

3 January 2020

Army Public Health Weekly Update

Army Public Health Center



U.S. Military | Global | Influenza | Veterinary/Food Safety | Wellness | Contact Us
USAFRICOM | USCENTCOM | USEUCOM | USINDOPACOM | USNORTHCOM | USSOUTHCOM

Approved for public release, distribution unlimited.

NOTE:

If you are viewing the Army Public Health Weekly Update using Internet Explorer on a government computer with Windows 10, the external hyperlinks will be disabled per the [Security Technical Implementation Guide](#) (V-64927).

As a workaround, opening the Update using **Chrome** will enable the links.

We're sorry for the inconvenience.

Contents

U.S. MILITARY

- [Is adopting a service dog right for you? What veterans diagnosed with PTSD need to know](#)

GLOBAL

- [CDC has declared that Vitamin E acetate linked to vaping sickness and injuries](#)
- [Cutting out alcohol may reduce atrial fibrillation episodes](#)
- [Decolonizing parents could cut spread of Staph to newborns](#)
- [Delivering the TB vaccine by IV better protects monkeys, new study finds](#)
- [Diabetes in pregnancy may put child at risk for heart disease in adulthood](#)
- [Eating disorder hospital admissions rise sharply](#)
- [Fruity no more: FDA to ban all non-menthol pod e-cigarettes](#)
- [HIV-Infected children in Pakistan missing out on treatment](#)
- [Research continues into shingles vax for certain cancer patients](#)
- [Study finds Google system could improve breast cancer detection](#)

INFLUENZA

- [APHC: U.S. Army Influenza Activity Report](#)
- [Flu activity high, at least 2,100 deaths this season](#)

VETERINARY/FOOD SAFETY

- [Hard-boiled egg snacks recalled because of supplier's link to outbreak](#)
- [Jimmy John's restaurants in Iowa linked to another E. coli outbreak tied to sprouts](#)
- [Minnesota Company recalls salads because of undeclared allergen](#)
- [Outbreak-related hardboiled egg recall now includes consumer products](#)

WELLNESS

- [Make 2020 the year of less sugar](#)
- [Scrap 'quick-fix diets and tea-toxes' this New Year](#)

Subscription or Comments

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.



USAFRICOM

- Malaria in Burundi: 'Progressive increase' in cases in 2019, case tally tops 8 million
- Monkeypox in DRC: More than 5,000 cases reported in 2019

USCENTCOM

- Rabies in Yemen: Estimated 'hundreds of deaths' in Sana'a

USEUCOM

- Norway: Shigella outbreak sickens eight, linked to imported sugar peas from Kenya

USINDOPACOM

- China: Sinovac announces approval of chickenpox vaccine

USNORTHCOM

- Canada: Salmonella outbreak linked to raw turkey and raw chicken rises to 126
- Mexico: Chickenpox outbreak affects dozens at Ciudad Juárez shelter
- U.S.: E. coli O103 illnesses in Iowa linked to sprouts

USSOUTHCOM

- Measles in Argentina: Most cases reported in 20 years

U.S. MILITARY

Is adopting a service dog right for you? What veterans diagnosed with PTSD need to know

2 January- As many as 20 percent of veterans who served in operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom are affected by post-traumatic stress disorder, according to the Department of Veterans Affairs. While there are multiple options one could choose for treatment, nonprofit organizations like K9s for Warriors and Southeastern Guide Dogs have championed a treatment method that veterans can't receive directly from the VA: service dogs. These trained animals can perform a range of tasks such as providing tactile stimulation to help the veteran cope with anxiety or panic attacks, or standing directly in front of their handler in a crowd to give the veteran space from other people. The goal is to empower veterans who are living with PTSD. "The dogs are never going to be a cure for it, they're simply going to be a tool to help them in their recovery with it," Suzy Wilburn, director of admissions and alumni support at Southeastern Guide Dogs, told Military Times. The VA is currently evaluating whether service dogs can benefit veterans diagnosed with PTSD. Although Congress first mandated a study on the topic in 2010, it has been put on the back burner twice. Most recently, it was launched again in 2015 and is still being conducted. According to the New York Times, the VA said in May it will unveil the study's results in 2020. But K9s for Warriors, who matches post-9/11 veterans with service dogs, has pointed to research Purdue University released in 2018 that found veterans with service dogs experienced lower overall symptoms of PTSD, lower levels of depression and a greater ability to engage in social activities. [Military Times](#)

[top of page...](#)

GLOBAL

CDC has declared that Vitamin E acetate linked to vaping sickness and injuries

23 December- A new recently released study by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) finally confirms some of their earlier suspicions: Vitamin E acetate is closely related with EVALI (e-cigarette, or vaping, product use associated lung injury) A new clinical study took samples from 51 EVALI patients, which were compared to 99 different healthy people. The study revealed that Vitamin E Acetate in Bronchoalveolar lavage (BAL) fluids was present in 48 of 51 of the EVALI patients. Meanwhile, all 99 control group subjects did not have traces of BAL fluid in them. Vitamin E acetate is used to dilute the liquid in e-cigarettes and vaping products that contained Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), the chemical in marijuana responsible for its psychological effects. Oddly enough, Vitamin E isn't harmful when ingested or topically applied, but previous research has shown that it inflicts harm when inhaled. With the new study from the CDC, the previous study seems to be confirmed at this point. [Tech](#)

Follow us!



