

31 May 2019

Army Public Health Weekly Update

Army Public Health Center



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Combatting hearing loss remains top priority

22 May- Hearing is a critical sense, but often overlooked and ignored because it is largely invisible. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, about 14 percent of U.S. adults age 20-69 have hearing loss, while 25 percent of American adults who report excellent to good hearing may already have hearing damage. For Fiscal Year 2017, the Veterans Benefits Administration reported that 3.1 million Veterans received disability compensation for auditory injuries. There are currently 1.78 million Veterans who claim a service-related tinnitus disability, including 159,000 new claims reported in 2017. Hearing loss and tinnitus (ringing, buzzing or other sound in the ears or head), remain the top two most prevalent disabilities among Veterans. Because hearing and vision are critical senses, the Department of Defense recognizes May as Better Hearing and Vision Month, to raise awareness about hearing and vision injury, encourage people to analyze their own vision and hearing health, and inspire them to take action if they think there might be a problem. "Hearing and Vision Month highlights the enduring responsibility of the Department of Defense to protect the health and well-being of our service members and to focus on the impact sensory loss can have on quality of life and force readiness," said Air Force Col. LaKeisha Henry, division chief for the DoD Hearing Center of Excellence, known as HCE. The DoD established HCE in 2009 to address the prevention, diagnosis, mitigation, treatment, and rehabilitation of hearing loss and auditory injury, including auditory-vestibular (balance) dysfunction often related to traumatic brain injury. To reduce hearing injury, HCE is working to prevent noise-induced hearing loss (NIHL), in collaboration with hearing conservation programs administered by each Service, and through its Comprehensive Hearing Health Program (CHHP). Viewed as preventable, NIHL can be caused by a one-time exposure to an intense "impulse" sound, like an explosion, or by continuous exposure to loud sounds over an extended period of time, such as noise generated by machinery or aircraft. [Health.mil](#)

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**Residential Indoor
Mold and Residential
Mold Air Sample
Results What Do
They Mean?**

The term “mold” is used to refer to fungi that are naturally occurring in the environment. Molds are found in virtually every environment and can be detected, both indoors and outdoors, year round. Mold growth is encouraged by warm and humid conditions.



GLOBAL

Burnout is now a legitimate medical condition: WHO

28 May- The World Health Organization is recognizing burnout as an official medical condition with its inclusion in the latest version of the International Classification of Diseases. The ICD is WHO's handbook meant to guide medical professionals in diagnosing diseases. Now, burnout from work is officially part of this collection of health conditions. It's the first time that professional burnout has been officially categorized as a disease, according to WHO spokesperson Tarik Jasarevic in an AFP report. The international organization agreed to include it in the updated handbook during the recently concluded World Health Assembly in Geneva. [Tech Times](#)

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High doses of B vitamins tied to hip fractures in women

28 May- Large doses of vitamin B supplements are linked to an increased risk for hip fracture in older women, researchers report. The recommended dietary allowance for healthy women over 50 — 2.4 micrograms of B12 and 1.5 milligrams of B6 — would be fulfilled by eating six ounces of cooked tuna, and there are many other foods that contain these vitamins. One tablet of Centrum Silver, a widely used brand of multivitamins, contains 50 micrograms of vitamin B12 and 5 milligrams of B6. The observational study, in JAMA Network Open, included 75,864 women. Over a follow-up of 30 years, there were 2,304 hip fractures. After controlling for numerous medical, dietary and behavioral characteristics, they found that the more of either supplement consumed, the higher the risk for fracture. When large amounts of both B12 and B6 supplements were used together, the risk was highest: compared to those who took a daily dose of less than 2 milligrams of B6 and 10 micrograms of B12 a day, those who took more than 35 milligrams of B6 and 20 micrograms of B12 were 47 percent more likely to have a hip fracture. [The New York Times](#)

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Measles: 5 new cases reported over the weekend in Saint John

