

13 July 2012

# Army Public Health Weekly Update

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U.S. Army Public Health Command



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## Contents

### U.S. MILITARY

---

- [Amputations of upper and lower extremities, active and reserve components, U.S. Armed Forces, 2000-2011](#)
- [Making commanders accountable for soldiers' suicides](#)

### GLOBAL

---

- [Laws that criminalise gays hurt HIV treatment](#)
- [Study finds high effectiveness for indoor spraying to prevent malaria](#)
- [Study maps zoonotic disease burden, hot spots](#)

### INFLUENZA

---

- [Antiviral-resistant H1N1 virus in Australia didn't spread far](#)
- [Australia: Dangerous flu season upon us](#)
- [CDC: Weekly Influenza Surveillance Report](#)
- [China reports bird flu outbreak](#)
- [European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control: Weekly Influenza Surveillance Overview](#)
- [France: Pandemic vaccine uptake was poor in pregnant women](#)
- [Google.org: Flu Trends](#)
- [Hong Kong finds H5N1 in pet bird shop](#)
- [Indonesian girl dies from H5N1 infection](#)
- [Mexico: Bird flu strikes poultry farms](#)
- [Naval Health Research Center: Febrile Respiratory Illness Surveillance Update](#)
- [U.S.: H1N1 flu in pigs and people at Ohio county fair identical](#)
- [WHO: Flu season starts in Southern Hemisphere](#)

### VETERINARY/FOOD SAFETY

---

- [Botulism outbreak in Oregon sickens three](#)
- [Ohio: E. coli outbreak rises to 55; 10 hospitalized](#)
- [Hendra virus detected in Australian horse](#)



## Pertussis Posters

Two new posters on the importance of getting a pertussis booster are now available on the **USAPHC Health Information eCatalog**. One focuses on the need to vaccinate family members. The second poster is geared toward those who work with children (health care providers, teachers, daycare providers and babysitters.)



## U.S. MILITARY

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### Amputations of upper and lower extremities, active and reserve components, U.S. Armed Forces, 2000-2011

June - This report summarizes the numbers and types of traumatic amputations, and the demographic and military characteristics of affected active and reserve service members from 2000 to 2011. Both minor and major amputations are described and stratified by location of amputation. Furthermore, the trends and demographic and military characteristics of deployment-related cases are described. The surveillance period was 1 January 2000 through 31 December 2011. The surveillance population consisted of all individuals who served in an active and/or reserve component of the U.S. Armed Forces at any time during the surveillance period. During the surveillance period there were 6,144 incident cases of traumatic amputation among 5,694 service members. The majority of the injuries reported were considered minor amputations (i.e., toes, fingers, thumbs, upper/lower unspecified) (n=3,849; 63%). There were 2,295 major amputations (i.e., hands, feet, arms, legs) among 2,037 individuals, and of these, 29 were bilateral upper extremity amputations and 360 were bilateral lower extremity amputations. [Medical Surveillance Monthly Report](#)

### Making commanders accountable for soldiers' suicides

26 June - Suicide remains an alarming and growing problem throughout the Army, with the annual number of suicides **now greater than the number of deaths** resulting from combat. A few years ago the Army took the aggressive position that suicide prevention should be taken away from its Medical Department and given to the "line" — the commanders of troops. This was accomplished by placing the deputy chief of staff of the Army at the time, General Peter W. Chiarelli, in charge of suicide prevention. This was a tremendous move in the right direction. However, it wasn't enough and hasn't solved the problem, as **recent data** show. [New York Times](#)

[top of page...](#)

## GLOBAL

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### Laws that criminalise gays hurt HIV treatment

10 July - Laws that criminalise gay behaviour are among a host of legal tangles that waste resources and hinder an effective response to HIV/AIDS worldwide, an independent commission reported. The report by the Global Commission on HIV and the Law also pointed to laws that make sex work a crime, laws that prevent interventions with injecting drug workers, and legislation that denies the youth access to sex education. "Too many countries waste vital resources by enforcing archaic laws that ignore science and perpetuate stigma," said former president of Brazil Fernando Henrique Cardoso, who serves as chair of the commission. [EIN News](#)

## Classified Version of the Weekly Update

An Army Public Health Weekly Update is available with articles classified up to the **SECRET** level from the USAPHC SIPRNet site:

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## Links

[A-Z Index](#)

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[Medical Surveillance Monthly Report](#)

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

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## Study finds high effectiveness for indoor spraying to prevent malaria

