnson & Johnson, and presented at the 32nd European College of Neuropsychopharmacology meeting in Copenhagen. [NPR](#)

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## Juul illegally marketed E-Cigarettes, F.D.A. says

9 September- Juul Labs, the dominant e-cigarette company, illegally marketed its vaping products as a less harmful alternative to traditional cigarettes, the Food and Drug Administration said on Monday, casting a deepening shadow over the safety of e-cigarette devices. The agency issued a warning letter to Juul, saying that the company violated federal regulations because it had not received federal approval to promote and sell its vaping products as a healthier option. The F.D.A.'s action dealt a setback to the company's

efforts to rebrand itself after public outrage erupted over a surge in teenage vaping. [The New York Times](#)

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## **Outbreak of lung illness associated with using E-cigarette products**

6 September- CDC, U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), state and local health departments, and other clinical and public health partners are investigating a multistate outbreak of severe pulmonary disease associated with e-cigarette product (devices, liquids, refill pods, and/or cartridges) use. This investigation is ongoing and has not identified a cause, but all reported cases have a history of using e-cigarette products. Latest outbreak information:

-As of September 6, 2019, over 450 possible cases of lung illness associated with the use of e-cigarette products have been reported to CDC from the following 33 states and 1 U.S. territory: AR, CA, CO, CT, DE, FL, GA, IA, IL, IN, KS, KY, LA, MD, MI, MN, MT, NC, NE, NJ, NM, NY, OH, OR, PA, SC, TN, TX, UT, VA, VT, WI, WV, and the U.S. Virgin Islands). These numbers may change frequently.

-Five deaths have been confirmed in California, Illinois, Indiana, Minnesota, and Oregon.

-CDC worked with states to create a case definition to classify cases in a consistent way. State investigators determine if cases are confirmed or probable after examining the medical records of suspected cases and consulting with the clinical care team to exclude other possible causes. Unlike nationally reportable conditions, these cases are requiring clinicians and public health to interview patients to determine product use and individual behaviors.

-CDC will report numbers of confirmed and probable cases once states have finalized their classification of cases.

-We expect that states and clinicians may look back for older cases based on CDC's case definition. States are in the process of classifying current possible cases as well as older cases.

-No evidence of infectious diseases has been identified; therefore lung illnesses are likely associated with a chemical exposure. Initial published reports from the investigation point to clinical similarities among cases. Patients report e-cigarette use and similar symptoms and clinical findings. These align with the CDC health advisory released August 30, 2019.

-The investigation has not identified any specific substance or e-cigarette product that is linked to all cases. Many patients report using e-cigarette products with liquids that contain cannabinoid products, such as tetrahydrocannabinol (THC).

-These investigations are ongoing. CDC will provide updates when more information is available. [CDC](#)

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## Scientists create a device that can mass-produce human embryoids

11 September- Scientists have invented a device that can quickly produce large numbers of living entities that resemble very primitive human embryos. Researchers welcomed the development, described Wednesday in the journal *Nature*, as an important advance for studying the earliest days of human embryonic development. But it also raises questions about where to draw the line in manufacturing "synthetic" human life. Other scientists have previously created synthetic embryos, which are also known as embryoids. These entities are made by coaxing human stem cells to form structures found in very early human embryos. The research has raised questions about how similar to complete embryos they could and should be allowed to become. The new work takes such research further by creating a method that can rapidly generate relatively large numbers of embryoids. "This new system allows us to achieve a superior efficiency to generate these human embryo-like structures," says Jianping Fu, an associate professor of biomedical engineering at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, who led the research. Fu calls the step "an exciting new milestone for this emerging field" that should significantly improve the ability of scientists to study early human development. "Such human embryo-like structures have a lot of potential to open what we call the so-called black box of human development," Fu says. [NPR top of page...](#)

## Stress in pregnancy 'makes child personality disorder more likely'

6 September- The children of women who experience severe stress when pregnant are nearly 10 times more likely to develop a personality disorder by the age of 30, a study suggests. Even moderate prolonged stress may have an impact on child development and continue after a baby's birth, it said. More than 3,600 pregnant women in Finland were asked about their stress levels, and their children followed up. Psychiatrists say mums-to-be must have access to mental health support. Other important factors, such as how children are brought up, the family's financial situation and trauma experienced during childhood, are known to contribute to the development of personality disorders and could have played a role. [BBC News top of page...](#)

