

25 July 2014

# Army Public Health Weekly Update

U.S. Army Public Health Command



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

U.S. Military | Global | Influenza | Veterinary/Food Safety | Wellness | Contact Us

USAFRICOM | USCENTCOM | USEUCOM | USNORTHCOM | USPACOM | USSOUTHCOM

*Approved for public release, distribution unlimited.*

## Contents

### U.S. MILITARY

---

- Improved army rations give soldiers an edge
- Military suicides declined slightly in 2013, Pentagon says
- Soldiers' use of mental health services up, stigma down, study finds
- Study: Indirect link between combat and suicide risk
- Study: Military a refuge for those exposed to childhood abuse
- The geographic distribution of incident coccidioidomycosis among active component service members, 2000–2013
- VA chief: Agency 'playing catch-up' on women's health

### GLOBAL

---

- Antiviral group: 'Biomedical' Tx could slow HIV
- Autism linked primarily to common gene variants
- Combo cures HCV in HIV patients
- Early HIV drugs 'may not stop virus'
- GSK seeks approval for world's first malaria vaccine
- HIV health community reels from losses in Malaysia Airlines tragedy
- Scientists discover new way to make human platelets
- Small payday may up circumcision for HIV prevention
- Spark for a stagnant search
- Study profiles further resistance patterns during MDR-TB treatment
- UNICEF report on female genital mutilation holds hope and woe
- Viral therapy could boost limb-saving cancer treatment

### INFLUENZA

---

- CDC: Weekly Influenza Surveillance Report
- Naval Health Research Center: Febrile Respiratory Illness Surveillance Update
- Potential new flu drugs target immune response, not virus
- Topical adjuvant shows promise for flu vaccine in seniors

### VETERINARY/FOOD SAFETY

---

- Lithuania to slaughter 20,000 pigs as swine fever spreads
- U.S.: McDonald's, Yum can't ignore food scare reaction in U.S.

## 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.



Follow us!



Facebook



Twitter



YouTube

## Injury Prevention Survey

Common bone and muscle injuries are the #1 threat to military medical readiness. Often, these injuries occur during physical training activities or sports, and many of these injuries can be prevented. Help us learn what information Soldiers, civilians, and leaders need to help reduce these types of injuries by completing this [short survey](#).



- U.S.: Officials investigate 125 *Cyclospora* cases in 13 states
- U.S.: Final report on *E coli* lettuce outbreak notes two additional products

### WELLNESS

---

- Are these 10 trendy health foods worth the hype?
- FDA issues warning on caffeine powder
- Hoopsters put circus-inspired spin on cardio workout
- Natural-terrain schoolyards reduce children's stress, says Colorado University-Boulder study

### USAFRICOM

---

- Africa: African moms go digital for better health care
- Africa: The launch of the 'Every Newborn' action plan
- Central African Republic: Malaria is the leading killer in CAR - aid group
- Equatorial Guinea reports 5 polio cases
- Kenya to pilot community-wide malaria treatments
- Sierra Leone's top Ebola doctor gets virus
- Somalia confirms 4 new polio cases
- South Africa: Better, shorter TB treatment – thanks to SA scientists
- Tanzania arrests over Dar es Salaam body parts dump
- West Africa: Ebola virus disease, WHO update
- West Africa: UN agency warns of fruit bat risk in West African Ebola epidemic

### USCENTCOM

---

- Afghanistan: U.S. troops in Afghanistan sent waste to open burn pits, report finds
- MERS virus detected in air samples from Saudi camel barn
- Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus (MERS-CoV) – update
- Syria: Crucial need cited for continued polio vaccination efforts in Syria

### USEUCOM

---

- Germany allows seriously ill patients to grow their own cannabis
- Poland to challenge EU ban on menthol cigarettes
- United Kingdom: Life-threatening reactions to diet drug on the rise in the UK

### USNORTHCOM

---

- U.S.: Fourth rabies case discovered at Fort Hood
- U.S.: HIV diagnosis rates in U.S. on the decline
- U.S.: Human papillomavirus vaccination coverage among adolescents, 2007–2013, and postlicensure vaccine safety monitoring, 2006–2014
- U.S.: Kids may have stopped getting fatter
- U.S.: Leader of troubled lab steps down, C.D.C. says
- U.S.: Life expectancy gains threatened as more older Americans suffer from multiple medical conditions
- U.S.: Three more cases of rare human plague found in Colorado
- U.S.: Tinderbox explodes in wildfires across northwest
- U.S.: West Nile virus - Preliminary maps & data for 2014

### USPACOM

---

- China: Parts of Chinese city in quarantine after plague death
- China: Typhoon deaths rise to 151 as China reports more
- India: Brain disease kills scores in India's east
- India to investigate corruption in healthcare after TV sting operation
- Japan: No evidence of Agent Orange in barrels on Okinawa
- Myanmar: Muslims in remote Rakhine suffer worsening health crisis

## Sexual Assault Information Card

A new card that addresses sexual assault, what to do if you've been assaulted and your options for reporting the crime is now available on the [USAPHC Health Information Products eCatalog](#).