4 July - Indoor insecticide spraying has reduced malaria infections in malaria-endemic communities by 62%, according to a meta-analysis published online Jul 3 in the American Journal of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene (AJTMH). The researchers examined 13 studies published between 2000 and 2010 on the effect of indoor residual spraying (IRS) on malaria transmission, primarily in Africa. Because the effectiveness of IRS in the studies varied considerably, as did study design and other factors, the authors performed a meta-regression analysis using 45 observations and deduced the following: IRS is most effective in areas with a high initial prevalence of malarial disease, where both Plasmodium falciparum and Plasmodium vivax parasites are a threat, when several rounds of spraying are conducted, and where DDT rather than pyrethroids or other insecticides is used. The use of DDT is controversial and has been banned in many countries, the authors acknowledge, but it may be worth consideration in areas of intense malaria transmission. [CIDRAP](#)

## Study maps zoonotic disease burden, hot spots

5 July - A review and mapping study to gauge the burden of zoonotic diseases found that Ethiopia, Nigeria, Tanzania, and India are four top hot spots and that a surging demand for livestock products will likely fuel the spread of several diseases. The report was designed to help global health officials target disease-fighting resources to best help the poor... Besides offering a detailed view of the interplay between poverty, farming practices, climate change, and zoonotic diseases, the report also provides a vivid snapshot of the overall global burden of animal-human diseases. The group estimated that 13 of 56 zoonoses they studied are responsible for 2.4 billion human illnesses and 2.2 million deaths each year, mainly in low- and middle-income countries. [CIDRAP](#)

[top of page...](#)

## INFLUENZA

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### Antiviral-resistant H1N1 virus in Australia didn't spread far

5 July - An oseltamivir-resistant 2009 H1N1 virus that spread in one Australian community in 2011 apparently did not escape to a nearby large city, according to a report published in Eurosurveillance yesterday. Researchers previously reported the community spread of a resistant 2009 H1N1 virus in the Newcastle, Australia, area from June through August of 2011, the report notes. The authors of the new study looked for signs of the resistant strain in Sydney, the nearest major city to Newcastle, 120 kilometers away. They ran genetic assessments of H1N1 viruses from 143 patients who had not received oseltamivir and from 23 patients who had been treated with it. Only 2 (1.4%) of the 143 isolates from untreated

patients carried the resistance mutation (H275Y in the neuraminidase), indicating a low prevalence of the resistant strain and "no convincing evidence" of its spread from the Newcastle area. [CIDRAP](#)

## Australia: Dangerous flu season upon us

11 July - Doctors are warning people to protect themselves against potentially deadly flu strains that have already taken lives and sent dozens of people to hospital. Nationally, 8183 cases of flu have been reported this year, with 1034 of them in Victoria. This is up from 698 during the same period in Victoria last year and 226 in 2010. Seven deaths have been reported to the federal Department of Health. But the chairman of the Influenza Specialist Group, Dr Alan Hampson, said this was likely to be the tip of the iceberg. He said he feared Australia was in for a difficult year because most people were being diagnosed with the H3N2 and Type B flu virus strains. "When we see high levels of H3N2, which is the predominant strain this season, there is significant impact, especially in high-risk groups. Typically, we can expect to see more deaths and hospital admissions," said Dr Hampson, whose group receives some funds from pharmaceutical companies. The World Health Organisation's Ian Barr said he also feared a worse flu season than the past two years. But he said this year's flu vaccine included protection against these strains because they were dominant in the northern hemisphere winter. [The Sydney Morning Herald](#)

## CDC: Weekly Influenza Surveillance Report

During week 26, 6.6% of all deaths reported through the 122-Cities Mortality Reporting System were due to pneumonia and influenza. This percentage was below the epidemic threshold of 6.9% for week 26. [FluView](#)

## China reports bird flu outbreak

2 July - Authorities in China's remote northwestern region of Xinjiang have culled more than 150,000 chickens following an outbreak of bird flu, officials said. The outbreak of the H5N1 strain of avian flu initially killed 1,600 chickens and sickened about 5,500, the agriculture ministry said late Monday. In an effort to contain the disease, agricultural authorities quarantined the area and culled 156,439 chickens, according to the ministry. The outbreak occurred on June 20 but was only confirmed as H5N1 bird flu on Monday, it said. The ministry and state press did not specify exactly where the outbreak occurred, but said it happened at a farm run by the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps, described by state media as a semi-military government organisation of about 2.5 million people. [AFP](#)