27 May- Health officials in New Brunswick have reported five additional confirmed cases of measles in the Saint John area over the past two days. Two new cases were confirmed late Saturday. Both cases are linked to a previous confirmed case at Kennebecasis Valley High School. Three new cases were confirmed late Sunday. Two are linked to a previous confirmed case at Kennebecasis Valley High School. One of the new cases involves an individual who was recently present at the emergency department of the Saint John Regional Hospital. This brings the total number of confirmed cases in the Saint John area to eight. “Measles is a very serious disease and people must understand the importance of contacting your health-care provider, Public Health or 811 by telephone prior to presenting

**The Surgeon
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<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.

to a clinic, physician's office or emergency room so that necessary measures can be put into place to prevent the spread to others," said Dr. Jennifer Russell, chief medical officer of health. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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Prostate gel spacer reduces bowel and bladder damage

28 May- A man with prostate cancer is the first NHS patient in the UK to have a device implanted which can reduce the side effects of radiotherapy by 70%. The liquid gel spacer increases the distance between the prostate and rectum to reduce the amount of radiation absorbed during treatment. It is injected before treatment and stays in place during radiation therapy before being naturally absorbed. The treatment will now be rolled out to 12 hospitals around the UK. [BBC News](#)

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Study finds e-cig flavors can damage cardiovascular cells

28 May- E-cigarette flavors can damage the cells that line your blood vessels and perhaps your heart health down the line, according to a new study of human cells in the lab. The study, published Monday in the Journal of the American College of Cardiology, adds to growing evidence that the flavored "e-liquids" used in vapes can hinder human cells' ability to survive and function. The authors say these changes, some observed in the absence of nicotine, and are known to play a role in heart disease. "The public has this notion that e-cigarettes are safe," said study author Dr. Joseph Wu, director of the Stanford Cardiovascular Institute and a professor in the medical school's departments of medicine and radiology. Experts say this belief stems not just from the presence of fewer cancer-causing chemicals than combustible cigarettes, but also from the fact that many vaping products are sold in sweet or fruity flavors that may appear harmless. [CNN](#)

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Study: Regulating gut bacteria may help ease symptoms of anxiety

27 May- Anxiety is a common mental health concern that impacts millions. A new study found evidence that anxiety symptoms may be improved by regulating intestinal microbiota. Anxiety symptoms are common in mental diseases and a variety of physical disorders, especially in illnesses related to stress. Signs of anxiety may include feeling nervous, being restless or tense, having a sense of impending danger, panic, or doom, having an increased heart rate, and hyperventilation. Experiencing gastrointestinal problems, sweating, trembling, and feeling weak or tired are also common symptoms of anxiety. [Tech Times](#)

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The Alzheimer's-Cholesterol connection

28 May- Elevated low density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol levels were tied to a higher probability of early-onset Alzheimer's disease, a case series showed. Early-onset Alzheimer's patients had higher LDL cholesterol, total cholesterol, and apolipoprotein B (Apo B) levels, even after adjusting for the apolipoprotein E ϵ 4 (APOE E4) allele -- a genetic risk factor known to raise circulating cholesterol -- reported Thomas Wingo, MD, of Emory University in Atlanta, and colleagues. Moreover, early-onset Alzheimer's cases were strongly associated with rare variants of APOB, which codes for the major protein of LDL cholesterol, they wrote in JAMA Neurology. [Med Page Today](#)

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Threats to health workers roil Ebola response amid new cases

24 May- Threats of death and more violence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) Ebola outbreak region kept the response on shaky security ground, with nurses threatening to strike if government officials don't take action and some health facilities closing as health workers flee the deteriorating conditions. In other developments, the outbreak total grew by 11 cases today, reaching a total of 1,888, according to the World Health Organization (WHO) online Ebola dashboard. Health officials are still investigating 293 suspected Ebola cases, and the death toll stands at 1,248. [CIDRAP](#)

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INFLUENZA

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

2018-2019 Influenza Season Week 20 ending May 18, 2019:

-Viral Surveillance: The percentage of respiratory specimens testing positive for influenza viruses in clinical laboratories remained low. During the most recent three weeks, influenza A(H3) viruses were reported more frequently than influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 viruses nationally.

-Pneumonia and Influenza Mortality: The proportion of deaths attributed to pneumonia and influenza (P&I) was below the system-specific epidemic threshold in the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) Mortality Surveillance System.