- [Philippines: Measles outbreak in Sulu, Maguindanao, Marawi](#)

### USSOUTHCOM

---

- [PAHO's chikungunya count jumps 24%, to 442,000](#)
- [Peru: Oil spill in Amazon sickens villagers, kills fish](#)

### U.S. MILITARY

---

## Improved army rations give soldiers an edge

23 July - Warfighters trekking through cold, mountainous regions or sweating through hot, dry conditions have new rations to keep them energized. Army researchers discovered that many service members were losing weight in combat situations, despite having regular access to field rations. The rough terrain and strenuous activity requires service members to consume as much as an additional thousand calories per day. A new food source is helping these troops reload on nutrients... The ration enhancement supplements the service member's daily caloric intake by providing a carefully researched offering of foods. The packets include carbohydrate-dense snacks, chewing gum and caffeinated treats. The latter are part of a caffeinated dosing strategy in combat environments to aid cognitive function. The packets are lightweight and ready-to-eat. [MHS](#)

## Military suicides declined slightly in 2013, Pentagon says

22 July - Suicides in the military dropped by 6 percent last year, a decline that Pentagon officials hope signals a reversal in a tragic trend — but that some advocates say does not reflect the true scope of the issue in the military and veterans' community. According to data published Tuesday by the Defense Department, 479 service members — 259 active-duty troops, 87 Reserve members and 133 National Guard members — died by suicide in 2013, down from 319 active-duty members and 203 non-activated Reserve and Guard members in 2012. The rate per 100,000 — a measure used to compare incidence across the services and the civilian population — also dropped for the active-duty force, from 22.7 to 18.7. The civilian rate, adjusted for demographics similar to those who serve in the military, is 18.8 per 100,000, according to calculations by the Army and the National Institutes of Mental Health. [Army Times](#)

## Soldiers' use of mental health services up, stigma down, study finds

18 July - As war raged in Iraq and Afghanistan, U.S. soldiers almost doubled their use of mental health services -- and they felt more comfortable seeking such treatment, according to new research. Even so, about two-thirds of soldiers with symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and major depression didn't seek care between 2002 and 2011, reports study author Phillip Quartana, a research psychologist at the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research in Silver Spring, Md... The proportion of soldiers who used mental

### Poster: Have You Taken 10,000 Steps Today?

A new poster that encourages taking the stairs is available on the [USAPHC Health Information Products eCatalog](#).

See all the [Performance Triad products](#).



health services in 2011 -- about 15 percent -- was almost twice the 8 percent rate reported in 2003, representing a 94 percent increase, the study found. At the same time, "we've seen a small but reliable decrease in mental health [services] stigma," Quartana said. In 2003, more than half reported feeling any stigma, and by 2011, it was about 44 percent. [Health Day](#)

## Study: Indirect link between combat and suicide risk

19 July - One of the first comprehensive efforts to explain record suicides among soldiers during and after their deployments in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan finds an indirect link between deployment, combat and self-destructive urges, according to a paper published Thursday. The two scientists who conducted the study — one of them a former Army research director — argue that high rates of depression or post-traumatic stress disorder flowing out of the combat experience can lead to suicidal behavior. The illnesses can lead to a sense of burdening others and social isolation. Add to this loss of personal relationships a familiarity with firearms, and the resulting toxic stew can drive suicides among troops and veterans. The paper published online in *Current Psychiatric Reports* surmises that this could help explain an astonishing rate of 22 veterans committing suicide each day, as estimated by the Department of Veterans Affairs. [USA Today](#)

## Study: Military a refuge for those exposed to childhood abuse

23 July - Those who have served in the military are more likely to have suffered childhood abuse or to have lived in homes where there was violence than their nonmilitary counterparts, a study says. The findings, released Wednesday by the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, suggest that the military could serve as a refuge for those seeking to escape troubled home lives. The research also could provide the military with added insight into its struggle to curb suicide in the ranks, as people who have experienced severe childhood abuse are at a higher risk of attempting suicide. Still, researchers cautioned that it is too early to draw definitive conclusions from the study, which was a secondary analysis of data from a 2010 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention survey. [Stars and Stripes](#)

## The geographic distribution of incident coccidioidomycosis among active component service members, 2000–2013

June 2014 - Coccidioidomycosis, or "Valley Fever," is an infectious illness caused by inhalation of the spores of... naturally occurring fungi found primarily in the soil of large areas of the southwestern U.S. and Central and South America... During the period between January 2000 and December 2013, there were 511 incident cases of coccidioidomycosis among active component service members. The crude annual incidence rates ranged from a low of 1.2 per 100,000 person-years (p-yrs) in 2003 to 3.8 per 100,000 p-yrs in 2006.

## Japanese Encephalitis

### Awareness Webcast: Live Broadcast

Healthcare professionals are invited to join us as we discuss the importance of protecting yourself and others against Japanese Encephalitis. We will provide information on clinical features, ACIP recommendations, and issues/challenges faced by anyone in infected areas.

- Tuesday, 29 Jul 14  
@2300 ET in support  
of PACOM OCONUS  
sites
- Wednesday, 30 Jul 14  
@1600 ET

### Registration



Twenty-two three-digit ZIP codes were associated with four or more cases of coccidioidomycosis during the surveillance period and accounted for 82.6% (n=422) of the total number of cases. Most of these cases were located within the Coccidioides-endemic area in the southwestern U.S.; however, some locations outside of the endemic area were also linked to cases (e.g., Florida, Alaska, Hawaii). [Medical Surveillance Monthly Report](#)

## VA chief: Agency 'playing catch-up' on women's health

24 July - The Department of Veterans Affairs is lagging when it comes to providing health care to women veterans, the agency's director acknowledged Thursday under questioning at a House hearing. "We are quite frankly playing catch-up," acting VA secretary Sloan Gibson said. "The growth rate of women veterans coming under VA health care radically outstrips the overall number of veterans coming under VA care. We have not historically been well-positioned to provide that care." ... The VA served 390,000 women veterans last year but an investigation published in June by the Associated Press showed one in four VA hospitals did not have a fulltime gynecologist on staff. It also showed 140 of the 920 community-based clinics in rural areas do not have a designated women's health provider... Women veterans also were more likely to be placed on waiting lists for VA appointments than men, and were more likely to be given medications that can cause birth defects than women treated outside the VA, the study found. [Las Vegas Review-Journal](#)

[top of page...](#)

