

20 September 2019

Army Public Health Weekly Update

Army Public Health Center



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U.S. MILITARY

Public Health Alert

17 Sep - Public Health Alert - Update 1: Severe Lung Illness Associated with E-Cigarette Use. As of Sept. 17, 2019, seven deaths and 380 cases have been linked to the current outbreak of severe lung illness associated with e-cigarette use. These numbers will continue to change while the investigation is ongoing. Until we know more, individuals are encouraged to avoid using all e-cigarette or vaping products. If you experience any of the following symptoms and currently or recently used e-cigarettes, see your health care provider right away: cough, shortness of breath, or chest pain; nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea; fatigue, fever, or abdominal pain. [U.S. Army Combat Readiness Center](#)

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The VA's suicide prevention strategy will fail

17 September- The suicide rate for young adults was 17 per 100,000 population in 2017, while the suicide rate for veterans 18-39 is over 50 per 100,000. The VA strategy says, "Suicide prevention is VA's highest priority." If that were true, the VA would not outsource the solution to local, community-based organizations. In the VA's National Strategy for Preventing Veteran Suicide, there are four critical protective factors that help offset risk factors. Two clinical solutions: 1) Positive coping skills, and 2) Access to mental health care; and two non-clinical solutions: 3) Feeling connected to other people, and 4) Having reasons for living or a sense of purpose in life. The VA's strategy has a "lead from behind" approach for the latter two. We give the VA \$220.2 billion per year to take care of our 20 million veterans. Yet, the VA wants to outsource outreach to veteran service organizations (VSOs), nonprofits, local businesses and governments to address the two non-clinical factors. While VSOs advocate on behalf of all veterans, they are not in touch with all veterans. Given member overlap and passive membership, basic math dictates that the combined marketing reach of the entire VSO community is estimated to be 5-10 percent of the total. Even so, this business-to-business (B2B) (organization to organization) approach is not the right strategy for an organization with individual customers. The VA's customers/end users are the veterans themselves. Therefore, a business-to-consumer (B2C) (organization to end user) approach is the correct one. That's why the VA's current outreach strategy will fail to lower the suicide rate, especially among young veterans. Instead of relying on others, the VA's strategy should be to replicate the peer, community and institutional support veterans had while they were in the military. [Military Times](#)

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GLOBAL

Chagas Disease

Chagas (pronounced SHA-gus) disease, also known as American Trypanosomiasis, is a parasitic disease affecting roughly 8 million people in Mexico and Central and South America. It is a rare disease in the southern United States but has been detected in Texas, Louisiana, and Oklahoma. The disease is caused by the flagellate protozoan parasite *Trypanosoma cruzi* (T. cruzi). This parasite causes both acute (short-term) and chronic (long-term) symptoms, which can become life-threatening.



A 7th person has died from vaping-related causes- The CDC is stepping up its probe of e-cigarette illnesses

17 September- A California man has become the seventh person to die from a vaping-related illness in the United States as the nation's leading health agency activates emergency operations to better investigate the outbreak of lung injuries associated with e-cigarettes. California will launch a \$20 million ad campaign to warn against the dangers of vaping, Gov. Gavin Newsom announced Monday, and the same day health officials said a 40-year-old had died over the weekend from complications related to using e-cigarettes. Vaping-related illness recently killed another person in California, plus one person each in Kansas, Illinois, Indiana, Minnesota and Oregon, officials have reported. In light of the outbreak of lung injuries, the US Centers for Disease Control has activated its Emergency Operations Center, the agency announced. Researchers are looking into 380 cases of lung illness associated with the use of e-cigarettes in 36 states and the US Virgin Islands, they have said. [CNN](#)

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A daily baby aspirin could help many pregnancies and save lives