## European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control: Weekly Influenza Surveillance Overview

During weeks 25 and 26 (18 June – 1 July 2012), sixteen countries reporting experienced low-intensity influenza activity. Of 68 sentinel specimens, one was positive for influenza type B virus. Since week 40/2011, 89.3% of the detected influenza viruses have been type A and 10.7% type B. The A(H3) subtype represented 98.5% of influenza A type viruses detected during the 2011–2012 season. [Weekly Influenza Surveillance Overview](#)

## France: Pandemic vaccine uptake was poor in pregnant women

7 July - Despite an active campaign in France urging pregnant women to receive the 2009 H1N1 pandemic vaccine, poor coverage ensued, with social disparities and no increase in protection for women at highest risk for complications, according to a study published online Jul 7 in *Vaccine*. Data from 13,453 French women who were in their second trimester during the campaign were analyzed. Coverage was 29.3% (95% confidence interval [CI], 28.6%-30.1%). Among women not getting the vaccine, 91.2% gave as the reason that they did not want it. The vaccination rate was higher in pregnant women who were older, were employed, were born in France, had fewer than three children, and had positive health behaviors during pregnancy. Women who had received postgraduate education had an adjusted odds ratio for vaccination of 4.1 (95% CI, 3.5-4.8) compared with those having less than a high school education. [CIDRAP](#)

## Google.org: Flu Trends

12 July – Estimates of flu activity based on flu-related Internet search queries indicate that the level of flu activity in the northern hemisphere is minimal and ranges from minimal to high in the southern hemisphere. High levels are indicated for Chile, Australia and New Zealand. [Google.org Flu Trends](#)

## Hong Kong finds H5N1 in pet bird shop

5 July - Officials in Hong Kong have shuttered a pet bird shop after routine tests yielded the H5N1 avian flu virus, according to a statement today from Hong Kong's Agriculture, Fisheries, and Conservation Department (AFCD). The virus was found on a swab sample collected on Jun 25 from a cage holding an Oriental magpie robin. Authorities have transferred all of the shop's birds to an AFCD animal management center, where they will be destroyed. Authorities have also closed the Bird Garden, where the shop was located, for 21 days as a precaution. [CIDRAP](#)

## Indonesian girl dies from H5N1 infection

5 July - Indonesia's health ministry today announced the death of an 8-year-old girl from an H5N1 avian influenza infection, according to a report from the *Jakarta Globe*. The girl, from West Java province, got sick on Jun 18 during a trip to Singapore. Six days later her symptoms worsened and she was admitted to a Jakarta hospital with signs of pneumonia. She was transferred two more times and required treatment with a ventilator. A health ministry official told the *Globe* that she tested positive for the virus on Jun 29 and died on Jul 3. The official said she had often walked past a live-bird market on her way to school, and 6 days before she got sick she had helped carry freshly killed birds home from the market with her father. If the World Health Organization (WHO) confirms the girl's H5N1 illness and death, she will be listed as Indonesia's 190th case-patient and its 158th fatality from the disease. [CIDRAP](#)

## Mexico: Bird flu strikes poultry farms



10 July - An outbreak of avian flu in western Mexico has killed approximately 870,000 poultry birds since June. The state government of Jalisco has declared a national animal health emergency and is currently working to prevent the spread of the disease to other parts of the country. The strain of avian flu

in this outbreak, H7N3, rarely infects humans. Jose Munoz, a member of the Jalisco state government, reassured people that there is no risk of infection for humans who consume the region's poultry or eggs. [The Disease Daily](#)

## Naval Health Research Center: Febrile Respiratory Illness Surveillance Update

For the week ending 7 July 2012:

Influenza: Laboratory-confirmed influenza cases among U.S. military basic trainees included 19 cases of type A/H3, 16 cases of A/pH1N1, and 21 cases of type B influenza.

FRI surveillance at all U.S. military basic training centers indicated FRI rates were at or below expected values. [NHRC Febrile Respiratory Illness Surveillance Update](#)

## U.S.: H1N1 flu in pigs and people at Ohio county fair identical

9 July - The discovery of identical triple-reassortant H1N1 influenza in pigs and humans at a county fair in Ohio in August 2007 illustrated the importance of coordinating public health and animal health disease investigations, says a report released yesterday in *Zoonoses and Public Health*. Clinical signs of a flu-like illness were seen in most of more than 200 pigs within 80 hours of their arrival at the fair; these included anorexia, fever, lethargy, and a "barking" cough. The pig barns were temporarily closed to the public and the animals were treated with antibiotics. Five days after the pigs' arrival at the fair, respiratory symptoms in several exhibitors were reported. [CIDRAP](#)