Facebook



Twitter



YouTube



Instagram

**An Ergonomic
Overview on
Exoskeletons,
Orthosis, and
Prosthesis: Potential
Impacts and Future
Research Directions**

For over 100 years, researchers and inventors have attempted to create devices that work in parallel with the body's muscles and tendons in order to augment them. The potential impact of recent Exoskeleton technology on decreasing Work Related Musculoskeletal Disorder (WMSD) injuries and their associated reduction of monetary costs is encouraging. With any new technology however, there are potential user risks involved with bionic exoskeletons that need to be addressed, specifically physical ergonomic and psychological human factor risks. This paper offers an overview on ergonomic risks on the future use of exoskeletons in an industrial environment.



[Times](#)

[top of page...](#)

Cutting out alcohol may reduce atrial fibrillation episodes

1 January- For people with atrial fibrillation, abstinence from alcohol may make the heart beat better. Eliminating most alcohol consumption dramatically cuts the number of episodes of the potentially-deadly heart rhythm disturbance among moderate and heavy drinkers, according to results of a six-month Australian study of 140 volunteers published in The New England Journal of Medicine. While atrial fibrillation (AF), or Afib, reappeared in 73% of the people who averaged 13 drinks per week, the rate dropped to 53% among patients in the abstinence group - who weren't supposed to drink at all but, on average, consumed two drinks weekly. In addition, among the people trying to abstain, it took longer for their next episode of Afib to occur. "What this study shows is the potential impact of alcohol reduction or abstinence in people with symptomatic heart rhythm problems," co-author Dr. Peter Kistler of The Alfred Hospital in Melbourne told Reuters Health by phone. People with Afib symptoms who have 10 drinks per week should be advised to abstain or reduce their alcohol use, he said." [Reuters](#)

[top of page...](#)

Decolonizing parents could cut spread of Staph to newborns

31 December- The findings from a preliminary randomized clinical trial published yesterday in JAMA suggest that treating parents who are colonized with Staphylococcus aureus could be a strategy to reduce the risk of transmitting the bacteria to newborns in intensive care units. The results of the trial—which found that decolonizing S aureus–colonized parents reduced the risk of neonates acquiring S aureus strains that were the same as those found in their parents—are significant, because S aureus is a leading cause of healthcare-associated infections in neonatal intensive care units (NICUs), with potentially devastating consequences. Many infection prevention strategies in NICUs focus on reducing the risk of neonates acquiring the bacteria from healthcare workers or the hospital environment. But the authors of the study say the findings indicate that parents are a major reservoir for the pathogen, and that decolonizing S aureus–colonized parents may reduce this reservoir and the risk of infection. [CIDRAP](#)

[top of page...](#)

**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.

Delivering the TB vaccine by IV better protects monkeys, new study finds

1 January- A new study suggests that a simple tweak could make a century-old vaccine for tuberculosis far more effective — but that shift could prove difficult in practice. Researchers found that increasing the dose of a TB vaccine and delivering it intravenously better protected monkeys against the infection than the standard method, of injecting the vaccine into the skin. The scientists reported their findings Wednesday in *Nature*. “By just changing the route of vaccination, we see an incredible protection against TB,” said Dr. Maziar Divangahi, who studies TB and vaccines at McGill University and was not involved in the new research. “The question is can we ever do IV vaccination [with the TB vaccine] in humans? That’s a little bit tricky,” he added. Experts said there are questions about the safety of delivering the live — though weakened — bacteria in a TB vaccine into the bloodstream. There would also practical hurdles to delivering an IV vaccine in low-resource areas, where health providers often have difficulty reaching people to provide even simpler vaccinations, like the polio vaccine given through drops in the mouth. There were 1.5 million deaths due to TB worldwide in 2018, making it the leading cause of death from a single infectious pathogen. One in four people worldwide has what’s known as latent TB infection, which means they’re infected but haven’t yet developed the disease. Those infected have between a 5% and 15% risk of getting sick from TB. Researchers say there’s an urgent need for a way to better protect against TB infection — and prevent an infection from turning into disease. “The burden is high. And it’s not just the people who die — it’s also a disease that takes an enormous toll on a person,” said Joanne Flynn, a tuberculosis researcher at the University of Pittsburgh and an author of the new study. [STAT News](#)

[top of page...](#)

Diabetes in pregnancy may put child at risk for heart disease in adulthood

23 December- Adults with mothers who had diabetes during pregnancy may have a greater risk of cardiovascular disease compared to those who did not, according to a new study from Denmark. It was published online Dec. 4, 2019 in *The BMJ*. Previous studies have shown that babies born to women with diabetes have a higher rate of congenital malformations and other complications, noted Jorge Chavarro, associate professor of nutrition and epidemiology at Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health in a December 12 Reuters article. These babies also face a higher risk for overweight and obesity as children, and cardiovascular and metabolic diseases as adults. Chavarro, who was not involved in the new study, said that it “provides evidence that maternal diabetes can also result in a higher frequency of clinically relevant cardiovascular events during the first four decades of life.”