16 September- Bridget Desmukes was surprised when her OB-GYN recommended low-dose aspirin at her first prenatal appointment this past spring. She knew about daily low-dose aspirin being prescribed to people recovering from a heart attack or stroke. But for pregnant women? In a past pregnancy, Desmukes, who is now 42, had developed preeclampsia, a potentially serious complication that involves high blood pressure. A small amount of daily aspirin, it turns out, can significantly cut the risk of developing preeclampsia in pregnancy. It's currently recommended for many pregnant women by two influential groups — the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force, an independent panel of experts commissioned by the federal government. The challenge, some OB-GYNs believe, is getting the word out to women who are at risk that the low-dose aspirin regimen is something that could benefit them. In that way, Desmukes and her husband, Jeffrey, were lucky to hear about it early in her pregnancy. She says her doctor "explained to us that because of my age and the fact that I had a history of preeclampsia, aspirin would be recommended for me to take. Just precautionary — to keep the flow of nutrients and oxygen and everything to the baby and help it continue to thrive and grow." [NPR](#)

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

As Congo's Ebola outbreak drags on, untracked cases sow confusion

16 September- The United States remains committed to fighting Ebola in Africa, American health officials said on Monday, but the scope of the current outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo has become somewhat unclear. There were rumors that Ebola had reached Tanzania, the officials noted. And the arrest of Congo's former health minister, who until recently led his country's response to the outbreak, has raised doubts about how effective that effort ever was. The American delegation included Alex M. Azar, the secretary of Health and Human Services; Dr. Robert R. Redfield, the director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; Dr. Anthony Fauci, the director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases; and Tim Ziemer, a retired admiral who is a senior deputy assistant administrator at USAID. The group toured Ebola response operations in Congo, Rwanda and Uganda. In a telephone news conference as the trip neared its end, Mr. Azar said that, to date, the United States has spent \$158 million in direct aid on the fight and another \$238 million in technical assistance, including research on vaccines and treatments. [The New York Times](#)

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CDC activating Emergency Operations Center to aid vaping crisis investigations

16 September- As U.S. health officials look into what might be causing hundreds of serious breathing illnesses in people who use e-cigarettes and other vaping devices, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has activated its Emergency Operations Center (EOC) to aid the investigations. "CDC has made it a priority to find out what is causing this outbreak of e-cigarette- or vaping-related injuries and deaths," said CDC Director Robert Redfield. "Activation of CDC's Emergency Operations Center allows us to enhance operations and provide additional support to CDC staff working to protect our nation from this serious health threat." Reuters reported that the Emergency Operations Center offers a central command post where teams of trained experts, including staff of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), track public health emergencies, share information and coordinate the responses. [Fox News](#)

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Chinese scientists attempt to cure man's HIV and leukemia using gene-editing tool CRISPR

14 September- Scientists in China used gene-editing tool CRISPR to treat a patient with HIV. It was the first time that CRISPR was used in an experimental HIV therapy. It did not cure nor control the patient's HIV infection, but the researchers said that that the treatment appears to be safe. In the new study published in the New England Journal of Medicine on Sept. 11, Hongkui Deng, from Peking University, and colleagues reported that they did not find any

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unintentional genetic alteration, a concern associated with gene therapies. In an earlier controversial study, a Chinese scientist also used CRISPR to edit the genomes of twins to make them resistant to HIV. Jiankui He edited the DNA of the embryos, so the gene alterations may be passed down to the next generation. The new study is different in that it made the DNA edits on adult cells, which means the changes will not be passed on. The HIV patient in the experimental treatment also has leukemia and needed a bone marrow transplant. The researchers edited the DNA in bone marrow stem cells from a donor and then transplanted the edited cells into the patient. The researchers then used CRISPR to delete the gene called CCR5, which gives instructions to the protein on the surface of some immune cells. HIV uses this protein to get inside cells. People who have a natural mutation in the CCR5 gene are thus resistant to HIV infection. [Tech Times](#)

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Climate change is having widespread health impacts

16 September- The climate crisis is making people sicker—worsening illnesses ranging from seasonal allergies to heart and lung disease. Children, pregnant people and the elderly are the most at risk from extreme weather and rising heat. But the impact of the climate crisis—for patients, doctors and researchers—is already being felt across every specialty of medicine, with worse feared to come. "There's research suggesting that our prescription medications may be causing harm because of changing heat patterns," said Aaron Bernstein, a pediatric hospitalist who is the co-director of the Center for Climate, Health and the Global Environment at Harvard University. [Scientific American](#)