-Influenza-associated Pediatric Deaths: Three influenza-associated pediatric deaths were reported to CDC during week 20. Two occurred during the 2018-2019 season and one occurred during the 2017-2018 season. [CDC](#)

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ECDC: Flu News Europe

Week 20/2019 (13–20 May 2019)

-For week 20/2019, all countries reporting ILI or ARI thresholds reported activity at or below baseline levels, indicating a return to interseason levels.

-Few countries reported influenza virus detections in non-sentinel specimens. Of 81 sentinel specimens tested, none was influenza virus positive.

-For week 20/2019, one of the 54 specimens from patients hospitalized with severe acute respiratory infection (SARI) tested positive for an influenza virus.

-Pooled data from 23 Member States and areas reporting to the EuroMOMO < Caution-<http://www.euromomo.eu/> > project indicated that that all-cause mortality was at expected levels.

-This is the last weekly report during the season 2018–19. During the summer, influenza reports will be published on 27 June, 15 August and 3 October. The weekly reporting will resume on 11 October 2019, for the 2019-2020 season. [European Center for Disease Prevention and Control/WHO](#)

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WHO: Influenza Update

27 May 2019 - Update number 342, based on data up to 12 May 2019

-In Australia and New Zealand influenza detections were predominantly influenza A(H3N2) and influenza B viruses.

-In South Africa, predominantly influenza A(H3N2) viruses were detected.

-In South America, influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 viruses predominated.

-In Southern Asia, influenza activity was low overall.

-In the Caribbean, Central American countries, and the tropical countries of South America, influenza and RSV activity were low in general.

-In Eastern, West and Middle Africa, influenza activity was low across reporting countries.

-In the temperate zone of the northern hemisphere influenza activity decreased overall.

-In North America and Europe, influenza activity was low overall.

-In North Africa, influenza detections were low across reporting countries.

-In Western Asia, influenza activity was low overall, but with continued detections in a few countries on the Arabian Peninsula.

-In East Asia, decreased but continued influenza activity was reported. [WHO](#)

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VETERINARY/FOOD SAFETY

Lack of inspection prompts recall of 154,500 pounds of imported catfish

29 May- California firm Richwell Group Inc., doing business as Maxfield Seafood and importer of record, is recalling more than 154,500 pounds of Siluriformes, also known as catfish, that was not presented for import re-inspection into the United States, according to the USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS). According to the recall notice, the fish was produced at a Vietnamese establishment that was not eligible to export Siluriformes to the United States. The frozen Siluriformes products, specifically yellow walking fish, were distributed to retail locations nationwide. The recall notice says the fish products were imported from Vietnam to the United States on various dates from March 2018 through January 2019. The recalled frozen fish has a shelf life of two years. The problem was discovered on May 22 during routine FSIS surveillance activities of imported products. [Food Safety News](#)

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Listeria deaths in France linked to raw milk cheese brand

29 May- One woman has died and another has lost her baby due to listeriosis after eating raw milk cheese, according to French media reports. The raw milk cheese was produced by Fromagere de la Brie, the company was ordered to stop production and recall raw and pasteurized dairy products in April. Epidemiological, environmental and food traceability investigations were conducted to identify the origin of contamination. The Hauts de France public health agency confirmed a pregnant woman, who lived in Pas-de-Calais, lost her child and it was reported that she had eaten a cheese made by Fromagere de la Brie. An enquiry has been opened to determine the cause of death. Earlier this month, a 64 year old woman died in l'Yonne after being hospitalized for two months and she is also believed to have eaten cheese made by the same company. [Food Safety News](#)

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WELLNESS

Infertility linked to dangerous heart condition in pregnancy

28 May- Women undergoing fertility treatments may be at increased risk of a dangerous pregnancy condition called peripartum cardiomyopathy. But the heightened risk is not likely to be related to the treatments themselves. Rather, researchers say, factors that contribute to infertility may also make this type of heart failure more common. In new research presented Saturday (May 25) at the Heart Failure 2019 conference in Athens, Greece,