[The Harvard Gazette](#)

[top of page...](#)

Links

[A-Z Index](#)

[About APHC](#)

[Army Public Health](#)

[Weekly Update Archives](#)

[Medical Surveillance](#)

[Monthly Report](#)

[Medical Threat Briefings \(AKO\)](#)

[Request APHC Services](#)

[APHC Resource Materials](#)

[APHC Homepage](#)

[APHC Training](#)

[Contact APHC](#)

Eating disorder hospital admissions rise sharply

1 January- Hospital admissions for eating disorders have risen by more than a third (37%) across all age groups over the last two years, figures show. Experts described the figures as "worrying" and urged the government to promote early intervention. There were 19,040 admissions for eating disorders in 2018/19, up from 16,558 the year before and 13,885 in 2016/17. The NHS Digital data for England found the most common age last year for patients with anorexia was 13 to 15. A quarter of admissions in 2018/19 were for children aged 18 and under, at 4,471. More than half of these (2,403) were for anorexia, up 12% from the previous year. This included 10 cases of anorexia among boys and six among girls aged nine and under. [BBC News](#)

[top of page...](#)

Fruity no more: FDA to ban all non-menthol pod e-cigarettes

2 January- The quick rise in popularity of e-cigarettes among the youth has become a problem for President Donald J. Trump and his administration. The fruity flavor and scent of some of these e-cigarettes could have been a contributing factor to its popularity. More discreet designs could have also made it easier for teens to use e-cigarettes without the knowledge of their parents or authority figures in schools...Different camps have visited the White House last month to debate on the merits and dangers of e-cigarettes, especially towards the youth. Medical and family groups argue against all flavors of e-cigarettes, citing its health risks and its addictive properties, especially with the fruity-flavored e-cigarettes. Meanwhile, conservatives point out that a total ban of the product would lead to the closure of shops, loss of jobs, and a negative impact on the economy. The FDA's decision to ban only fruity flavors of pod cigarettes - the most widely used by the youth - may be a compromise to satisfy family groups and the conservatives at the same time. After all, President Trump concluded that meeting in the White House saying that he wanted to "do something for everybody, where everybody's happy." Whatever the outcome of this policy will be will surely have an impact on President Trump's re-election bid. However, these policies will surely affect everyone during the next few years, regardless of President Trump is still in power. [Tech Times](#)

[top of page...](#)

HIV-Infected children in Pakistan missing out on treatment

20 December- The first scientific study of the HIV outbreak in Ratodero, Pakistan shows an urgent need to ramp up efforts to control the outbreak and treat those infected, according to a London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine news release. The outbreak, discovered last April, hit kids hardest: Of 930 people who tested positive, nearly 800 were children, says the London School's Rashida Ferrand, senior author of the Lancet Infectious Diseases study.

But by July, just 67% (395 out of 591) of the children registered for HIV care had started antiretroviral treatment; there aren't enough drugs and trained staff to treat more. The authors confirm that the virus spread mostly from contaminated needles and blood products, and propose urgent steps to prevent and treat pediatric HIV—including more drugs, training, and disease surveillance. [Global Health Now](#)

[top of page...](#)

Research continues into shingles vax for certain cancer patients

31 December- In December 2018, we reported on a study that found higher risk of herpes zoster, or shingles, in certain cancer patients, and discussed the roles that vaccine development could potentially play in preventing these painful episodes. Here, we examine research on zoster vaccines in immunocompromised patient populations appearing after that initial study was published. In November, *Clinical Infectious Diseases* published a systematic review of 34 studies that examined risk of herpes zoster among patients with hematopoietic cell transplants, hematologic and solid tumors, as well as solid tumor malignancies, and other immunocompromised populations, such as HIV. The authors found estimates of herpes zoster incidence ranging from 9 to 92 cases/1,000 patient-years. Similar to the December 2018 study, the CID authors found incidence was higher in patients with hematopoietic cell transplants, followed by solid organ transplant and solid tumor malignancies. In February, *The Lancet Infectious Diseases* published a summary of guidelines from the most recent European Conference on Infections in Leukaemia about vaccination in patients with hematologic malignancies who did not have transplantations. Examining patients with multiple myeloma, the authors recommended valacyclovir prophylaxis, an antiviral used to treat active infections including shingles. Zoster live attenuated vaccine is contraindicated in such patients, the authors noted, and there are no data in this population yet about an approved inactivated subunit vaccine, though it is "much awaited" for these patients. The guidelines also observed that there are no data on either the live attenuated or the inactivated vaccine among patients with chronic lymphocytic leukemia, despite their elevated risk for zoster attacks. "The inactivated zoster vaccines should be assessed in adult and child patients with [hematological] disorders," the authors said. Researchers continued to examine the role of inactivated vaccines against herpes zoster in patients with solid tumor malignancies. A study published in August found that an inactivated varicella zoster virus vaccine was effective, meeting pre-specified criteria for preventing confirmed herpes zoster infection in patients with solid tumor malignancies who were receiving chemotherapy. However, the vaccine was not effective in patients with hematologic malignancies. But a second study found that the adjuvanted recombinant zoster vaccine, Shingrix, produced an immunologic response in a cohort of adult patients with hematological malignancies during or soon after they underwent cancer treatment compared to placebo. Adding to the evidence for the effectiveness of Shingrix, a July study also found that patients undergoing autologous hematopoietic stem cell transplantation who received the vaccine had lower incidence of shingles versus patients who received placebo. Alison Freifeld, MD, of the University of Nebraska Medical Center in Omaha, who