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New York's governor is taking executive action to ban the sale of flavored e-cigarettes

15 September- New York Governor Andrew Cuomo says he is taking executive action to ban the sale of most flavored e-cigarettes in the state. Cuomo announced at a press conference Sunday that the state will prohibit all flavors except tobacco and menthol because flavored products are "highly attractive to young people." He said that 68% of e-cigarette users use flavored products. New York Dept. of Health Commissioner Dr. Howard Zucker will hold an emergency meeting with the New York Public Health and Health Planning Council (PHHPC) this week to carry out the ban, a press release from Cuomo's office states. The move comes amid two intertwined public health crises related to e-cigarette use, known as vaping. There has been a dramatic rise in youth and teenage vaping over the past few years, and the outbreak of mysterious vaping-related lung illnesses have brought new attention to the field. Juul Labs, the leading e-cigarette company, has said its products are intended to be used as an alternative for adult cigarette smokers. But health officials say that the company's range of flavors, such as Mint and Mango, are designed to appeal to young people. Michigan became the first state to ban the sale of flavored e-cigarettes last week. The Trump administration has also said that a newly proposed enforcement policy would

require e-cigarette companies to take their flavored products off the market. [CNN](#)

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Picturing health: Podoconiosis—stepping out of neglect

16 September- Podoconiosis is a WHO-classified neglected tropical disease (NTD) and is the lesser known of the two major forms of tropical lymphoedema. It is usually bilateral but can be asymmetric, and predominantly occurs at altitudes too high for the transmission of filarial parasites. The photographs shown here were taken by Alexander Kumar in Mirab Gojjam, a rural area in northern Ethiopia. This NTD has been described in 32 countries in tropical Africa, Central America, and Asia where red clay soils coexist with high altitude, high rainfall, and low-income communities. Podoconiosis is a non-transmissible, preventable NTD that affects individuals whose feet and legs are exposed longterm to irritant red clay and volcanic soils. The disease causes substantial morbidity. Affected individuals and communities also bear social and economic burdens. Stigma results from misconceptions about the cause of podoconiosis and fatalism regarding its progress. Unsurprisingly, the disease is associated with low quality of life and depression, irrespective of a patient's disability level. Podoconiosis can be prevented through consistent wearing of shoes from early childhood, good foot hygiene, and covering floors. Good foot hygiene and use of socks and shoes reverses early stage disease and decreases the frequency of acute dermatolymphangioadenitis episodes. Central to podoconiosis elimination is health education so that patients understand the causes of podoconiosis and stigma is reduced. Research has identified genetic susceptibility to podoconiosis; however, the disease remains without a diagnostic test or a treatment for advanced stage disease. Awareness about podoconiosis is low, including among health professionals. Footwork, the International Podoconiosis Initiative is a global partnership working to raise awareness, educate, and move towards elimination of podoconiosis. The authors believe shoes, as part of clothing, should be considered as a human right. Supporting shoe-wearing initiatives and ensuring healthy working conditions and adequate footwear in affected communities are first steps toward elimination, which is well within the reach of our generation with a coordinated, sustained effort to bridge inequity, remove stigma, and allow communities and patients to reach their potential. [The Lancet](#)

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Prostate drug may slow Parkinson's disease

17 September- A drug used to treat enlarged prostates may be a powerful medicine against Parkinson's disease, according to an international team of scientists. Terazosin helps ease benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH) by relaxing the muscles of the bladder and prostate. But researchers believe it has another beneficial action, on brain cells damaged by Parkinson's. They say the drug might slow Parkinson's progression - something that is not possible currently. They studied thousands of patients with both BPH and Parkinson's. Their findings, published in the Journal of Clinical Investigation, suggest the alpha-blocker drug protects brain cells from destruction. Parkinson's is a progressive condition affecting the brain, for which there is currently no cure. Existing Parkinson's treatments can help with some of the symptoms but can't slow or reverse the loss of neurons that occurs with the disease. Terazosin may help by activating an enzyme called PGK1 to prevent this brain cell death, the researchers, from the University of Iowa, in the US and the Beijing Institute for Brain Disorders, China, say. [BBC News](#)