## GLOBAL

---

## Antiviral group: 'Biomedical' Tx could slow HIV

21 July - Nearly all people living with HIV could be rendered noninfectious by a suite of "biomedical interventions," according to new recommendations for HIV prevention. Similarly, people at risk for HIV now have biomedical options that can reduce their risk of acquiring the disease, according to the International Antiviral Society-USA (IAS-USA). It's the first time the IAS-USA has issued recommendations for HIV prevention in clinical care settings. The new guidelines are twinned with its usual recommendations -- updated every 2 years -- for the treatment of HIV... "After more than 30 years, we are at a potential turning point in the control of the global HIV epidemic," the recommendations concluded. That's largely because control of HIV transmission no longer has to rely solely on changes in human behavior, such as using condoms or refraining from sexual activity. Instead, tools such as antiretroviral treatment (ART) and pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) can help bolster individual efforts to prevent the disease, the guidelines panel argued. [MedPage Today](#)

## Autism linked primarily to common gene variants

21 July - The main cause of autism disorders isn't environmental influences or DNA mutations but the inheritance of certain common gene variants, according to a study based

## CDC: State Indicator Report on Physical Activity, 2014

This report shows that physical activity among adults and high school students is higher in some states than others. Overall, most states have environmental and policy strategies in place that encourage physical activity.

The report can be used to illustrate how states support physical activity and identify opportunities to improve access to environmental supports such as sidewalks or walking paths for active behavior.



on data from an unprecedentedly large population sample... The latest research suggests genetics are the single greatest factor in whether someone develops the condition, accounting for about half of the cause. Crucially, though, according to the study from Swedish and American scientists, most of the genes underlying autism disorders aren't beset by rare mutations, but are common variants found in the general population... Applying statistical analyses, the study concludes that 49 per cent of someone's susceptibility for autism stems from common inherited variations in their genes, while a further three per cent is due to rare, inherited variants. A further 2.6 per cent of the risk of developing autism comes from rare and spontaneous mutations arising in a person's own DNA. [CBC News](#)

## Combo cures HCV in HIV patients

19 July - A drug combination approved to treat hepatitis C virus (HCV) delivers similar efficacy in patients who also have HIV, researchers reported. In an open-label nonrandomized trial, the combination of sofosbuvir (Sovaldi) and ribavirin yielded HCV cure rates ranging from 67% to 94%, according to Mark Sulkowski, MD, of Johns Hopkins University, and colleagues. There was no adverse effect on HIV disease or on treatment for the virus, Sulkowski and colleagues reported at the International AIDS Conference here and in the July 23/30 issue of the *Journal of the American Medical Association*. The "very exciting" findings open new doors to the treatment of co-infected patients, commented Turner Overton, MD, of the University of Alabama at Birmingham. [MedPage Today](#)

## Early HIV drugs 'may not stop virus'



21 July – A baby was thought to have been cured with treatment hours after birth, but the virus emerged years later. Monkey research, published in the journal *Nature*, suggests untouchable "viral reservoirs" form even before HIV can be detected in the blood. Experts described it as a "sobering" and "striking" finding. Reservoirs of HIV in the

gut and brain tissue are the massive obstacle in the way of a cure. [BBC](#)

## GSK seeks approval for world's first malaria vaccine

24 July - GlaxoSmithKline (GSK.L) said on Thursday it is applying for regulatory approval for the world's first vaccine against malaria, designed for children in Africa. The British drugmaker said the shot, called RTS,S, is intended exclusively for use outside the European Union but will be evaluated by the European Medicines Agency (EMA) in collaboration with the World Health Organisation (WHO). Malaria, a mosquito-borne parasitic disease, kills more than 600,000 people a year, mainly babies in the poorest parts of sub-Saharan Africa. Experts have long hoped that scientists would be able to develop an effective vaccine against the disease, and scientists at GSK have been working on this one for 30 years.

[Reuters](#)

**Public Health  
Command tracks  
new mosquito-  
borne disease**

The U.S. Army Public Health Command is responding rapidly to an emerging viral infection that is threatening the United States.

Chikungunya is spread by two species of mosquitoes that are commonly found in the U.S., according to entomologists at the U.S. Army Public Health Command, or USAPHC.

One way public health experts monitor the spread of chikungunya is by tracking reports from medical providers of the cases that occur in people. Experts also track the location of mosquitoes that carry the chikungunya virus.



## HIV health community reels from losses in Malaysia Airlines tragedy

18 July - Many members of the international HIV research community, including world-renowned Joep Lange, MD, PhD, of the Netherlands, died when Malaysia Airlines Flight 17 was shot down by a missile over Ukraine yesterday, according to media reports. The researchers were bound for the International AIDS conference in Melbourne, Australia, which begins this weekend, the *Washington Post* reported. Their plane was flying from Amsterdam to Kuala Lumpur. Also among the crash victims was Glenn Thomas, a member of the World Health Organization's (WHO's) Department of Communications, who also was on his way to the AIDS conference, WHO spokesman Gregory Hartl said in a statement today. [Scientific American](#)

## Scientists discover new way to make human platelets

21 July - Scientists report they have discovered a new way to make fully functional human platelets, which are the blood cells that form clots. Using human stem cells and a device called a bioreactor, which mimics the body's natural way of producing blood cells but on a larger scale, the researchers said their method eliminates risks and complications associated with donor blood transfusion. Those include a five-day shelf-life, contamination, rejection and infection. They added that their findings could help meet increasing global demand for donor blood... The researchers hope to begin human clinical trials in 2017. [Health Day](#)

## Small payday may up circumcision for HIV prevention

20 July - Modest economic incentives appeared to increase the chance that uncircumcised men in HIV-endemic areas would undergo circumcision within a couple of months, researchers reported here. In a study done in over 1,500 uncircumcised Kenyan men, circumcision uptake was 6.6% among those offered food vouchers worth about \$8.75 and 9% among those offered food vouchers worth about \$15 when compared with men who were given vouchers of lesser values or no vouchers at all, reported Harsha Thirumurthy, PhD, from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and colleagues. [MedPage Today](#)

## Spark for a stagnant search

21 July - ... Late on Monday, the Broad Institute, a biomedical research center, announced a \$650 million donation for psychiatric research from the Stanley Family Foundation — one of the largest private gifts ever for scientific research. It comes at a time when basic research into mental illness is sputtering, and many drug makers have all but abandoned the search for new treatments. Despite decades of costly research, experts have learned virtually nothing about the causes of psychiatric disorders and have developed no truly novel drug treatments in more than a quarter century. Broad Institute officials hope that Mr. Stanley's donation will change that, and they timed their announcement to coincide with the publication of the largest analysis to date on the genetics of schizophrenia. [New York Times](#)

## Tweet of the Week: What Beer Are You?



## 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:

<http://phc.army.smil.mil>

Look under Hot Topics & Current Issues.