German researchers reported that women undergoing fertility treatments had a risk of peripartum cardiomyopathy five times that of women who got pregnant without fertility treatment. However, infertility did not seem to affect the patients' recovery from cardiomyopathy, according to their research, which has yet to be published in a peer-reviewed scientific journal. [Live Science](#)

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Sleep apnea can have deadly consequences

27 May- Although the woman in her 50s had been effectively treated for depression, she remained plagued by symptoms that often accompany it: fatigue, sleepiness and lethargy, even though she thought she was getting enough sleep. With depression no longer causing her persistent symptoms, her psychiatrist advised her to consult a sleep specialist. Sure enough, a night in the sleep lab at the University of Pennsylvania's Perelman School of Medicine revealed that while the woman was supposedly asleep, she experienced micro-awakenings about 18 times an hour, resulting in sleep that restored neither body nor brain. All night long, she would stop breathing for more than 10 seconds at a time, followed by a mini-arousal and a snore as she gasped for breath to raise the depleted oxygen level in her blood. Diagnosis: Obstructive sleep apnea, an increasingly common yet often missed or untreated condition that can result in poor quality of life, a risk of developing heart disease, stroke, diabetes and even cancer, and perhaps most important of all, a threefold increased risk of often-fatal motor vehicle accidents. Obstructive sleep apnea afflicts about 9 percent of women and 24 percent of men, most of them middle-aged or older, yet as many as 9 in 10 adults with this treatable condition remain undiagnosed, according to the American Academy of Sleep Medicine. The condition is on the rise because the most frequent cause is obesity, which continues its unrelenting climb among American adults. Sleep apnea afflicts more than two people in five who have a body mass index of more than 30, and three in five adults with metabolic syndrome, Dr. Sigrid C. Veasey and Dr. Ilene M. Rosen wrote in *The New England Journal of Medicine* in April. [The New York Times](#)

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Too much coffee may increase risk of heart disease, new study finds

28 May- A cup of joe per day might keep the doctor away, but half a dozen or more is pushing it. Even though there are tons of legitimate reasons to drink coffee for good health, a recent study published in *The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* shows that drinking six or more cups a day increases a person's risk for developing heart disease by as much as 22 percent. In their research, the University of South Australia's Ang Zhou and Elina Hyppönen looked for a link between heart disease and the caffeine-metabolizing gene CYP1A2. They did this by analyzing data on 347,077 coffee drinkers in the U.K. aged 37 through 73. Of the sample size, there were 8,368 documented incidents of heart disease.

[Fox News](#)

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Rift Valley fever in Mayotte: Vigilance called upon run-up to Eid el Fitr

28 May- In an update on the Rift Valley fever (RVF) animal and human outbreaks in Mayotte, ARS Indian Ocean reports since the first cases occurred at the end of November 2018, 121 animal outbreaks have been confirmed and 134 human cases have been reported. Samples taken by veterinarians on sick animals or during abortions have identified 121 outbreaks of sick animals (including 97 cattle and 24 small ruminants). The CHM laboratory reported 134 human cases of RVF at the monitoring and health emergencies platform of the ARS OI (CVAGS) of Mayotte. Although the vast majority of human cases of RVF have not been serious, officials do report two serious cases. In addition, health officials say in the run-up to Eid el Fitr and the big wedding season, they remind the population to be vigilant in the case of slaughter of animals, consumption of meat and consumption curdled milk. In humans, RVF is usually manifested by an influenza-like illness: high fever (39 °), muscle and / or joint pain, severe headache, tiredness. In the vast majority of cases, healing occurs within a few days. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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Uganda: Yellow fever outbreak declared

27 May- The Ugandan Ministry of Health declared a yellow fever outbreak earlier this month after laboratory confirmed cases were reported from Koboko and Masaka districts. The patients are an 80-year-old woman and a 10-year-old girl. Neither had a history of yellow fever vaccination, nor exhibited symptoms of jaundice, however the older woman had hemorrhagic signs. A district rapid response team was sent to the affected localities to conduct further investigation.