## WHO: Flu season starts in Southern Hemisphere

9 July - The flu season has started in most of the temperate Southern Hemisphere countries that collect surveillance information, the World Health Organization (WHO) said Jul 6 in its latest global flu update. The H3N2 virus is dominant overall, but the virologic picture varies by country, with some, including Bolivia, reporting high levels of 2009 H1N1 infections and others seeing co-circulation of influenza B. In Chile, flu activity has almost reached the country's alert threshold, and the proportion of emergency visits for respiratory disease has reached 31%, surpassing the level reported for the same period in the last 2 years. Most virus detections there are H3N2. Brazil has reported a sustained rise in flu detections since the middle of May, with a notable increase in severe respiratory infections, 80% from the 2009 H1N1 virus and the rest from H3N2. In Bolivia, more than 50% of samples tested were positive for flu, and the country has seen a recent rise in severe infections. In sub Saharan

Africa, limited data suggests low or no flu activity in most countries, except for Ghana, Ivory Coast, and Madagascar. [CIDRAP](#)

[top of page...](#)

## VETERINARY/FOOD SAFETY

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### Botulism outbreak in Oregon sickens three



8 July - Three Oregonians were hospitalized with botulism after eating at a private barbecue, according to state health officials. The *Clostridium botulinum* bacteria that infected these individuals is thought to have come from home-canned foods served at the event, held in Deschutes County. All three victims

were residents of the county, located in central Oregon. The Deschutes County Health Department says the incident was isolated and that all barbecue attendees had been notified. [Food Safety News](#)

### Ohio: E. coli outbreak rises to 55; 10 hospitalized

12 July - The number of people sickened by E. coli bacteria in Germantown has risen to 55, according to Public Health — Dayton & Montgomery County officials. The health department is investigating the outbreak which appears to have stemmed from a customer appreciation picnic July 3 at Neff's Lawn Care. Bill Wharton, a spokesman for the health department, said 19 additional cases were identified Wednesday with 10 hospitalizations since the event... The health department is not expecting the illness count to rise significantly, because the normal incubation period for this strain of E. coli is eight days, and Wednesday was the eighth day since the picnic. The number has grown over time because those who were feeling ill heard about illnesses from the picnic and contacted the health department, Wharton said. [Dayton Daily News](#)

### Hendra virus detected in Australian horse

10 July - Another case of Hendra virus was detected last week in Queensland, Australia. Australian news agencies reported that a veterinarian treated a gravely ill horse in the northern part of the state. Lab results confirmed that the animal had Hendra virus (HeV), a severe virus of the Henipavirus genus that can cause fatal neurological and respiratory disease in horses and humans. Upon confirmation of infection, the horse was humanely euthanized. One person was exposed to the virus, but officials say that the risk of infection was low, as he had worn full protective equipment. [The Disease Daily](#)

### Upstate New York Shigella outbreak expands to 45

12 July - Almost three weeks after health officials in Upstate New York announced they were investigating a Shigella outbreak affecting 25 people, the estimated victim count has grown to 45. The outbreak is affecting residents of Onondaga County, which includes the city of

Syracuse and is located in the northern central part of the state. "There are currently 45 cases of Shigella," reported the Onondaga County Health Department in a statement to Food Safety News. "This includes confirmed, probable, and what New York State Department of Health is considering suspect (cases). We continue to investigate each and every case for linkages but the source remains unknown." [Food Safety News](#)

[top of page...](#)

## WELLNESS

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### Fake sweeteners might help keep pounds off

10 July - Can artificial sweeteners help people reach and maintain a healthy body weight? Maybe, according to two major medical societies. A scientific statement issued by the American Heart Association and the American Diabetes Association concluded that using non-nutritive sweeteners could cut down on added sugars and therefore lead to beneficial effects. But an extensive literature search found sketchy, limited, and often contradictory evidence, researchers concluded in *Circulation: Journal of the American Heart Association and Diabetes Care*. "Smart use of non-nutritive sweeteners could help you reduce added sugars in your diet, therefore lowering the number of calories you eat," said lead author Christopher Gardner of Stanford University in Palo Alto, Calif. That reduction "could help you attain and maintain a healthy body weight, and thereby lower your risk of heart disease and diabetes," Gardner said in a statement. But any beneficial effects, the researchers noted, could be undone if people "compensate" for the calorie cuts by eating more high-calorie foods. [ABC News](#)