was not involved in the research, told MedPage Today in July that transplant patients couldn't receive the zoster vaccine until at least 2 years after transplantation, due to the potential risk of a patient developing disseminated vaccine strain live virus. "[Shingrix] is a great advantage for autologous transplant patients because it permits the vaccine to be given much earlier than the previous live virus vaccine," she said. Jeanne Marrazzo, MD, of the University of Alabama at Birmingham, told MedPage Today at that time that "protection was less than that observed in immune-competent people, which the investigators attribute to a generally weaker immune system in the HSCT recipients." "Regardless, this outcome is considerably better than no vaccine, which was the earlier alternative," Marrazzo added. In addition to cancer patients, researchers continued to discuss the use of both live-attenuated vaccines and inactivated vaccines among immunocompromised populations, such as patients with autoimmune conditions. And research presented at the American College of Rheumatology annual meeting in November provided reassuring evidence about the safety of live attenuated herpes zoster vaccine, Zostavax, among patients treated with tumor necrosis factor inhibitors. A randomized trial found that no patients developed varicella (chicken pox, the predecessor to shingles) infections or shingles attacks, and there was no difference in rates of rheumatologic disease flare between groups receiving vaccine or placebo. [MedPage Today](#)

[top of page...](#)

Study finds Google system could improve breast cancer detection

1 January- A Google artificial intelligence system proved as good as expert radiologists at detecting which women had breast cancer based on screening mammograms and showed promise at reducing errors, researchers in the United States and Britain reported. The study, published in the journal *Nature* on Wednesday, is the latest to show that artificial intelligence (AI) has the potential to improve the accuracy of screening for breast cancer, which affects one in eight women globally. Radiologists miss about 20% of breast cancers in mammograms, the American Cancer Society says, and half of all women who get the screenings over a 10-year period have a false positive result. The findings of the study, developed with Alphabet Inc's (GOOGL.O) DeepMind AI unit, which merged with Google Health in September, represent a major advance in the potential for the early detection of breast cancer, Mozziyar Etemadi, one of its co-authors from Northwestern Medicine in Chicago, said. The team, which included researchers at Imperial College London and Britain's National Health Service, trained the system to identify breast cancers on tens of thousands of mammograms. They then compared the system's performance with the actual results from a set of 25,856 mammograms in the United Kingdom and 3,097 from the United States. The study showed the AI system could identify cancers with a similar degree of accuracy to expert radiologists, while reducing the number of false positive results by 5.7% in the U.S.-based group and by 1.2% in the British-based group. It also cut the number of false negatives, where tests are wrongly classified as normal, by 9.4% in the U.S. group, and by 2.7% in the British group. These differences reflect the ways in which mammograms are read. In the United States, only one radiologist reads the results and the tests are done

every one to two years. In Britain, the tests are done every three years, and each is read by two radiologists. When they disagree, a third is consulted...The study has some limitations. Most of the tests were done using the same type of imaging equipment, and the U.S. group contained a lot of patients with confirmed breast cancers. Crucially, the team has yet to show the tool improves patient care, said Dr. Lisa Watanabe, chief medical officer of CureMetrix, whose AI mammogram program won U.S. approval last year. "AI software is only helpful if it actually moves the dial for the radiologist," she said. Etemadi agreed that those studies are needed, as is regulatory approval, a process that could take several years.

[Reuters](#)

[top of page...](#)

INFLUENZA

APHC: U.S. Army Influenza Activity Report

Week ending 14 December 2019 (week 50) - The most observed type of influenza in week 50 continues to be Influenza B. The percentage of tests that were Influenza B positive increased 40% from week 49 to week 50; the percentage of influenza A positive tests increased 31.2% during this period. Influenza A and B accounted for 45.3% and 54.6% respectively of positive laboratory tests submitted in week 50. Outpatient visits for influenza-like illness were 5.7% lower in week 50 than the previous week and 15.1% lower in week 50 of the current season compared to the same time last year. Two hospitalizations with onset dates in week 50 were reported in the Disease Reporting System Internet. Among non-Active Duty beneficiaries, beneficiaries under the age of 18 years old accounted for 78.2% of positive respiratory specimen results; while among Active Duty Soldiers, Soldiers between the ages of 18 to 29 years accounted for 47.8% of positive results. The next influenza report will be released on 3 January 2020. [APHC](#)

[top of page...](#)