The team sampled several households and found a substantial population of unvaccinated individuals due to immigration and missing the yellow fever reactive vaccination campaign, which was conducted in 2016. Seven additional samples were collected from suspected cases who met the case definition for yellow fever. Yellow fever is a viral disease that is transmitted by mosquitoes belonging to the Aedes species. Yellow fever can lead to serious illness and even death. Yellow fever vaccine is the best protection against yellow fever disease, which can be fatal. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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Global polio cases up to 24 as additional cases reported in Pakistan

24 May- Pakistan saw two additional wild poliovirus type 1 (WPV1) cases during the past week– one from Gulshan-e-Iqbal Town in Karachi district, Sindh province, and one from North Waziristan in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, according to the Global Polio Eradication Initiative. This brings the total cases in Pakistan to 17 and globally the tally is now 24. In all of 2018, 33 WPV1 cases were reported. In addition, seven WPV1-positive environmental samples were reported in the past week: one each from Baldia Town and S.I.T.E in Karachi district, Sindh province; one from Lahore district, Punjab province; one from Federal Capital Territory, Islamabad; one each from Bannu district and South Waziristan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province; one from Quetta district, Balochistan province. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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Pakistan issues advisories for dengue fever, chikungunya and Naegleria fowleri

25 May- Pakistan's National Institute of Health (NIH) has issued advisories for the prevention and control of dengue fever and chikungunya, plus an advisory on Primary Amebic Meningoencephalitis (PAM) caused by Naegleria fowleri. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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Scotland: Reports 100 percent increase in gonorrhea in 5 years

28 May- Reports from Health Protection Scotland (HPS) show that the sexually transmitted infections (STI), chlamydia, gonorrhea and syphilis have all increased from 2017 to 2018. In particular, gonorrhea cases increased the most. In 2018, 3,233 episodes of gonorrhea were reported, a 24% increase compared to 2017 and the largest number recorded in the last decade. In fact, since 2013, gonorrhea diagnoses have increased by 103% (from 1,595 in 2013 to 3,233 in 2018). The increase is largely due to a 121% increase in male diagnoses (from 1,056 to 2,339) and principally, among men who have sex with men (MSM). Rectal gonorrhea in men, a marker of condomless anal intercourse (CAI), increased in 2018 to 39% of all gonorrhea episodes recorded. The number of male rectal gonorrhea episodes is the largest number of episodes recorded over the last decade. Genital chlamydia remains the most frequently diagnosed STI in Scotland with 16,338 diagnoses reported in 2018, which represents a 4% increase compared to 2017. In addition, the number of diagnoses of

infectious syphilis increased between 2017 and 2018 by 14% (from 399 to 455). This is the highest annual total recorded since the establishment of the surveillance system in 2002-2003 with the burden of infection among MSM (87% of diagnoses). [Outbreak News Today](#)

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Yersinia outbreak update in Sweden and Denmark

28 May- In a follow-up on the Yersinia enterocolitica outbreak ongoing in Sweden and Denmark, health officials from both countries in this cross-border outbreak to a cumulative total of 57. In Sweden, the outbreak tally has reached 37, as of May 3. Health officials say that previous suspicions of a link to Latvian carrots has proven to have no connection. Sweden has begun a case-control study to search for foods that the disease cases have eaten and which differ from what controls have eaten. While in Denmark, a total of 20 people are part of the outbreak. The investigation shows that the source of infection was probably fresh spinach. After in-depth interviews with the patients, Statens Serum Institut initiated a study in which healthy subjects with the same sex and age were also asked, and who lived in the same municipality as the sick, if they had eaten certain foods that many of the sufferers had eaten. The study showed that the patients had eaten fresh spinach to a far greater extent than the controls. The study also points out that the spinach has been bought in Netto and in a supermarket chain in Sweden. It is probably about foreign, fresh spinach sold in March. The spinach is no longer on the market. The outbreak strains in the two countries are the same and a joint investigation is ongoing. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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USINDOPACOM

Auckland: Measles outbreak update; Syphilis increases

27 May- The Auckland Regional Public Health Service, in a measles outbreak today, reports the outbreak case tally is now 71 since the beginning of the year. Nationally, New Zealand has reported 158 measles cases year to date, 147 were unvaccinated or under vaccinated. Outbreaks of measles have also been reported in Canterbury and Waikato. Cases have also been reported in the Bay of Plenty, Lakes, Northland, Capital and Coast and Southern DHB areas. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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Hong Kong: Rat hepatitis E infections