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

## Study profiles further resistance patterns during MDR-TB treatment

23 July - A large, international study to assess the impact of efforts to get second-line treatment to more patients with multidrug-resistant (MDR) tuberculosis (TB) found that treating the condition increases the risk of more resistance, which could be minimized if certain steps are followed... Of those without baseline resistance to specific second-line drugs, 8.9% acquired extensively drug-resistant (XDR) TB, 11.2% acquired fluoroquinolone resistance, and 7.8% acquired resistance to second-line injectable drugs. However, the risk of acquiring resistance was lower at [Green Light Committee (GLC)] approved sites. Investigators noted that the findings have important policy implications for programs scaling up services for MDR-TB. For example, they said drug-susceptibility testing should be repeated during treatment and that use of new drugs in regimens without at least two or three other highly effective drugs will contribute to rapidly developing resistance to the new drug. In an accompany editorial in the same issue, two US experts wrote that there are a number of reasons why MDR-TB patients may develop additional resistance, including variation in drug quality. [CIDRAP News Scan](#) (second item)

## UNICEF report on female genital mutilation holds hope and woe

24 July - Women and girls are less likely to undergo female genital mutilation, or FGM, than 30 years ago. That's the encouraging news from a UNICEF report on the controversial practice, presented this week at London's first Girl Summit. The rate has dropped in many of the 29 countries across Africa and the Middle East where FGM is practiced. In Kenya, for example, nearly half the girls age 15 to 19 were circumcised in 1980; in 2010 the rate was just under 20 percent. But there's a sobering side to the report. In countries like Somalia the rate has gone down slightly but is still over 90 percent. And because the population is growing in parts of the world where the practice takes place, total numbers are on the rise. Unless the rate of decline picks up, another 63 million girls and women could be cut by 2050. [NPR](#)

## Viral therapy could boost limb-saving cancer treatment

22 July – Viruses designed to target and kill cancer cells could boost the effectiveness of chemotherapy to the arms and legs and help avoid amputation, a new study reports. Scientists at The Institute of Cancer Research, London, tested the effectiveness of a genetically engineered version of the virus used to vaccinate against smallpox. They found use of the virus alongside isolated limb perfusion chemotherapy – given directly to blood vessels supplying the affected arm or leg as an alternative to amputation – was more effective in rats than either treatment on its own. [EurekAlert](#)

[top of page...](#)

## Links

[A-Z Index](#)

[About USAPHC](#)

[Army Public Health and Health Information Weekly Update Archives](#)

[Medical Surveillance Monthly Report](#)

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

[Request USAPHC Services](#)

[USAPHC Library](#)

[USAPHC Homepage](#)

[USAPHC Training](#)

[Contact USAPHC](#)

## INFLUENZA

---

### CDC: Weekly Influenza Surveillance Report

During week 28 (ending July 12, 2014), 5.3 % 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 6.2% for week 28. [FluView](#)

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

For the week ending 19 July 2014:

- Influenza: No new cases of NHRC laboratory-confirmed influenza among US military basic trainees.
- FRI surveillance at all eight U.S. military basic training centers indicated FRI rates were at or below expected values. [NHRC Febrile Respiratory Illness Surveillance Update](#)

### Potential new flu drugs target immune response, not virus

21 July – The seriousness of disease often results from the strength of immune response, rather than with the virus, itself. Turning down that response, rather than attacking the virus, might be a better way to reduce that severity, says Juliet Morrison of the University of Washington, Seattle. She and her collaborators have now taken the first step in doing just that for the H7N9 influenza, and their work has already led to identification of six potential therapeutics for this highly virulent strain. The research is published ahead of print in the Journal of Virology. "We set out to characterize the response to the severe disease-causing H7N9 virus and compare it to responses elicited by other serious flu viruses in a mouse model of infection," says Morrison. That work involved determining which genes are turned on by this infection. [EurekAlert](#)

### Topical adjuvant shows promise for flu vaccine in seniors

22 July - Using imiquimod as a topical adjuvant appears to boost the effect of intradermal flu vaccination in older people with underlying medical conditions, according to a study from Hong Kong researchers yesterday in Clinical Infectious Diseases...The prospective, double-blind randomized control trial was conducted in 2012 and followed 91 adults, average age 73. They received one of three vaccinations: topical imiquimod ointment followed by intradermal trivalent influenza vaccine (TIV), a topical aqueous cream followed by intradermal TIV, and a topical aqueous cream followed by intramuscular TIV... By day 7, 27 of 30 patients (90%) who received imiquimod with the intradermal vaccine seroconverted against the H1N1 strain, compared with 4 of 30 (13%) who received the aqueous cream and intramuscular vaccine and 12 of 31 (39%) who received the aqueous cream plus the intradermal vaccine. [CIDRAP Flu Scan](#) (second item)

[top of page...](#)

## Lithuania to slaughter 20,000 pigs as swine fever spreads

24 July - ...Lithuanian authorities on Thursday ordered the slaughter of 19,400 pigs at one of the country's largest farms as an outbreak of African swine fever (ASF) in the region spread. It was first case of ASF to be found in farm pigs in the Baltic country, Chief Veterinary Officer Jonas Milius said, amid an outbreak in which cases have appeared in neighboring countries... Latvia, which has also found cases, has suspended imports of Lithuanian raw pork and pork meat products. Poland has also reported ASF cases at farm pigs near its border with Belarus. [Reuters](#)