Flu activity high, at least 2,100 deaths this season

27 December- In today's FluView update from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), experts say the flu season is in full swing with an estimated 4.6 million flu illnesses, 39,000 hospitalizations and 2,100 deaths from flu so far this season. The rate of outpatient visits for influenza-like illnesses (ILI) spiked in the week ending on Dec 21, from 3.9% to 5.1% — a trend typically seen during winter holidays. Rates of ILI have been above the national baseline of 2.4% for 7 weeks. Twenty-five states and the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and New York City reported high levels of ILI. Flu activity was described as widespread in 39 states. [CIDRAP](#)

[top of page...](#)

Hard-boiled egg snacks recalled because of supplier's link to outbreak

26 December- Reichel Foods Inc. is recalling snack packs that include whole, hard-boiled eggs in relation to a contaminated production plant and a deadly Listeria outbreak. The company is recalling Pro2Snax brand "To The Max Granny Apples /Hard Boiled Egg/Cheddar/Cashew & Craisin" and Pro2Snax "To The Max Gala Apples/Hard Boiled Egg/White Cheddar/Almond & Craisin" snacks. Egg supplier Almark Foods has initiated a recall. "This recall is taking place due notification from Almark Foods of Gainesville, GA, that Almark Foods may have supplied single serve prepackaged hard boiled eggs contaminated with Listeria monocytogenes and its association with a Listeria monocytogenes foodborne illness investigation," according to the Reichel Foods recall notice posted by the Food and Drug Administration. The FDA and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have warned the public and food service operators to watch for the bulk, peeled hard-boiled eggs. Although investigators have not confirmed any illnesses related to the Pro2Snax products, illnesses have been traced to eggs from the implicated Almark Foods production plant. The Almark egg facility has been confirmed to be contaminated with the same strain of Listeria monocytogenes that public health officials have found in patients involved in a multi-state outbreak. One person has died. Whole genome sequencing has help investigators identify patients going back to 2017. So far seven people from five states have been confirmed as outbreak victims. [Food Safety News](#)

[top of page...](#)

Jimmy John's restaurants in Iowa linked to another E. coli outbreak tied to sprouts

27 December- Sprouts Unlimited has initiated a recall of clover sprouts because of possible E. coli O103 contamination. The clover sprouts were distributed to Hy Vee Food stores, Fareway Food Stores and used by Jimmy John's restaurants in Iowa. "Sprouts Unlimited Inc. became aware of the potential contamination after receiving information from the Iowa Department of Inspections and Appeals, Des Moines, IA, that a cluster of E. coli O103 illnesses epidemiologically linked to clover sprouts from Sprouts Unlimited Inc.," according to the company's recall notice. "An investigation and further tests are being conducted to determine the source." The company reported that the implicated sprouts are packaged in pint containers from with a blue label on the lid and a UPC number of 7 32684 00013 6 stamped on the bottom right side of the label. If consumers have the recalled product in their home, they should not consume it and should return the product to the retail store for a full refund. Anyone with questions can call Sprouts Unlimited Inc. at 319-360-4586. [Food Safety News](#)

[top of page...](#)

Minnesota Company recalls salads because of undeclared allergen

30 December- J&J Distributing of St. Paul, MN, is recalling 136 pounds of ready-to-eat salad products that contain meat because of misbranding and undeclared allergens, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) announced today. The products contain pine nuts, a known allergen, which are not declared on the product label. The ready-to-eat salad products that contain meat were produced on various dates from Dec. 21 through Dec. 27. The following products are subject to recall:

-14-oz. plastic sealed cartons containing "KOWALSKI'S MARKETS SICILIAN CHOPPED SALAD" with a "SELL BY" sticker placed on the carton with dates of 12/27 through 01/02 (inclusive).

-14-oz. plastic sealed cartons containing "KOWALSKI'S MARKETS ITALIAN STEAKHOUSE COBB SALAD" with a "SELL BY" sticker placed on the carton with dates of 12/27 through 01/02 (inclusive).

The products subject to recall have the establishment number "EST. 38450" inside the USDA mark of inspection. These items were shipped to retail locations in Minnesota. The problem was discovered during routine FSIS inspection activities. There have been no confirmed reports of adverse reactions due to consumption of these products. Anyone concerned about an injury or illness should contact a healthcare provider. FSIS is concerned that some product may be in consumers' refrigerators. Consumers who have purchased these products are urged not to consume them. These products should be thrown away or returned to the place of purchase. Consumers with questions about the recall can contact Ron Carkoski, CEO of J&J Distributing, at 651-292-3822. [Food Safety News](#)

[top of page...](#)

Outbreak-related hardboiled egg recall now includes consumer products

30 December- Almark Foods is expanding its recall of hard boiled eggs to include products sold directly to consumers, but the company continues to downplay whether its contaminated plant is behind a Listeria outbreak. Some of the eggs do not expire until late March, so public health officials are concerned they may be in consumers' homes. Major retailers including Kroger, Walmart, Costco and Trader Joe's are among those with implicated products. The multistate, two-year long outbreak has killed at least one person, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Seven people from 2017 through 2019 — one as recently as November — have been confirmed infected with Listeria monocytogenes that matches the strain found in an Almark plant. Almark's initial recall on Dec. 20 involved only hard boiled, peeled eggs in pails that were sold to foodservice operations such as restaurants and grocery store delis. The expanded recall includes a wide variety of products, some of which are sold in grocery stores in protein kits and in egg pouches, according to the company's recall notice posted by the Food and Drug