### Get up! Sitting less can add years to your life



10 July - Sitting for more than three hours a day can cut two years off a person's life expectancy, even if he or she exercises regularly, a new study finds. Watching TV for more than two hours a day can shorten life expectancy even further, by another 1.4 years. The findings suggest that when it comes to

gleaning health benefits from physical activity, it may not be enough just to get the recommended amount of daily exercise — the government advises about a half-hour of moderate activity a day for adults...Whether "you're physically active and meet the exercise guidelines, or if you're not active," says Peter Katzmarzyk, professor of epidemiology at Pennington Biomedical Research Center and lead author of the new paper published in the online journal *BMJ Open*, "sitting is bad." [Healthland Time](#)

### Really, cranberries do protect against urinary tract infections

10 July - This folk remedy may be for real: A new study finds that cranberry products really do help prevent urinary tract infections. The benefit of cranberry juice and other cranberry products in staving off urinary tract infections (UTIs) has long been debated. In 2011, a

study showed that among a group of college-age women, those consuming more cranberry products were 43% more likely to develop a UTI. Yet, other studies, including one conducted by the Cochrane Review in 2008, have hinted that cranberry products can help reduce the risk of these infections by as much as 34%. Those results were backed up by molecular analyses showing that compounds in cranberries could block the ability of the bacteria that cause UTIs to attach themselves to the membranes of the urinary and genital tracts. Despite the lack of consensus, however, many doctors have continued to advise their patients to try cranberry products for infection, since the alternative treatment — antibiotics — can lead to drug resistance, which makes bacterial infections harder to treat. [Healthland Time](#)

[top of page...](#)

## USAFRICOM

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### Nigeria aims for generation of HIV-free babies



10 July - Health authorities say 70,000 children are born HIV-positive in Nigeria every year, and one-fourth of them don't live past their first birthday. While some officials say they want to make Nigeria one of Africa's first nations to give birth to a generation of HIV-free babies, activists say

poverty, stigma and a lack of government support make that goal lofty, if not impossible... Edward Ogenyi is the national coordinator for the Network of People Living With HIV/AIDS in Nigeria. He says 2.9 million people are known to be living with HIV in Nigeria, but more than 80 percent of the population does not know their HIV status. And for many who do know, drugs are not available. More than half of the people known to be in need of anti-retroviral drugs in Nigeria don't get them because there are not enough. "The culture of voluntary counseling and testing is not there. It is something that we are still struggling with," said Ogenyi. "It is only when we can take it up very seriously that we can be sure that we can prevent new HIV infections in this country." [Voice of America](#)

### Tanzania: Gender violence fuels HIV/Aids infections in women

11 July – Any person who intentionally transmits HIV to another person commits an offence and on conviction the culprit shall be liable to life imprisonment. This amounts to gender violence and is partially what the HIV and AIDS Prevention Control Act (2007) seeks to curb. The law is also tailored to provide incisive prevention, care and control of HIV and AIDS and promotion of public health to persons living with HIV and AIDS. A national report on HIV/AIDS prevalence shows that by the end of 2004 it was estimated that 1.3 million Tanzanians were positive to HIV/AIDS with the infection rate standing at seven per cent among the sexually active age group... Today, however, two million Tanzanians live with the

disease. Fortunately, the infection rate has been scaled down to five per cent at national level, thanks to sustained campaigns by the state, NGOs and other stakeholders in the welfare of Tanzanians. [All Africa](#)

## Uganda: HIV prevention no longer just ABC

11 July - Uganda enjoyed tremendous success reducing its AIDS prevalence rate in the 1990s through a campaign based on the ABCs: Abstain, Be Faithful or Use a Condom. Now new infections are on the rise again. As health workers struggle to keep HIV in check, the country is moving beyond its celebrated ABC message to new prevention strategies... [A] recently released AIDS Indicator Survey showed new infections are on the rise again in Uganda. Though the increase was less than one percent, the news alarmed health workers and activists... [Dr. Bernard Etukoit] says for Uganda, the most important of these strategies are preventing transmission of HIV from mothers to their children, and safe male medical circumcision, which can reduce the chance of HIV transmission by up to 60 percent. Over the last year, the country has strengthened plans for both strategies, though limited resources mean neither service is universally available. [Voice of America](#)

## West Africa: Cholera upsurge kills more children in the Sahel



10 July - As the rainy season unfolds across the Sahel, a recent upsurge of cholera that has killed over 60 people and sickened about 2,800 this year is putting more and more people - especially malnourished children - at risk, UNICEF warned today. Last week, an outbreak in Northern