## U.S.: McDonald's, Yum can't ignore food scare reaction in U.S.

21 July - ...On Monday, both McDonald's and Yum Brands said they had stopped buying meat products from Hushi Food, a supplier in Shanghai, even as Chinese authorities continue to investigate allegations that beef and chicken were sold past the expiration date. Hushi is owned by OSI Group of Aurora, Ill. The Shanghai TV station Dragon TV reported on Sunday that Hushi had repackaged old beef and chicken and put new dates on the meat sold to McDonald's, KFC and Pizza Hut restaurants. No illnesses were immediately reported. Food-safety experts interviewed by USA TODAY say while it's certainly possible for U.S. suppliers to rejigger the dates on expired meats, it's much less likely to happen here because of better government oversight, better supplier reliability and because of the serious concerns that the major fast-food brands in the U.S. share over food safety. But one thing is certain both in the U.S. and internationally: the fast-food giants are increasingly dependent on the integrity of their suppliers. [USA Today](#)

## U.S.: Officials investigate 125 Cyclospora cases in 13 states

23 July - Federal health officials have joined with officials in 13 states to investigate a spike in *Cyclospora* illnesses, with 125 confirmed or probable cases reported and no specific food item implicated so far, the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) said today. Texas health officials have been investigating a recent surge of infections, and an outbreak investigation is underway in Maine, with Massachusetts also probing an increase in lab-confirmed cyclosporiasis cases, the CDC said in an e-mail to CIDRAP News. As of today, it said, those 3 states, 10 others, and New York City have reported cases. The other states are Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Maryland, Montana, New Jersey, New York, Oregon, and Tennessee. [CIDRAP](#)

## U.S.: Final report on *E coli* lettuce outbreak notes two additional products

22 July - The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) yesterday released a final report on a 2013 *Escherichia coli* outbreak traced to pre-packaged salads sold at Trader Joe's stores that sickened 33 people in four states, Food Safety News (FSN) reported today. The report contains new information, including two previously unreported salad products linked to the outbreak: one produced by Glass Onion for Walgreens, and one made by an unnamed Oakland, Calif., company... All four salads contained romaine lettuce harvested and shipped by Ratto Bros. of Modesto, Calif., and grown by Lake Bottom Farms LLC... The investigators could not pinpoint how the salads became contaminated, FSN reported. Since the inspection, according to the report, Ratto Bros. has implemented new and improved procedures to lower the risk of future contamination. [CIDRAP News Scan](#) (first item)

[top of page...](#)

### WELLNESS

---

## Are these 10 trendy health foods worth the hype?



23 July - Whether via your Facebook news feed, the juice store around the corner, or even in articles about healthy living, chances are you've heard of buzzword-y health foods like acai, spirulina and wheatgrass. You know these foods are healthy. But have you ever stopped to think about why they are -- and whether it's worth shelling out the extra cash for them? We talked to Keri Gans, R.D., author of "The Small Change Diet," to walk us through some of the more trendy health foods to explain what they are exactly, why we eat them, and whether they're actually worth the hype. [Huffington Post](#)

## FDA issues warning on caffeine powder

21 July - The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has issued a warning on powdered caffeine products that companies market directly to consumers. The powder, often sold in bulk, is nearly 100 percent pure caffeine. Even small amount of the stimulant can cause a lethal overdose. Just one teaspoon of caffeine powder is equal to drinking approximately 25 cups of coffee, the FDA said. Caffeine powder is easily purchased on websites that sell vitamins and supplements, as well as on eBay and even Etsy. Because this product is unregulated,

health officials point out it's impossible to know what dose of caffeine you're consuming, even if you measure the powder carefully. Symptoms of caffeine toxicity include rapid and erratic heartbeat, seizures, vomiting, diarrhea, disorientation. [CBS News](#)

## Hoopsters put circus-inspired spin on cardio workout

21 July – It has been a circus prop, a toy and a 1950s fad, and now the hula hoop is making a comeback as a workout tool that fitness experts say provides an effective cardio and even meditative workout. A new generation of hoop activists is putting another spin on the hoop, which ancient Greeks fashioned from grapevines and used to exercise the hips. [Reuters](#)

## Natural-terrain schoolyards reduce children's stress, says Colorado University-Boulder study

22 July – Playing in schoolyards that feature natural habitats and trees and not just asphalt and recreation equipment reduces children's stress and inattention, according to a University of Colorado Boulder study. Working on class assignments or gardening in such settings also provide stress-reducing benefits for youth, according to a paper published in the journal *Health & Place*. The study is one of the first of its kind to focus on the relationship between student access to green settings and stress. [EurekAlert](#)

[top of page...](#)

### **USAFRICOM**

---

## Africa: African moms go digital for better health care

21 July – A new initiative that aims to improve maternal and child health and nutrition in sub-Saharan Africa is being launched in September 2014 using digital technology. Gemalto, a digital security company, is partnering with the mobile telecommunications association called Groupe Speciale Mobile Association (GSMA)... Local healthcare workers will obtain vital information from mothers and mothers-to-be in each of seven targeted countries and register them for the long-term project. The moms will then receive nutrition and healthcare support through mobile technology, a service that will be provided with no cost to them. [allAfrica](#)

## Africa: The launch of the 'Every Newborn' action plan

22 July – The 3rd WHO/PMNCH... has witnessed the launch of the Every Newborn Action Plan. [The] strategic document if and when implemented by countries will see tremendous progress in saving the lives of many newborns... "Every day, 15,000 babies are born and die without ever receiving a piece of paper. The lack of recording reflects the world's acceptance that these deaths are inevitable. This fatalism, lack of attention, and lack of

investment are the reasons behind lagging progress in reducing newborn deaths - and even slower for progress in reducing stillbirths. In reality, these deaths are nearly all preventable," said Professor Lawn of the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine and senior health advisor to Save the Children. [allAfrica](#)