Administration. The FDA confirmed the presence of the outbreak strain of *Listeria monocytogenes* in the Almark egg production plant in Gainesville, GA, in early 2019 and again recently. "On Dec. 18, 2019, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration notified Almark Foods that the company's 'Hard-Boiled and Peeled' eggs in pails manufactured at the Gainesville facility may be associated with a *Listeria monocytogenes* outbreak that has been linked to several reported illnesses and one reported death. A more recent FDA sample from the facility also matched the outbreak strain, suggesting the possibility that the strain may have remained present in the facility," Almark reported. "Almark Foods is expanding its voluntary recall first announced on Dec. 20, 2019, to include all hard-boiled eggs manufactured at the firm's Gainesville, GA, facility, including all retail, pillow pack, pouch pack, frozen diced, and protein kit products, due to potential contamination with *Listeria monocytogenes*." The recall now includes all products from the Georgia plant that are packaged for the retail market. This includes product with "Best If Used By" dates up through March 2, 2020. If the "Best If Used By" code starts with the prefix "G", the product was manufactured at the Georgia facility and is subject to the recall. The FDA has reported that Almark temporarily closed the production plant in Georgia. [Food Safety News](#)

[top of page...](#)

WELLNESS

Make 2020 the year of less sugar

30 December- Here's the last New Year's health resolution you might ever need: resolve to stop eating added sugar. While you might think you're not eating much sugar, chances are you're eating a lot more than you realize. Added sugar lurks in nearly 70 percent of packaged foods and is found in breads, health foods, snacks, yogurts, most breakfast foods and sauces. The average American eats about 17 teaspoons of added sugar a day (not counting the sugars that occur naturally in foods like fruit or dairy products). That's about double the recommended limit for men (nine teaspoons) and triple the limit for women (six teaspoons). For children, the limit should be about three teaspoons of added sugar and no more than six, depending on age and caloric needs. Cutting added sugar isn't about dieting and deprivation, and you don't have to count calories or cut fat. In fact, when you stop eating foods with added sugar, you'll replace them with foods that taste even better. And yes, you can still have dessert. Whether you are thin or fat, you can benefit by reducing the sugar in your diet. "It's not about being obese, it has to do with metabolic health," says Dr. Robert Lustig, professor of pediatric endocrinology at the University of California, San Francisco, and one of the first to raise the alarm about the health risks of added sugar. (His 90-minute lecture called *Sugar: The Bitter Truth* has been viewed more than nine million times since 2009.) "Sugar turns on the aging programs in your body," Dr. Lustig says. "The more sugar you eat, the faster you age." A number of health authorities, ranging from the World Health Organization to the Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, which issues national dietary guidelines for Americans, agree that cutting back on added sugars is a good idea. And critics like Dr. Lustig believe that the case against sugar is as strong as the

case against smoking or excess alcohol. [The New York Times](#)

[top of page...](#)

Scrap 'quick-fix diets and tea-toxes' this New Year

31 December- If your New Year resolution is to lose some weight, avoid fad diets, because they don't work and can be harmful, says NHS England's top doctor. Diet pills, "tea-toxes" and appetite suppressant products are no quick fix, says Prof Stephen Powis, NHS medical director. Products making this claim can have side-effects, including diarrhoea and heart issues, he warns. Getting in shape safely takes time and requires eating sensibly, and exercise. As the public gets ready for New Year's Eve, Prof Powis also warned of the dangers of "party drips" or quick fix hangover cures. [BBC News](#)

[top of page...](#)

USAFRICOM

Malaria in Burundi: 'Progressive increase' in cases in 2019, case tally tops 8 million

23 December- In a follow-up on the malaria situation in Burundi in 2019, the World Health Organization reports a progressive increase in cases in the past year across all 46 districts of Burundi. Since the beginning of the year, 8,392,921 malaria cases, including 3,113 deaths have been reported. The population in the landlocked country in Southeast Africa is estimated at 11.53 million in 2019. Malaria has been a scourge in Burundi in recent years. In fact, World Vision International reports since 2015, more than 19.7 million cases of malaria have been recorded in Burundi through 2017. With a population of 11.5 million, that's the equivalent of nearly every Burundian getting malaria twice in those two years. In 2018, malaria afflicted 228 million people and killed an estimated 405,000, mostly in sub-Saharan Africa. While malaria cases have dropped significantly in Southeast Asia in the past decade, countries in Africa reported an increase of 1 million cases from 2017 to 2018, and the continent accounted for almost 94% of global cases and deaths from the disease in 2018. Malaria is a disease caused by a parasite that spreads to humans through the bite of an infected mosquito. Early symptoms of malaria resemble those of the flu, including fever, chills, sweats, headache, vomiting, and body aches. Without prompt diagnosis and treatment, malaria can rapidly progress to severe illness and death. [Outbreak News Today](#)