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Use of 'high risk' antibiotics in hospitals may up risk for C. Diff

16 September- Use of high-risk antibiotics in hospitals, such as cephalosporins, fluoroquinolones, carbapenems, and lincosamides, was linked with a greater risk of Clostridioides difficile in hospitals, researchers found. After adjusting for confounders, for each 100-day increase in high-risk antibiotic use per 1,000 days present, risk of hospital-associated C. difficile infection rose 12% (RR 1.12, 95% CI 1.04-1.21), reported L. Clifford McDonald, MD, of the CDC, and colleagues, writing in Infection Control & Hospital Epidemiology, the journal of the Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America. "This highlights the importance of ongoing monitoring of antibiotic use in hospitals for patient safety as it relates to the effect of antibiotics on C. difficile infections," McDonald said in a statement. The authors noted that antibiotic overuse is now being looked at as a major driver of C. difficile infections, especially prior research finding that around half of inpatients were prescribed an antibiotic and potentially 30% of those antibiotics were unnecessary, they said. "In addition to the direct effects of antibiotics on [C. difficile infection] risk, antibiotics mediate carriage of C. difficile spores by asymptomatic carriers ... and are sources of transmission that may further increase the [C. difficile infection] burden in acute-care settings," the authors wrote. Researchers examined data from 171 hospitals in 2016-2017 through the BD Institute Research Database. They defined 4 antibiotic classes as high risk based on prior research and guidelines that looked at specific antibiotics to treat C. difficile infection, they said: second-, third-, and fourth-generation cephalosporins, as well as fluoroquinolones, carbapenems, and lincosamides. The authors noted piperacillin/tazobactam was also evaluated, as some studies considered it "medium risk" for C. difficile infection. [Medpage Today](#)

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INFLUENZA

WHO: Influenza Update

16 September 2019 - Update number 350, based on data up to 01 September 2019

-In the temperate zones of the southern hemisphere, influenza activity continued to decrease in most countries.

-In the Caribbean, and tropical South American countries, influenza activity was low overall. In Central American countries, influenza activity slightly increased across the sub-region.

-In tropical Africa, influenza activity was low across reporting countries.

-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 continued to be reported 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 top of page...](#)

VETERINARY/FOOD SAFETY

General Mills recalls Gold Medal Unbleached All Purpose Flour over E. coli fears

17 September- Today, General Mills announced a nationwide recall for 5 lb. bags of its Gold Medal "Unbleached All Purpose Flour" marked with a "better-if-used-by" date of Sept. 6, 2020 for the potential presence of E. coli O26, which FDA officials said was discovered during sampling of the 5 lb. bag product. According to the recall, "This recall only affects this one date code of Gold Medal Unbleached All Purpose Flour five-pound bags. All other types of Gold Medal Flour are not affected by this recall." As of today, General Mills has not received any direct consumer reports of confirmed illnesses related to this product. If consumers or others have flour on hand that is no longer in its original packaging, and it is not known for sure that it is not the implicated flour, they should throw it out. "Consumers are asked to check their pantries and dispose of the product," the state department advised.

[Food Safety News](#)

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Hepatitis A outbreak linked to imported clams

19 September- Authorities in an Australian state have linked eight Hepatitis A patients to imported clams. The New South Wales (NSW) Food Authority advised consumers who bought salted or pickled clams from Koryo Food Co. or Byul Mi Kim Chi to destroy any remaining product or return it to the place of purchase for a refund. Koryo Food Co. and Byul Mi Kim Chi recalled the items because of the potential link with hepatitis A from the salted or pickled clams imported from South Korea. Authorities in South Korea recently warned domestic consumers to avoid certain types of salted or pickled clams due to a link with hepatitis A infection. Australian grown clams are not implicated in the outbreak. South Korea, where hepatitis A is usually rare, is experiencing a large outbreak with more than 11,000 cases reported this year. Lisa Szabo, NSW Food Authority CEO, said testing was underway on a number of products but results may take several weeks. "Although a contamination has not yet been confirmed, we have advised the companies of a potential link to eight cases of hepatitis A in NSW, and they have both undertaken a recall of the product," she said. "We want to ensure all consumers who may have these products are aware of the possible link between the product and hepatitis A. While the affected products have been recalled from participating retailers, consumers may still have product they have already purchased in their fridges." Koryo Food Co. is recalling pickled clams sold at independent Korean and Asian Grocery Stores in New South Wales. The 180-gram pack has use by dates of Nov. 19 and Nov. 28, 2019. [Food Safety News](#)