## Study accidentally reveals biological aging may be reversible

8 September- A new study shows that scientists might be able to not only slow the process of aging but actually reverse it, Benjamin Button-style. Volunteers in a California study were given a cocktail of three common drugs for one year-- a growth hormone and two diabetes medications. Scientists had been testing the drugs in the hope of regenerating the thymus gland. But upon further analysis, they found that participants had lost an average of 2.5

years on their "epigenetic clock," measured by analyzing marks on a person's genomes, according to the journal Nature. Participants' immune systems also showed signs of rejuvenation. [Fox News](#)

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## **Vitamin E chemical is 'key focus' in vaping illness investigation, health officials say**

5 September- An investigation into the link between vaping and severe lung illnesses has yielded the discovery of extremely high levels of the chemical vitamin E acetate in nearly all cannabis-containing vaping products that were analyzed, New York health officials said Thursday. At least one vape product containing this chemical has been linked to each person who fell ill and submitted a product for testing in the state. Laboratory tests conducted at the New York Department of Health's Wadsworth Center in Albany showed "very high levels" of vitamin E acetate in the cannabis-containing samples, the state health department announced. Vitamin E acetate is now "a key focus" of the department's investigation into the illnesses, the department said. Some of the products that have been found to contain vitamin E acetate are candy-flavored vapes. [CNN](#)

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### **INFLUENZA**

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## **CDC: Flu View - Weekly U.S. Influenza Surveillance Report**

2018-2019 Influenza Season Week 35 ending August 31, 2019:

-U.S. Virologic Surveillance: WHO and NREVSS collaborating laboratories, which include both public health and clinical laboratories located in all 50 states, Puerto Rico, Guam, and the District of Columbia, report to CDC the total number of respiratory specimens tested for influenza and the number positive for influenza by virus type. In addition, public health laboratories also report the influenza A subtype (H1 or H3) and influenza B lineage information of the viruses they test and the age or age group of the persons from whom the specimens were collected.

-Pneumonia and Influenza (P&I) Mortality Surveillance: Based on National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) mortality surveillance data available on September 5, 2019, 4.5% of the deaths occurring during the week ending August 24, 2019 (week 34) were due to P&I. This percentage is below the epidemic threshold of 5.6% for week 34.

-Influenza-Associated Pediatric Mortality: One influenza-associated pediatric death was reported to CDC during week 35. The death was associated with an influenza A (H3) virus and occurred during week 9 (the week ending March, 2, 2019). A total of 130 influenza-associated pediatric deaths occurring during the 2018-2019 season have been reported to

CDC. [CDC](#)

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## WHO: Influenza Update

02 September 2019 - Update number 349, based on data up to 18 August 2019:

- In the temperate zones of the southern hemisphere, influenza activity continued to decrease in most countries.
- In the Caribbean, Central American, and tropical South American countries, influenza activity was low overall.
- In tropical Africa, influenza activity was low across reporting countries, with the exception of a few countries in Western and Eastern Africa.
- In Southern Asia, influenza activity was low across reporting countries except in Bhutan where influenza percent positivity was reported above alert threshold.
- In South East Asia, influenza activity was low in most reporting countries and remained elevated in Myanmar.
- In the temperate zone of the northern hemisphere, influenza activity remained at inter-seasonal levels.
- Worldwide, seasonal influenza A viruses accounted for the majority of detections. [WHO](#)

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### VETERINARY/FOOD SAFETY

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## MDH Sambar Masala recalled for Salmonella risk

9 September- House of Spices (India), packaging products under MDH brand names, is recalling various lots of "MDH SAMBAR MASALA" because of the risk of Salmonella contamination, according to a recall notice posted on the FDA's website. The recalled product, produced by R-Pure Agro Specialties and distributed by House of Spices (India), were sold in retail grocery stores in Northern California. The implicated product comes in a box weighing weighing 3.5-oz (100g) with red and white MDH Logo with the UPC code "6291103750327". [Food Safety News](#)

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## Salmonella suspected in outbreak at Belgian school

11 September- Around 150 students and teachers from a school in Belgium are ill with possible food poisoning. The Agency for Care and Health (Zorg en Gezondheid) and the Federal Agency for the Safety of the Food Chain (FASFC) are investigating to find the source of the suspected Salmonella outbreak. Students and teachers from the Spermalie Hotel and Tourism School in Bruges became ill this past Friday and over the weekend. Students at the

school train for a job in hotels, restaurants or the foodservice sector by specializing in tourism or hospitality plus special classes on hotel management and catering. The Agency for Care and Health received information late last week about a large number of students from the school complaining of gastrointestinal illness. [Food Safety News](#)