[top of page...](#)

Monkeypox in DRC: More than 5,000 cases reported in 2019

1 January- When you think of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) in 2019, the first outbreak that naturally come to your mind is the ongoing Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) outbreak. You may also think of the world's largest measles outbreak of last year, as this has been getting more attention recently. Did you know that the DRC reported more than 5,000 monkeypox cases in 2019? According to the World Health Organization, DRC saw 5,060 cumulative monkeypox cases through Dec. 8 last year, including 103 fatalities—a 2 percent CFR. This includes 56 cases and one death reported the week of Dec. 8. This is multitudes more cases than is reported in Nigeria or other African countries. Monkeypox is a rare disease that occurs throughout remote parts of Central and West Africa, often near tropical rain forests. Fever, headache, muscle aches, swollen lymph nodes, and exhaustion are followed by a rash. Patients are usually ill for 2–4 weeks. Monkeypox is fatal in as many as 10% of people who get it. [Outbreak News Today](#)

[top of page...](#)

USCENTCOM

Rabies in Yemen: Estimated 'hundreds of deaths' in Sana'a

29 December- Stray dogs roaming the streets of the Yemen capital of Sana'a have caused a terror and huge public health problem, according to a Gulf365 report. The report notes that medical sources confirmed that the number of "rabies" infections in the capital, Sanaa, is estimated at thousands, including hundreds of deaths, most of them children and women. Officially, The Ministry of Health and Population of the Houthi militia recently announced that 50 deaths were reported as a result of rabies and 9498 cases of dog infestations during about 7 months of the year 2019, which are all cases that reached health facilities. The ministry said 18 deaths were recorded with rabies, and about 7000 other people were infected with the disease during 2018. The only health center for treatment of rabies in the Republican Hospital in the capital, Sanaa, receives between 15 and 30 cases on a daily basis, mostly women and children. This center suffers from a lack of vaccine medication for the treatment of rabies, which leads to complications for the injured, leading to increased deaths from people who are unable to provide the costs of treatment and hospital and the value of the vaccine dose for the treatment. Medical sources reported that the Houthi militia is looting financial allocations for rabies vaccines, which are supposed to be available at the center in the Republican Hospital and distributed to the injured free of charge, while vaccines provided by international organizations as drug aid are sold in most pharmacies in the capital, Sanaa. The directorate of stray dogs control at the Municipality of Amman claimed in press statements that it had launched since late November an early campaign to combat stray dogs in all districts of the Capital Municipality, and to limit its spread, implemented by the Health and Improvement Fund and the Municipality Cleaning Project,

with the participation of 4 field teams from the Department of Control and Spray. Within 3 weeks, 5050 dogs will be killed. Many residents of the capital, Sanaa, considered this campaign insufficient, as dogs are still seen in large numbers in many streets and neighborhoods, causing an increase in the number of injuries and deaths due to rabies and the lack of an increase in the Houthi's authority, which is not recognized internationally, in the lives of citizens. [Outbreak News Today](#)

[top of page...](#)

USEUCOM

Norway: Shigella outbreak sickens eight, linked to imported sugar peas from Kenya

25 December- The Institute of Public Health in Norway is reporting a Shigella sonnei outbreak that has sickened at least eight people in several counties across the country. In early December 2019, several people became ill with gastrointestinal symptoms after eating in a canteen in Oslo. The bacterium Shigella sonnei was found in samples from 5 of the patients. The local outbreak was investigated in collaboration with the infection control superior and the Food Safety Authority in Oslo. Imported sugars from Kenya were likely sources of infection. The sugars associated with the outbreak in Oslo were distributed to several parts of the country. The outbreak investigation shows that three people in Akershus and Hedmark have also been ill with the same bacteria. The eight people who have been diagnosed with the bacterium are aged 29 to 63 years. The sugars from Kenya were labeled "Sugersnaps" or "Sugars", 150 grams, packed by Springfresh and distributed in Norway by Bernhard Botolfsen Import AS. The sugars were packed in black containers covered with transparent plastic and marked with lot no.194819. [Outbreak News Today](#)

[top of page...](#)

USINDOPACOM

China: Sinovac announces approval of chickenpox vaccine

29 December- Sinovac Biotech Ltd., a leading provider of biopharmaceutical products in China, this week announced that the China National Medical Products Administration (NMPA) has approved and issued a Product license for the Company's varicella vaccine to prevent the varicella-zoster virus in children from 1 to 12 years old. Mr. Weidong Yin, Chairman, President and CEO of Sinovac, commented, "The approval of our varicella vaccine allows us to provide another high-quality product to address unmet medical needs for the Chinese population. This is the first vaccine product approved by the Chinese government after the issuance and implementation of the Vaccine Management Law in China. Our ability to continue to gain approval for our products since the government issued the Vaccine