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Need to make tough decisions about your pet? A veterinary social worker can help

16 September- ...Veterinary social workers interact with veterinarians and pet owners in clinics, animal hospitals and other settings in four areas: the link between human and animal violence; grief and loss; animal-assisted interaction; and compassion fatigue management. I could have used the services focused on grief and loss — veterinary social workers can streamline communication on treatment and end-of-life decisions, and they work one-on-one with pet owners to explain options, answer questions and provide emotional support. They also offer outside grief counseling and grief support groups. There is no official count on the number of veterinary social workers. The University of Tennessee at Knoxville — which established the country's first program in 2002 and offers three certificates — has an Internet mailing list of about 1,000 individuals, though some may not be veterinary social workers. [The Washington Post](#)

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Three dead and 200 ill in Spanish Listeria outbreak

17 September- More than 220 people are sick and three have died as part of a listeriosis outbreak in Spain, according to the World Health Organization (WHO). From July 7 to September 13, 222 confirmed cases have been reported in five regions of Spain: 214 patients in Andalusia, four in Aragon, two in Extremadura and one each in Castilla y Leon and Madrid. Most Andalusian cases have been registered in Seville with 175 but 17 people are sick in Huelva, 11 in Cádiz, six in Málaga and five in Granada. This past Friday only 21 people remained in hospital. The outbreak has been traced to a chilled roasted pork meat product made in Spain by Magrudis and sold under the brand name "La Mechá". Usually, there are about 300 infections from Listeria in Spain every year. A total of 66 probable and 80 suspected cases are under investigation in Aragón, Canary Islands, Castilla y León, Castilla La Mancha, Cataluña, Valencia, Extremadura, Madrid, and Melilla, according to Spanish authorities. [Food Safety News](#)

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WELLNESS

The perks of being outdoors backed up by science

12 September- In this issue's cover story, Jason G. Goldman covers a massive research study of 20,000 individuals in England that found that 120 minutes spent in nature every week proffered marked benefits in health and mental wellness (see "The Nature Cure"). While the scale of such an undertaking makes the work significant, the results are likely to be met by some societies with little surprise. Take Denmark, where for more than half a century families have sent their children as young as three years old to so-called forest kindergarten to forgo classroom curriculum and play and explore each day outdoors, no matter the weather. Some research has shown that those kids get sick less often, can concentrate better and have improved motor skill development. Perhaps this latest finding won't spur the creation of "forest universities" or, sadly, "forest workplaces," but if ever there was a case to get outside and commune with nature, this is it. Cassandra Willyard writes about a string of recent advances that have helped patients with spinal cord injuries regain mobility and functionality (see "First Steps to a Revolution"). And David Adam profiles anesthesiologist John Carlisle, who, in his free time, sleuths hundreds of peer-reviewed papers for misleading or falsified data. His work has led to the retraction of hundreds of papers (see "The Data Detective"). Good reads such as these are best consumed while lounging outside, preferably under a leafy tree. [Scientific American](#)

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USAFRICOM

Nigeria yellow fever: 23 deaths linked to Bauchi

16 September- In a follow-up on the yellow fever outbreak in Bauchi state, Nigeria, the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) now report that since the first confirmed case was reported on the 29th of August, in a case from Kano who had visited Yankari Game Reserve, Alkaleri LGA, Bauchi in August 2019, 169 suspected and 15 laboratory confirmed cases by RT-PCR have been reported. Of this total, 23 people have died from yellow fever – Bauchi (9), Kano (1), Katsina (13), with a Case fatality rate (CFR) of 13.6%. The suspected and confirmed cases have been reported in people who are either residents of, or have visited Alkaleri Local Government Area (LGA) in Bauchi since the 1st of August 2019. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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USCENTCOM