## Central African Republic: Malaria is the leading killer in CAR - aid group

24 July - As a recent ceasefire deal boosts prospects for peace in Central African Republic, a key medical aid group warned on Thursday that malaria was the leading killer in the impoverished landlocked country. Malaria, a life-threatening disease transmitted to people via mosquitoes, kills more than half million people a year, mainly infants in the poorest parts of sub-Saharan Africa. Medecins Sans Frontieres (Doctors Without Borders) said it had seen a jump in cases in Central African Republic, where violence between Christian militia and Muslim rebels has killed thousands of people and forced a million from their homes. An MSF report found that malaria cases in Bossangoa, about 190 miles (300 km) north of the capital Bangui, had more than tripled to 6,507 in May with almost two-thirds of those children under the age of five. [Reuters](#)

## Equatorial Guinea reports 5 polio cases

18 July - Equatorial Guinea has reported five recent infections with wild poliovirus type 1 (WPV1), the WHO reported yesterday. The patients had an onset of paralysis ranging from Jan 28 to May 3. Genetic sequencing indicates that the cases are connected to an ongoing outbreak in neighboring Cameroon. [CIDRAP News Scan](#) (fourth item)

## Kenya to pilot community-wide malaria treatments



18 July – Kenya is experimenting with unconventional methods to tackle high malaria rates through the piloting of mass drug administration (MDA) - treating entire communities with anti-malarial drugs, regardless of whether they have the parasite... MDA has been considered a malaria control mechanism for over a

century, with studies on MDA usage dating back to 1914. But more recently, with the availability of transmission-reducing antimalarials, scientists are beginning to refocus on the possibility of using mass treatment to eradicate the disease in areas where other methods have been unable to have a large impact. [IRIN](#)

## Sierra Leone's top Ebola doctor gets virus

24 July - The head doctor fighting the deadly tropical virus Ebola in Sierra Leone has himself caught the disease, the president's office said, as the West African outbreak claimed more victims. Sheik Umar Khan, a Sierra Leonean virologist credited with treating more than 100 Ebola victims, has been receiving treatment at a ward run by medical charity Doctors

Without Borders, a source at the ward told the Reuters news agency on Wednesday. The 39-year-old, hailed as a "national hero" by the health ministry, was leading the fight to control an outbreak that has killed 206 people in the West African country. Health Minister Miatta Kargbo called Khan a national hero and said she would "do anything and everything in my power to ensure he survives". It was not immediately clear how Khan had caught the virus. His colleagues told Reuters that he was always meticulous with protection, wearing overalls, mask, gloves and special footwear. [Al Jazeera](#)

## Somalia confirms 4 new polio cases

22 July - Somalia has confirmed 4 new polio cases so far this year, in its remote Jariban district in Mudug region in the country's northeast, the World Health Organization (WHO) Eastern Mediterranean Regional Office (EMRO) said today. The 2014 infections bring the total number of cases to 198 since an outbreak was confirmed in the country in May 2013. Somalia's health ministry, with WHO support, carried out case investigations and outbreak response in the affected region. [CIDRAP News Scan](#) (second item)

## South Africa: Better, shorter TB treatment – thanks to SA scientists

22 July – South African scientists may be en route to developing shorter, better tuberculosis (TB) treatment, according to research released at the International AIDS Conference in Melbourne, Australia. Researchers from the universities of Cape Town, Stellenbosch and the Free State were part of the international team that recently discovered that a new combination of drugs was able to kill more TB bacteria more quickly than standard treatment. The results come after an eight-week trial involving about 200 TB patients from South Africa and Tanzania. Patients either received standard TB treatment - or a novel combination of drugs including the new anti-TB drug PA-824, as well as moxifloxacin and pyrazinamide... [About] 70 percent of patients on the new drug combination showed no sign of TB in sputum samples after two months in comparison to only 50 percent of those patients on standard TB treatment. [allAfrica](#)

## Tanzania arrests over Dar es Salaam body parts dump

22 July - Eight people from a Tanzanian medical institute have been arrested after 85 bags containing body parts were found in the port city of Dar es Salaam. A police officer told the BBC that human limbs, fingers, ribs and skulls were in the bags, discovered in a landfill site in the Bunju suburb. Some of the bags contained surgical instruments and used disposable gloves... Dar es Salaam police chief Suleiman Kova said those arrested have links to the city's Institute of Medical and Training University (IMTU). [BBC News](#)

## West Africa: Ebola virus disease, WHO update

24 July - ...New cases and deaths attributable to EVD continue to be reported by the Ministries of Health in the three West African countries of Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone. Between 18 – 20 July 2014, 45 new cases of EVD, including 28 new deaths, were reported

from the three countries as follows: Guinea, 5 new cases and 4 deaths; Liberia, 28 new cases with 11 deaths; and Sierra Leone 12 new cases and 13 deaths. These numbers include laboratory-confirmed, probable, and suspect cases and deaths of EVD. As of 20 July 2014, the cumulative number of cases attributed to EVD in the three countries stands at 1 093, including 660 deaths. [WHO](#)

## West Africa: UN agency warns of fruit bat risk in West African Ebola epidemic

21 July – The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) is urging increased efforts to improve awareness among rural communities in West Africa about the risks of contracting the Ebola virus from eating certain wildlife species, including fruit bats. “We are not suggesting that people stop hunting altogether, which isn’t realistic,” said FAO Chief Veterinary Officer Juan Lubroth in a statement released by the Rome-based agency today. “But communities need clear advice on the need not to touch dead animals or to sell or eat the meat of any animal that they find already dead. They should also avoid hunting animals that are sick or behaving strangely, as this is another red flag.” ...The Ebola virus is transmitted by direct contact with the blood and body of infected people and animals. And fruit bats – usually eaten dried or in a spicy soup – are thought to be the most likely reservoir species for the virus. They can carry Ebola without developing clinical signs and should be avoided altogether, according to FAO. [UN News Centre](#)

[top of page...](#)