Management Law and implemented stringent management of the vaccine industry is a testament to the strength of our operations and the quality of our products. Moreover, with approximately 40 countries including varicella vaccines in their government sponsored national immunization programs, we have a positive outlook in our ability to provide varicella vaccines to markets outside of China and generate additional sources of growth.” Varicella, commonly known as “chickenpox,” is a highly contagious infectious disease caused by the varicella-zoster virus. The disease is spread by direct contact or through respiratory droplets. It is characterized by the appearance on the skin and mucous membranes of successive crops of lesions that are easily broken and become scabbed. Varicella usually affects children and is relatively benign, but complications may arise in the form of pneumonia and encephalitis. After infection, the virus may be reactivated and develop into herpes zoster, commonly known as “shingles,” in older adults. [Outbreak News Today](#)

[top of page...](#)

USNORTHCOM

Canada: Salmonella outbreak linked to raw turkey and raw chicken rises to 126

19 December- Officials with the Public Health Agency of Canada and the various provinces report continuing to investigate an outbreak of Salmonella infections. Based on the investigation findings to date, exposure to raw turkey and raw chicken products has been identified as the likely source of the outbreak. As of December 18, 2019, there have been 126 confirmed cases of Salmonella Reading illness investigated in the following provinces and territories: British Columbia (31), Alberta (44), Saskatchewan (8), Manitoba (24), Ontario (8), Quebec (2), New Brunswick (1), Prince Edward Island (1), Northwest Territories (1), and Nunavut (6). Individuals became sick between April 2017 and November 2019. Thirty-eight individuals have been hospitalized. One individual has died. [Outbreak News Today](#)

[top of page...](#)

Mexico: Chickenpox outbreak affects dozens at Ciudad Juárez shelter

29 December- The Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare (STPS) reported that, with the coordination between health sector authorities and epidemiologists of the Integrating Center for Migrants “Leona Vicario”, located in Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua, managed to control the chickenpox outbreak affecting dozens of people, mostly children, according to a Proceso news report. The shelter, across the border from El Paso, Texas, closed on Thursday after 72 people, including 69 children, were diagnosed with the virus. “The staff works 24 hours in the Integrating Center for Migrants, located in Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua. People and families who have chickenpox symptoms receive medical treatment in a timely manner and remain in an isolation area to monitor their evolution and avoid future complications,”

according to an official. He pointed out the participation of the staff of the Coordination of the Northern Border Migrant Care Plan and installed tables in each pavilion, bathrooms and dining room exclusively for infected people and distributed mouth covers and special sanitary containers. [Outbreak News Today](#)

[top of page...](#)

U.S.: E. coli O103 illnesses in Iowa linked to sprouts

27 December- The FDA announced a company recall of sprouts linked to E. coli O103 illnesses in Iowa. It is not yet known how many people are sick in this latest Iowa sprouts outbreak, but we do know where the sprouts were distributed. According to the announcement by the sprouts' manufacturer Sprouts Unlimited Inc. "The affected batches of clover sprouts were distributed to Hy Vee Food stores, Fareway Food Stores and Jimmy John's restaurants in Iowa. The sprouts available at retail were packaged in in pint containers from Sprouts Unlimited Inc. with a blue label on the lid. The UPC code 7 32684 00013 6 is stamped on the bottom right side of the label." [Outbreak News Today](#)

[top of page...](#)

USSOUTHCOM

Measles in Argentina: Most cases reported in 20 years

29 December- In a follow-up report on the measles outbreak in Argentina, the Ministry of Health is now reporting 88 confirmed cases of measles, of which 86 are local 2 and were detected in Spain with two weeks left in 2019. The vast majority of cases were locally acquired, according to officials. It is the worst outbreak of the disease registered in the country since 2000. The bulk of the cases were recorded in the city of Buenos Aires and Buenos Aires province. [Outbreak News Today](#)

[top of page...](#)

[U.S. Military](#) | [Global](#) | [Influenza](#) | [Veterinary/Food Safety](#) | [Wellness](#) | [Contact Us](#)

[USAFRICOM](#) | [USCENTCOM](#) | [USEUCOM](#) | [USINDOPACOM](#) | [USNORTHCOM](#) | [USSOUTHCOM](#)

The *Army Public Health Update* is a collection of articles taken from public sources to offer awareness of current health issues and the media coverage given to them. The articles do not necessarily represent U.S. Army Medical Command opinions, views, policy, or guidance, and should not be construed or interpreted as being endorsed by the U.S. Army Medical Command.

The *Army Public Health Weekly Update* does not analyze the information as to its strategic or tactical impact on the U.S. Army and is not a medical intelligence product. Medical intelligence is available from the [National Center for Medical Intelligence](#).

External Links: The appearance of external hyperlinks does not constitute endorsement by the U.S. Army of the website or the information, products, or services contained therein. For other than authorized activities such as military exchanges and MWR sites, the U.S. Army does not exercise any editorial control over the information you may find at these locations. Such links are provided consistent with the stated purpose of this product.

Although we avoid links to sites that may be blocked, all sites may not be accessible from all locations. While we verify the links at the time of publication, we cannot guarantee that they will be active in the future.

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