Brain-eating amoeba takes the life of 14th Karachi resident

16 September- The second time in two days, Karachi officials report a fatality due to the brain-eating amoeba, Naegleria fowleri. The News reports the 14th case occurred in a 26-year-old man from Gulistan-e-Jauhar Block-27. He was taken to the Aga Khan University Hospital [AKUH] last week after complaining of fever, vomiting and headache. He died Friday afternoon. Sindh Health Director General Dr. Masood Solangi said that the family had informed them that the young man had gone swimming at a local pool, adding that the swimming pool lacking chlorination could be the place where he contracted the deadly brain infection. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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USEUCOM

Italy: Superbug NDM-1 outbreak reported in Tuscany

15 September- Health officials in Tuscany, Italy are reporting an outbreak of the superbug bacterium, New Delhi metallo- β -lactamase-1 (NDM-1) Carbapenemase-producing Enterobacteriaceae in hospitals since November 2018. According to public health officials, a significant diffusion was observed in the north-western area of Tuscany. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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New Zealand measles: More than 100 infants hospitalized, Auckland cases top 1000

16 September- In a follow-up on the measles outbreak in New Zealand, health officials reported an additional 165 confirmed measles cases last week, bringing the total to 1275 for the year to date with 441 (34.6%) hospitalizations. The Auckland area continues to see the most cases with 1064 confirmed cases through today. Of the 441 people that required hospitalization for their illness, 102 were in children under the age of one. Of the total cases, 633 were unvaccinated and the vaccination status in 539 were unknown. Another 28 cases only received one dose of the MMR vaccine. Auckland 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.

[Outbreak News Today](#)

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Philippines: Worst dengue outbreak in years kills over a thousand

17 September-...Over the past months, the Philippines has been grappling to stem its worst dengue outbreak since 2012. According to the Department of Health, a total of 271,480 dengue cases were reported from January to August 31 of this year, prompting the declaration of a national dengue epidemic. In 2012, 187,031 cases of dengue were recorded. As of August 31 this year, an estimated 1,107 people have died of dengue in the Philippines, almost half were children between five and nine years of age. At Manila's Tondo Medical Center, where Katelyn was treated, 21 dengue patients were crowded into one room in the paediatric ward. Two to three patients have to share a bed, with additional beds set up in the corridors to deal with the overflow. "Children are particularly susceptible to dengue because they have weaker immune systems compared to adults," said Amado Parawan, health and nutrition officer at Save the Children Philippines. [Al Jazeera](#)

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Thailand: Mosquito-borne disease in 2019 to date

16 September- In this post, I'll look at the latest numbers for several mosquito-borne diseases in Thailand to date in 2019.

-Dengue: Through September 9, Thailand health officials have reported 57,926 patients from all 77 provinces. Seven fatalities have been seen. Provinces reporting the highest incidence include Ubon Ratchathani, Chiang Rai, Chanthaburi, Nakhon Ratchasima and Rayong.

-Chikungunya: The number of chikungunya cases in Thailand has risen to 7,287 from 49

provinces. Ranong, Pattani, Tak, Phuket and Songkhla provinces have seen the most of this mosquito-borne infection.

-Zika: 132 Zika virus cases have been reported through early September. Lampang, Mae Hong Son and Songkhla have reported the highest incidence.

-Malaria: Thai health officials have reported 1,547 malaria patients from 45 provinces, including one death. Yala, Tak and Mae Hong Son provinces saw the most malaria cases.

-Japanese encephalitis: Five cases of JE were reported from two provinces—Ubon Ratchathani and Chachoengsao. No deaths have been reported.