Mali left two children dead and 34 other people sick, including a growing number of children, according to Mali's Ministry of Health. So far in 2012, cholera has killed nearly 700 people in West and Central Africa and more than 29,000 cases were reported. Since mid-June, the number of people affected by the deadly highly infectious water-borne disease has shot up in the Sahel, especially in Niger's regions bordering the Niger River, where the Ministry of Health reports nearly three times as many cholera patients over the first half of 2012 compared to the same period last year. [All Africa](#)

[top of page...](#)

### USCENTCOM

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## Pakistan: Birth control – roping in Pakistan's men

11 July - "No scalpel, no stitch and no rest needed," guarantees Dr. Ghulam Shabbir Sudhayao, referring to the surgical procedure called vasectomy – the least popular method of birth control around the world, including Pakistan. "People confuse vasectomy with castration (surgical removal of the testicles) and that scares them away," Sudhayao, who

works for the government's population welfare department, tells IPS... But, Sudhayao is frustrated that the 2,000 social mobilisers working for the department are unable to meet their quotas. "We get no more than 80 to 90 clients in a month though the operation is free and the patient gets Pakistani rupees 500 (five dollars) for nutrition, and the introducer can collect 1.59 dollars as incentive money." [IPS](#)

## Plight of Afghanistan's mentally ill

10 July - Afghanistan is struggling to fight mental health problems that afflict its population after decades of violence. Slideshow. [Reuters](#)

## Study links polio rise in Afghanistan, Pakistan to ebbing vaccine coverage

4 July - Decreases in polio vaccination coverage in parts of Pakistan and southern Afghanistan, two of the three remaining polio-endemic countries, have led to an increase in cases despite eradication efforts and more effective polio vaccines, says a study published online yesterday in *The Lancet*. The researchers, from Imperial College London and the World Health Organization (WHO), did a matched case-control analysis of data from national surveillance programs in Afghanistan and Pakistan to study the effect of immunization campaigns and the effectiveness of the three polio vaccines available. The database included 46,977 children 0 through 14 years old with acute flaccid paralysis from 2001 through 2011. The team found that the serotype 1 monovalent vaccine and the serotype 1/3 bivalent vaccine had comparable effectiveness and were both superior to the trivalent vaccine. They report that the number of polio cases increased from 40 in Pakistan and 31 in Afghanistan in 2006 to 198 and 80 in 2011, respectively. The increase is occurring primarily in regions where vaccination coverage and population immunity are decreasing, including Balochistan and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas in Pakistan and parts of southern Afghanistan where security concerns continue. [CIDRAP](#)

[top of page...](#)

### **USEUCOM**

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## Netherlands: Little change in Dutch euthanasia post-legality

11 July - The frequency of doctor-assisted euthanasia in the Netherlands has changed little since the longstanding practice was legalized in 2002, according to a new study. A summary published Wednesday on *The Lancet* magazine's website said that "in 2010, of all deaths in the Netherlands, 2.8 percent were the result of euthanasia. This is higher than the 1.7 percent in 2005, but comparable with (levels seen) in 2001 and 1995." Under Dutch law, a person who asks to die may be administered a lethal mixture of sedatives and muscle relaxants if two doctors agree he or she is suffering "unbearable" pain with no prospect for

recovery. Most cases involve cancer victims. The Lancet study used data from the country's death registry and sent confidential questionnaires to doctors, extrapolating results to represent a cross-section of deaths in different social, medical and geographical areas.

[Yahoo News](#)

[top of page...](#)

**USNORTHCOM**

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## Babesiosis surveillance — 18 States, 2011

13 July - ...For the first year [2011] of babesiosis surveillance, health departments notified CDC of 1,124 confirmed and probable cases. Cases were reported by 15 of the 18 states where babesiosis was reportable; however, 1,092 cases (97%) were reported by seven states (Connecticut, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York [including New York City], Rhode Island, and Wisconsin). Cases were identified in persons aged <1–98 years; 57% were in persons aged ≥60 years. Among patients for whom data were available, 82% (717 of 879) had symptom onset dates during June–August. Ongoing national surveillance using the standard case definition will provide a foundation for developing evidence-based prevention and control measures to reduce the burden of babesiosis. [Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report](#)

## Babies addicted to prescription painkillers?

9 July - ...The Journal of the American Medical Association recently published a study taking a closer look at the growing number of mothers taking painkillers and the babies born that are addicted to drugs. On average, a child is born every hour in the U.S., addicted to a class of painkillers called opiates. By 2009, there were more than 13,000 babies born with neonatal abstinence syndrome (NAS), a withdrawal syndrome that occurs in some babies after being exposed to opiates, while in utero, according to the study. Even more startling, that one-baby-per-hour figure marks about a three-fold increase in the number of babies born with NAS since 2000; and during the same time period, opiate use among expectant mothers was also jumping, increasing nearly five-fold. [HLN](#)