### USCENTCOM

---

## Afghanistan: U.S. troops in Afghanistan sent waste to open burn pits, report finds



21 July - Although the U.S. has spent millions to build incinerators in Afghanistan to avoid exposing anyone to toxic smoke from open burning, American troops sent waste to an Afghan-operated open pit for five months last year, according to an inspector general’s report issued late Monday. The Afghans continued to burn their own dangerous waste -- including batteries, tires and plastic -- in the pit because they didn’t want to spend money on fuel to run new, U.S.-provided incinerators, which stood unused behind a locked gate, the report found. The Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction’s report said the incidents violate a 2010 Pentagon prohibition against using such pits except in extraordinary circumstances. U.S. forces did not notify Congress, as required, to seek an exemption from the ban, the report said... U.S. forces at

Shindand Airbase in western Afghanistan sent waste to the Afghan burn pit until June of last year, Sopko said, and Afghan forces continued to burn waste in the pit until October. [Los Angeles Times](#)

## MERS virus detected in air samples from Saudi camel barn

22 July - Saudi scientists have found gene fragments of the deadly Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) virus in air from a barn housing an infected camel and say this suggests the disease may be transmitted through the air...Scientists are not sure of the origin of the virus, but several studies have linked it to camels and some experts think it is being passed to humans through close physical contact or through the consumption of camel meat or camel milk. However, in this latest study, published in the online journal of the American Society for Microbiology mBio, scientists said the detection of the virus in air samples was concerning and needed to be followed up. [Reuters](#)

## Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus (MERS-CoV) – update

23 July - On 12 July 2014, the National IHR Focal Point of the Islamic Republic of Iran reported to WHO an additional laboratory-confirmed case of infection with Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus (MERS-CoV)... Globally, 837 laboratory-confirmed cases of infection with MERS-CoV including at least 291 related deaths have officially been reported to WHO. [WHO](#)

## Syria: Crucial need cited for continued polio vaccination efforts in Syria

23 July - Polio cases in war-torn Syria, which hadn't seen a case since 1999 until the conflict began there 3 years ago, continue to mount and without continued and effective vaccination campaigns will only add to what is already a "humanitarian disaster," says a story from the United Nations (UN) yesterday. Vaccination coverage in Syria has dropped from an average of 99% to 52% since the war began, says the story, and Syria's health infrastructure has been severely damaged... The UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Health Organization (WHO) have completed the first phase of the largest vaccine campaign in the history of the Middle East, reaching 25 million children under age 5 in seven countries. However, more than 750,000 Syrian children reside in unreachable areas, says the story. [CIDRAP News Scan](#) (third item)

[top of page...](#)

## Germany allows seriously ill patients to grow their own cannabis

22 July – A German court ruled on Tuesday that some people suffering from chronic pain should be able to cultivate their own cannabis "for therapeutic purposes". Five people suffering from chronic pain brought the complaint to a court in Cologne after Germany's Federal Institute for Drugs and Medical Devices (BfArM) refused them permission to grow the plant at home. The court said the BfArM had to reconsider three of the requests that it had rejected. While the plaintiffs all had permits to buy and consume cannabis for therapeutic purposes, they wanted to cultivate their own because they could not afford to purchase the drug and their health insurance did not cover it. [Reuters](#)

## Poland to challenge EU ban on menthol cigarettes

21 July - Poland will appeal to Europe's top court over a European Union ban on flavored tobacco products, saying it will be unfairly affected as one of the region's biggest consumers and producers of menthol cigarettes. The ban is a part of EU-wide anti-smoking legislation, due to be implemented in 2016, which also includes tougher rules on packaging and marketing. Polish Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Economy Janusz Piechocinski has said that menthol-flavored cigarettes should be considered a traditional product - not unlike the Swedish "snus", powdered tobacco placed under the lip – and therefore exempt from the directive. According to the World Lung Foundation, Poland remains one of the EU's heavy-smoking nations, with annual consumption of 1,586 cigarettes per capita - twice as large as Britain's. [Reuters](#)

## United Kingdom: Life-threatening reactions to diet drug on the rise in the UK

18 July - Use of a diet drug known as DNP has been linked to five deaths in the UK since 2007, according to a new report. The compound, also known as 2,4-Dinitrophenol, is a synthetic chemical originally used in the manufacturing of dyes, wood preservatives, explosives and pesticides. DNP was developed as a weight-loss drug in the 1930s before being banned in the U.S. in 1938 after reports of severe toxic reactions, researchers note. Still, the compound remains in use, sold online in bulk powder. "DNP is a so called 'fat burning' product used by body builders and as a weight loss aid - it prevents energy being stored as fat, but instead this is released as heat," senior author Dr. Simon Thomas told Reuters Health in an email. "The effect is an increase in body temperature and this can damage the body's cells, e.g. in muscle, kidney and brain." [Reuters](#)

[top of page...](#)

## U.S.: Fourth rabies case discovered at Fort Hood

18 July - A rabid bat was reported found on post, officials said. The Fort Hood Veterinary Center was notified Thursday that the bat was found near the Directorate of Public Works motorpool, Building 4001, and tested positive for rabies. This is the fourth identified rabies case at Fort Hood since May. Positively tested animals include a skunk, cat and fox found throughout the post. Public Health Command and the veterinary center said officials strongly urge all soldiers, civilians, contractors and residents to be aware and avoid handling wild or stray animals. [Killeen Daily Herald](#)

## U.S.: HIV diagnosis rates in U.S. on the decline

20 July - The U.S. annual rate of HIV diagnoses fell by more than 30% over a 10-year period, researchers reported. On average, the estimated percentage change year over year was 4% during the period 2002 through 2011, according to Anna Satcher Johnson, MPH, of the CDC in Atlanta, and colleagues. But while the rate fell significantly for most groups, it rose for some men who have sex with men, Johnson and colleagues reported here at the International AIDS Conference and in a research letter in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*. In particular, men, ages 13 through 24, who have sex with men saw the rate of diagnoses rise over the 10-year period, as did those 45 through 54 and those 55 and older... Both men and women saw the rates decline -- from 35.8 to 26.1 per 100,000 and from 13.0 to 6.6 per 100,000, respectively. The percentage changes were a drop of 27.1% for men and 49.2% for women, with respective annual changes of minus 3.1% and minus 6.6%. With the exception of those ages 13 through 24, the rate of diagnosis fell for all age groups. [MedPage Today](#)