-Filariasis: One filariasis case from Tak province has been reported in an individual from Myanmar. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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USNORTHCOM

U.S.: First human West Nile virus cases reported in New York City

16 September- New York City health officials have reported the first human West Nile virus (WNV) cases of the 2019 season. The four cases were reported from Queens (2), Staten Island and Brooklyn. Two people were discharged from the hospital, and two remain hospitalized. Human cases of West Nile virus occur each year in New York City, with most identified between late July and October. The amount of West Nile virus activity varies every year. "The findings from our mosquito and human surveillance serve as a reminder for all New Yorkers that they should take simple precautions to protect themselves and their families from mosquito bites," said Health Commissioner Dr. Oxiris Barbot. "Actions such as wearing mosquito repellent, covering arms and legs when outdoors, discarding standing water, and installing window screens can reduce the human transmission of West Nile virus and save lives." The West Nile virus was first detected in New York City 20 years ago. Since 1999, the number of human cases has ranged from three to 47 annually. Thirty-six New Yorkers were diagnosed with West Nile virus during the 2018 season. Of the 422 New Yorkers diagnosed with West Nile virus since 1999, 46 (11%) have died due to their infection. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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U.S.: Massachusetts- Sees 9th human case of Eastern Equine Encephalitis

19 September- On Wednesday, The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) announced that laboratory testing has confirmed the 9th human case of Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) virus infection, a man in his 70s from Essex County. One fatality has been reported this year. "We continue to emphasize the need for people to protect themselves

from mosquito bites,” said Public Health Commissioner Monica Bharel, MD, MPH. “We urge the public to use bug spray, wear long sleeves and pants and socks to reduce exposed skin, and stay indoors from dusk to dawn when mosquitoes are most active.” As a result of this most recent case, risk levels have been raised to high in Ipswich and Topsfield, and to moderate in Beverly, Danvers, Hamilton, Manchester-by-the-Sea, Middleton, Newbury, Newburyport, and Wenham. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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U.S.: Michigan- Reports additional EEE cases, 3 deaths; worst outbreak in more than a decade

18 September- In a follow-up on the Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) situation in Michigan, state health officials are urging residents to protect themselves from mosquito bites as four additional cases of Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) have been confirmed in Southwest Michigan – including two that were fatal. To date, seven confirmed human cases of EEE have been reported in Michigan with onset dates in July. The new cases expand the geographic area affected by human EEE cases to include Barry, Cass and Van Buren counties, along with previously identified cases in Kalamazoo and Berrien counties. Two of these additional cases, in Cass and Van Buren counties, were fatal, as was an earlier case in Kalamazoo County. “Michigan is currently experiencing its worst Eastern Equine Encephalitis outbreak in more than a decade,” said Dr. Joneigh Khaldun, Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) chief medical executive and chief deputy for health. “The ongoing cases reported in humans and animals and the severity of this disease illustrate the importance of taking precautions against mosquito bites.” MDHHS is encouraging local officials in the five Southwest Michigan counties that have been impacted by human EEE cases and St. Joseph, Genesee and Lapeer counties – which have had animal EEE cases – to consider postponing, rescheduling or cancelling outdoor activities occurring at or after dusk, particularly activities that involve children. This would include events such as late evening sports practices or games or outdoor music practices. The MDHHS recommendation is being made out of an abundance of caution to protect the public health and applies until the first hard frost of the year. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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Colombia reports 169 dengue deaths in 2019

14 September- In the Western hemisphere, the number of dengue cases reported through August is 2,384,029 cases and 949 deaths. The number of cases reported in 2019 as August 31 is higher than the annual totals reported in 2016, 2017, and 2018, and the total by the end of the year will likely exceed the total reported in the epidemic year of 2015. In Colombia, 84,664 cases of dengue and 919 cases of severe dengue have been reported to date. The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) indicated that Colombia has the

second highest incidence in this new cycle of the epidemic. The El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO) phenomenon, the country's geographical conditions, and the natural cycle of the disease have generated an increase in dengue cases since the final quarter of 2018. In addition, 169 deaths have been recorded. Dengue virus strains circulating in Colombia include DEN-1, 2 and 3. Colombia is in a state of alert with higher than expected cases in the departments of Meta (Villavicencio), Huila (Neiva), Cucuta (Norte de Santander), Casanare (Yopal), Tolima (Ibagué) and Santander (Bucaramanga). [Outbreak News Today top of page...](#)

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The *Army Public Health Weekly Update* is published by the Public Health Communication Directorate, Army Public Health Center.