## Can a deadly form of hand, foot and mouth disease hit the US?

10 July - Public health experts think they've solved the mystery behind the illness that's linked to more than 50 deaths of children across Cambodia since April: a virus that causes a common illness in children called hand, foot and mouth disease. The particular strain of the virus -- Enterovirus Type 71 or EV-71 -- that destroyed the lungs and led to brain swelling in the children who died, has posed problems in other Asian countries, but it isn't seen often in the US and tends to be less dangerous when it does infect children here. "We're not sure why that is," said Dr. Al DeMaria, state epidemiologist at the Massachusetts Department of

Public Health. "It may be a slightly different strain that comes here or have something to do with a difference in hygiene practices or overall health of our population." While parents shouldn't panic that the deadly EV-71 might cause an outbreak at, say, summer camp, DeMaria said public health officials have it on their radar screen. "I think it is a concern. It's one of the emerging infections we look out for," he said. "We need to keep an eye on it since infections can travel quickly around the world." [The Boston Globe](#)

## HPV vaccine reducing infections, even among unvaccinated



9 July - Even among unvaccinated girls and young women, the human papillomavirus vaccine is reducing infections of certain strains of the virus known to cause genital warts and cervical cancer, new research finds. The study is among the first to show signs that the human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine not only prevents infections, but it can also promote herd protection -- a decrease in infections among the unimmunized thanks to lower rates of infections among other people in their community who might otherwise be transmitting the disease... The study involved two groups of women aged 13 to 26 who had already had sexual contact and who were seen at two primary-care clinics in Cincinnati, one of which was a teen health center. One group was seen at the clinic in 2006 or 2007, before the HPV vaccine, which protects against four strains of HPV, was widely available. The second group was seen in 2009 or 2010, after the vaccines were widely available. [U.S. News](#)

## Newspaper says Florida health officials kept mum about TB outbreak

9 July - Florida health officials withheld from key state decision makers a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) report of a serious tuberculosis (TB) outbreak in Jacksonville, even as the state took steps to close a TB hospital, the Palm Beach Post reported yesterday. In the CDC report, Robert Luo, MD, MPH, warned Florida officials that the Jacksonville outbreak, with 13 deaths and 99 cases, was one of the worst hit group had investigated in 20 years, the story said. Luo issued his report in April, shortly after Gov. Rick Scott signed a bill that trimmed the Department of Health and required closure of the A.G. Holley State Hospital in Lantana, where patients with difficult TB cases have been treated for 60 years, the newspaper said. [CIDRAP](#)

## Record year for whooping cough? Get the shots, health experts say

10 July - The U.S. is on course for a record year for whooping cough, health officials said this week. And while vaccinating kids is clearly the most important defense, health experts say adults may not realize they're supposed to be getting regular shots, too... So far this year, the United States has seen more than 16,000 validated cases of whooping cough, said Stacey Martin, an epidemiologist with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. That's more than the 15,216 cases reported last year. The latest peak was 27,550 cases in 2010,

when it killed 27 people, 25 of them babies... Pertussis has reached epidemic levels in the state of Washington, with more than 2,700 cases so far this year, and CDC is following outbreaks in 18 other states: Wisconsin, Minnesota, New York, New Jersey, Illinois, Idaho, Montana, Texas, Ohio, Iowa, Missouri, Florida, Arizona, Maine, New Mexico, Pennsylvania, Kansas, and Oregon. [MSNBC](#)

## West Nile virus disease and other arboviral diseases — United States, 2011

13 July - ... West Nile virus (WNV) is the leading cause of domestically acquired arboviral disease in the United States (1). However, several other arboviruses also cause seasonal outbreaks and sporadic cases (1). In 2011, CDC received reports of 871 cases of nationally notifiable arboviral diseases (excluding dengue); etiological agents included WNV (712 cases), La Crosse virus (LACV) (130), Powassan virus (POWV) (16), St. Louis encephalitis virus (SLEV) (six), Eastern equine encephalitis virus (EEEV) (four), and Jamestown Canyon virus (JCV) (three). Of these, 624 (72%) were classified as neuroinvasive disease, for a national incidence of 0.20 per 100,000 population. WNV and other arboviruses continue to cause focal outbreaks and severe illness in substantial numbers of persons in the United States. [Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report](#)

[top of page...](#)