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## Udi's Classic Hamburger Buns recalled over plastic pieces

7 September -Conagra Brands is recalling approximately 2,200 cases of Udi's Classic Hamburger Buns due to the potential presence of small pieces of white plastic. The company says a dough scraper was inadvertently incorporated into the production process for a small amount of the product, according to the recall notice posted on the FDA's website. However, consumption of the plastic pieces may result in a choking hazard. Udi's Classic Hamburger Buns are made on a dedicated production line, so no other Udi's brand products are affected. The recalled product is sold in clear plastic bags and the UPC is located on the back of the bag in the lower right corner. Consumers can find the bag closure code on the hard plastic closure for the bag. [Food Safety News](#)

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### WELLNESS

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## Is it really possible that plant-based foods such as the Impossible Whopper are healthful?

9 September- With many American consumers interested in reducing their consumption of animal products without becoming vegetarian or vegan, the food industry has come up with a new mantra: plant-based. Look around your grocery store, and you'll see a growing number of dairy, egg and meat substitutes bearing this label. But the industry has taken liberties with the definition of "plant-based." Rather than focusing on whole foods such as vegetables, fruits, chickpeas and nuts, which is what health professionals mean when they recommend "plant-based eating," food manufacturers are developing ultra-processed burgers out of pea or soy protein, methylcellulose and maltodextrin, and liquid "eggs" out of mung bean protein isolate and gellan gum. Then they crown this ultra-processed food with an undeserved health halo. Fast-food companies have joined forces with the manufacturers. Impossible Foods veggie burgers are on the menu at Burger King and White Castle; Beyond Meat is offering options for Subway's meatless meatball subs, Dunkin's meatless sausages, Del Taco's burritos and Carl Jr.'s meatless burger, and has just partnered with KFC to test out vegan fried "chicken"; and vegan JUST Eggs are being used in breakfast sandwiches at Tim Hortons (note, these items might not be available at all locations). [The](#)

[Washington Post](#)

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## USAFRICOM

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### **Ebola: Bombali virus detected in bats in Guinea**

9 September- The sixth ebolavirus, Bombali virus, has been detected in insect-eating bats in Guinea. In addition to findings reported by researchers earlier this month, scientists from the University of California, Davis, detected the virus in Angolan free-tailed bats roosting inside people's houses in Guéckedou and Kissidougou. UC Davis One Health Institute also first discovered the Bombali virus in Angolan and little free-tailed bats in Sierra Leone. Bombali virus is distinct from the five previously known ebolaviruses, including Zaire ebolavirus, which caused a massive outbreak in West Africa in 2013-2016. Bombali virus was also found in an Angolan free-tailed bat in Kenya in May 2018. Research teams used similar methods to detect the virus and, collectively, results suggest Bombali virus has a wide distribution. Scientists are trying to determine if Bombali virus has spilled over into humans or if it can cause disease in humans or animals. Results to date show that Bombali virus can infect human cells, and studies are ongoing to understand more about the risk it may pose. The discovery of Bombali virus first in insect-eating bats in Sierra Leone, and now in Guinea, marks the first time that scientists discovered a new ebolavirus species in a host before detection in an infected human or sick animal. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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## USCENTCOM

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### **Pakistan reports 5 more polio cases, Global total now 71**

30 August- Five additional wild polioviruses type 1 (WPV1) cases were reported in the past week in Pakistan. According to the Global Polio Eradication Initiative, one case each was reported from Hangu, Bannu, and North Waziristan districts, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province; and, two from Hyderabad district, Sindh province. This brings Pakistan's total to 58 this year and the global total to 71. Pakistan only reported 12 cases all of last year. In addition, seven more circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus type 2 (cVDPV2) cases were reported, six in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and one in Nigeria. To date, 59 cases have been reported in Africa and Asia this year. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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## Belgium: Suspected Salmonella outbreak sickens scores at Bruges school