27 May- In this news brief, I look at the recent human infections with rat hepatitis E virus (rat HEV), the first cases, a Canadian case and a little about human HEV. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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Singapore: Dengue cases near 4,000

28 May- Singapore health officials reported 3,285 dengue fever cases for the whole of last year. However, the National Environmental Agency (NEA) in Singapore reports around 4,000 cases through May 27. The increase in cases has prompted the NEA to conduct multiple rounds of inspections for mosquito breeding in the cluster areas, as well as outreach activities such as community events and house visits. Dengue cluster alert banners and alert posters have been put up around the estates and at the lift lobbies, to heighten awareness of both residents as well as members of the public. NEA will continue to work with Grassroots Advisers, Grassroots Leaders, Dengue Prevention Volunteers (DPVs) and members of the community, to conduct house visits to increase awareness and remind residents to practice the 5-step Mozzie Wipeout. Educational pamphlets and insect repellent are distributed to the residents during the house visits. Dengue infects nearly 400 million people across more than 120 countries each year. Most survive with few or no symptoms, but more than two million annually develop what can be a dangerous dengue hemorrhagic fever, which kills more than 25,000 people each year. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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USNORTHCOM

U.S.: Florida: Stray cat tests positive for rabies in Escambia County

27 May- A stray cat that recently attacked two individuals in Escambia County, Florida has tested positive for rabies, prompting warning from health officials to avoid contact with wild and stray animals. "Rabies is a fatal infection but is preventable," notes FDOH-Escambia's director, Dr. John J. Lanza. "It is important to not feed or pet wild and stray animals, to avoid animals that appear to be acting strangely, and to keep pets vaccinated against rabies. Persons who are bitten by a wild animal or an animal who has not been vaccinated against rabies should seek immediate medical care. Proper medical treatment of an animal bite can be life-saving." [Outbreak News Today](#)

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U.S.: Three with Legionnaires' disease in Clark, New Jersey

26 May- Three people in Clark, New Jersey, have been diagnosed with Legionnaires disease, according to Mayor Sal Bonaccorso. These are part of the cluster of cases of Legionnaires disease in Union County, New Jersey. "I want residents to understand there is no need to panic. We are . . . working with the CDC and taking it extremely seriously," says Mayor Bonaccorso. "The good thing is this is curable with antibiotics, so it's important to get medical attention if experiencing flu-like symptoms." In Union County, 5 people have died and 22 people have been diagnosed with Legionnaires disease. Public health officials are

investigating a cluster of Legionnaires disease among people who live in—or have recently visited Union County, New Jersey. Between March 8 and May 13, 22 people who lived in or had visited Union County developed Legionnaires disease. 5 of those people died. The “vast majority” of those who developed Legionnaires disease live in Union County. “Out of an abundance of caution, the Department recommends that individuals who live in Union County who become ill with pneumonia-like/respiratory symptoms, such as fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath, muscle aches, and headache, visit their healthcare provider,” says Shereef Elnahal, New Jersey Health Commissioner. “Legionnaires’ disease is not spread person to person and you cannot get it by drinking water,” added Elnahal. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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USSOUTHCOM

World Chagas Day approved by World Health Assembly

29 May- In a follow-up on a report from April, the World Health Assembly approved last week, the designation of a World Chagas Disease Day—A day which aims to raise public awareness of this neglected tropical disease (NTD) that affects mainly poor people. World Chagas Disease Day will be observed on 14 April, each year. It was on this date in 1909 that the first patient, a Brazilian girl named Berenice Soares de Moura, was diagnosed for this disease by Dr. Carlos Ribeiro Justiniano Chagas. “An annual day celebrated at global level is bound to attract international attention,” said Dr. Pedro Albajar Viñas, WHO Medical Officer (Chagas disease). ““These days can help to provide visibility and commit countries to enhance control interventions for a disease that has remained largely neglected, but still present in many countries.” [Outbreak News Today](#)

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