### USPACOM

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## Vaccine rolls out to boys



13 July - The human papillomavirus vaccine - provided to girls to protect against cervical cancer - will be extended to boys from next year to protect against other cancers and bolster the vaccine's effectiveness in girls. Federal Health Minister Tanya Plibersek said the government would fund the vaccine for year 7 boys through schools and also for year 9 boys in a "catch-up program" over the next two years, in a \$21 million program. The vaccine, developed in Australia, protects against four strains of the human papillomavirus (HPV) that can also cause head and neck cancer and genital warts. Ms Plibersek said about 80 per cent of Australians had some strain of HPV in their lifetime and several strains could cause cancer. "So if you are able to protect your sons and your daughters against being infected with HPV, you increase the likelihood of protecting them from cancer," she said. Cancer Council Victoria director of cancer prevention Craig Sinclair welcomed the extension of the vaccine after its "terrific results" in girls since 2007. "The number of girls under 18 with high-grade abnormal pre-cancerous cells of the cervix has halved, so we know the vaccine is incredibly effective," he said. [The Sydney Morning Herald](#)

## Cambodia: Mix of pathogens caused mystery illness, doctors say

10 July - The World Health Organization, in conjunction with the Cambodian Ministry of Health, will conclude that a combination of pathogens is to blame for the mysterious illness that has claimed the lives of more than 60 children in Cambodia, medical doctors familiar with the investigation told CNN on Wednesday. The pathogens include enterovirus 71, streptococcus suis and dengue, the medical sources said. Additionally, the inappropriate use of steroids, which can suppress the immune system, worsened the illness in a majority of the patients, they said. The sources did not want to be identified because the results of the health organization's investigation have not yet been made public. Dr. Beat Richner, head of Kantha Bopha Children's Hospitals -- which cared for 66 patients affected by the illness, 64 of whom died -- said that no new patients had been seen there since last Saturday. [CNN](#)

## Samoa: Ministry of health reports increase in typhoid cases

11 July - Typhoid fever cases in Samoa have increased dramatically since April with more than one hundred cases reported to the ministry. A health consultant Leausa Dr Take Naseri says the ministry suspects a lack of food hygiene is the major cause of the outbreak recently. Dr Naseri says the ministry is looking at preventative measures such as licensing all food handlers in the country from shops to village stores, restaurants, food stalls and also mobile food sellers in villages... Dr Naseri has also confirmed the outbreak of the disease in April at Tafaigata prison has been contained. But he also adds the ministry has advised the Police Commissioner to consider medical check-ups on people facing a 3 to 6 month sentence before they begin their jail terms. He says such a policy would prevent any more outbreaks of communicable and non communicable diseases in prisons. [Radio New Zealand International](#)

[top of page...](#)

### USSOUTHCOM

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## Brazil to breed GM mosquitoes



10 July - Brazil said it will breed huge numbers of genetically modified mosquitoes to help stop the spread of dengue fever, an illness that has already struck nearly 500 000 people this year nationwide... The initiative in Brazil will produce large quantities of genetically modified male *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes, which will be released into nature to mate with females, the health ministry said. "Their offspring will not reach adulthood, which should reduce the population," it said in a statement. The new mosquitoes will be produced in a factory inaugurated on Saturday in the north-eastern Brazilian state of Bahia. Four million insects will be churned out per week. The experiment has already been attempted in two mosquito-infested towns in Bahia, each with about 3 000 inhabitants. [EIN News](#)

## Cuba reports cholera outbreak, first in over a century

10 July - Cholera has reportedly struck Cuba for the first time in 130 years, causing three deaths and at least 85 illnesses. The outbreak is centered in Manzanillo, a town of about 130,000 people located in the Granma province in eastern Cuba. Suspected, but still unconfirmed, cases appear in Caimanera, a town next to the U.S. Guantanamo Bay camp. Officials have named contaminated wells as the source of the outbreak; the contaminated wells were subsequently closed and disinfected. Heavy rains and hot temperatures may also have been factors in the spread of the disease. According to the health ministry, the outbreak has been controlled and case counts are falling. [The Disease Daily](#)

## Report - Little environmental damage from Chevron's offshore Brazil oil spill

11 July - A federal police spokesman confirmed Wednesday that investigators have found that an offshore oil spill near a Chevron well last year caused no significant environmental damage... Chevron spokesman Kurt Glaubitz said in an emailed statement that "continuous monitoring of the incident area shows no discernible environmental impact to marine life or human health. No oil has reached Brazil's coast." [Washington Post](#)

[top of page...](#)

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