11 September- Officials with the Zorg en Gezondheid in Belgium report that some 150 students and teachers from the Spermalie Hotel and Tourism School in Bruges have been sickened with suspected Salmonella food poisoning. Joris Moonens, spokesperson for the Agency for Care and Health (Zorg en Gezondheid): "We received notification of gastrointestinal complaints on Friday 6 September with a large number of pupils at the high school Spermalie in Bruges. Examination of bowel movements has already shown to a number of pupils and teachers that it is Salmonella. In the meantime, there are around 150 sick people, both students and teachers. We will follow up the investigation of additional bowel languages in the coming days. We also launch an online survey among students and teachers to find out who ate in which school restaurant. We do everything we can to identify the sources of the contamination." Federal Agency for the Safety of the Food Chain spokesperson, Liesbeth Van de Voorde said, "We have been investigating the possible source of the infection since Friday 6 September. Our inspectors first took samples of the meal that was served in the school restaurant on Thursday, and we are also extending the investigation to include meals on Wednesday and Tuesday. After all, salmonella can remain in the body for 6 to 72 hours before symptoms of disease occur. The food samples go to the laboratory of the National Reference Center of Sciensano. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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## Strep A infections: New bacterial strain linked to rise in England and Wales, according to study

11 September- Scientists studying scarlet fever have identified a new strain of disease-causing bacteria, which may explain a rise in more serious Strep A infections in England and Wales, according to results from cases in London and across England and Wales from 2014-16 published in The Lancet Infectious Diseases journal. In 2014, England experienced the biggest surge in scarlet fever cases since the 1960s. Numbers continued to increase, with 15,000 cases in 2014, 17,000 in 2015 and over 19,000 in 2016. Symptoms, which affect young children, include a high temperature, sore throat, and a pink-red rash that feels like sandpaper. Scarlet fever is caused by toxins released by the bacterium Streptococcus pyogenes, also known as Strep A, and cases follow a seasonal pattern peaking between March and May. Scarlet fever is easily treated with antibiotics. Cases of invasive infections caused by the same bacterium also increased in 2016 compared to the previous five years.

[Outbreak News Today](#)

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## USINDOPACOM

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### Measles: 1172 confirmed cases across New Zealand

11 September- New Zealand health officials continue to report measles, with Auckland seeing the most. From Jan. 1, 2019 to Sept. 11, 2019 there have been 1172 confirmed cases of measles notified across New Zealand. 970 of these confirmed cases are in the Auckland region. Counties Manukau District is reporting the most, with greater than 650 cases, in the Auckland region. Auckland Regional Public Health Service (ARPHS) continues to provide advice to schools, early learning services and other organization affected by measles. The service is also working to stop the spread of the virus outside of Auckland by alerting the travelling public and other public health services when people infectious with measles have left the region. Medical Officer of Health, Dr. William Rainger is asking parents not to delay getting children vaccinated at 12 months and at four years, and to make sure older children are vaccinated now if they have missed out. "Do watch out for the symptoms of measles – a fever, runny nose, cough and sore red eyes, with a rash following a few days later. Please phone ahead to your GP before going to the clinic, if you think you may have measles," Dr. Rainger says. Immunization is the best way to protect against getting measles. Measles (MMR) vaccination is free to everyone under the age of 50 and 99 percent effective after two doses. Children in New Zealand normally get the MMR vaccine at 15 months and 4 years old as part of the national vaccine schedule. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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## USNORTHCOM

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### Mexico: 50 Rickettsia cases reported in Chihuahua State

10 September-Health officials in the state of Chihuahua, Mexico are reporting some 50 rickettsiosis cases this year to date, according to an El Mexicano report. According to Dr. Gumaro Barrios, head of the Sub-Directorate of Epidemiology, of the total cases– Chihuahua (27), Juárez (16), Aldama (2), Meoqui (2) and one each in Guachochi, Delicias and Villa Ahumada. 17 deaths have been reported. "When we started with epidemiological surveillance, it was mostly children. In the last two years it has been extended to ages from 1 to over 65 years", he said. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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## U.S.: Eastern Equine Encephalitis: Massachusetts see high number of cases

9 September- The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) has reported seven confirmed human Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) virus infections to date. This is the same as the annual average seen in the US annually. And Massachusetts is not alone with cases and deaths reported in several states. What is this relatively rare disease? What are the symptoms? How does it affect horses? These issues and others are addressed here.

[Outbreak News Today](#)

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### USSOUTHCOM

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## Brazil measles: 98 percent of cases reported in São Paulo

5 September- The Brazil Ministry of Health reported Tuesday that over the past 90 days, 2,753 confirmed measles cases in 13 Brazilian states. According to the new epidemiological bulletin of the disease, from June 9 to August 31, 2019, Brazil reported 20,292 cases, of which 15,430 were under investigation and 2,109 were discarded. The Ministry of Health also pointed out that four deaths due to the disease were recorded: three deaths in the state of São Paulo (two children and one adult); and one in the state of Pernambuco (a child). All four cases were unvaccinated (all three children were under the age of one).

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