## U.S.: Human papillomavirus vaccination coverage among adolescents, 2007–2013, and postlicensure vaccine safety monitoring, 2006–2014

25 July - ... After a year of unchanging HPV vaccination coverage among adolescent girls, results from the 2013 [National Immunization Survey]-Teen show a modest increase in coverage; however, coverage levels remain low. From 2012 to 2013, the percentage of adolescents receiving  $\geq 1$  dose of HPV vaccine increased 3.5 percentage points for girls and 13.8 percentage points for boys. A cohort analysis also was performed to evaluate receipt of  $\geq 1$  dose of HPV vaccine by age 13 years over time and found an increase since 2007; however, missed vaccination opportunities persist. Had HPV vaccine been administered during health care visits when another vaccine was administered, vaccination coverage for  $\geq 1$  dose could have reached 91.3% by age 13 years for adolescent girls born in 2000. [Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report](#)

## U.S.: Kids may have stopped getting fatter

21 July - The waistlines of America's children and teens may have stopped expanding, a new study indicates. The proportion of kids aged 2 to 18 who were classified as obese, based on their waist size, held steady at nearly 18 percent from 2003 to 2012, researchers report... Abdominal obesity fell significantly among children aged 2 to 5 years during that time frame, the study found. But one-third of kids aged 6 to 18 years remain abdominally obese -- "too many," Steffen said. "We shouldn't have chubby kids or chubby adults either." Steffen credits the leveling off of childhood obesity largely to healthier school breakfasts and lunches and the removal of soda and candy from schools. Many vending machines now offer healthier alternatives. [CBS News](#)

## U.S.: Leader of troubled lab steps down, C.D.C. says

23 July - The leader of the federal bioterrorism lab in which careless procedures may have exposed dozens of workers to live anthrax has resigned, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention announced Wednesday. Michael Farrell, who had led the Bioterror Rapid Response and Advanced Technology Laboratory since 2009, "voluntarily resigned" on Tuesday, said Thomas Skinner, a C.D.C. spokesman... The lab's management has been under scrutiny. Dr. Thomas R. Frieden, the director of the C.D.C., and Dr. Michael Bell, who is leading the agency's investigation into the anthrax incident and another in a different lab involving a sample contaminated with the lethal H5N1 flu, said in an interview last week that they were looking closely at how the bioterrorism lab was run. It handles many pathogens with bioweapons potential. [New York Times](#)

## U.S.: Life expectancy gains threatened as more older Americans suffer from multiple medical conditions

23 July - With nearly four in five older Americans living with multiple chronic medical conditions, a new study by researchers at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health finds that the more ailments you have after retirement age, the shorter your life expectancy. The analysis, one of the first to examine the burden of multiple chronic conditions on life expectancy among the elderly, may help explain why increases in life expectancy among older Americans are slowing... The analysis found that, on average, a 75-year-old American woman with no chronic conditions will live 17.3 additional years (that's to more than 92 years old). But a 75-year-old woman with five chronic conditions will only live, on average, to the age of 87, and a 75-year-old woman with 10 or more chronic conditions will only live to the age of 80. [Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Health News](#)

## U.S.: Three more cases of rare human plague found in Colorado

18 July - Three more people in Colorado have been diagnosed with the plague after coming in contact with an infected dog whose owner contracted a life-threatening form of the disease, state health officials said on Friday. In all, four people were infected with the

disease from the same source, the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment said in a statement. Last week the department said a man in an eastern Colorado county whose dog died of the plague had been diagnosed with pneumonic plague, a rare and serious form of the disease. [Reuters](#)

## U.S.: Tinderbox explodes in wildfires across northwest



21 July - A cool, wet spring that drew out luxuriant growth in parts of the Pacific Northwest, followed by a ferociously hot and dry early summer, has created a fire-season tinderbox across the Pacific Northwest that exploded over the past week with dozens of wildfires burning hundreds of thousands of acres and forcing thousands of residents from

their homes. More than 3,500 people, including fire crews from all over the country and National Guard troops in Washington and Oregon, have been battling the fires. Spreading mostly across sparsely populated areas, the fires have a vast scope: Less than a week into the typical three-month fire season in Washington and Oregon, the total area of scorched ground is already higher than in any full year in at least a decade. [New York Times](#)

## U.S.: West Nile virus - Preliminary maps & data for 2014

22 July - A total of 30 states have reported West Nile virus infections in people, birds, or mosquitoes. Thirty-five cases of West Nile virus disease in people have been reported to CDC. Of these, 16 (46%) were classified as neuroinvasive disease (such as meningitis or encephalitis) and 19 (54%) were classified as non-neuroinvasive disease. [CDC](#)

[top of page...](#)

### USPACOM

---

## China: Parts of Chinese city in quarantine after plague death

22 July – China has sealed off parts of its northwestern city of Yumen after a resident died of bubonic plague last week, state media reported on Tuesday. A 38-year-old victim was infected by a marmot, a wild rodent, and died on July 16. Several districts of the city of about 100,000 people in Gansu province were subsequently turned into special quarantine zones, Xinhua said. It said 151 people who came into direct contact with the victim were also placed in quarantine. None have so far shown any signs of infection, the news agency said. [Reuters](#)

## China: Typhoon deaths rise to 151 as China reports more

22 July - The death toll from the strongest typhoon to hit China's south in decades was raised to 46 on Tuesday, increasing the overall toll to 151 people dead in three countries just before a second storm approaches land. The Civil Affairs Ministry said 25 other people were still missing after Typhoon Rammasun made landfall Friday. The storm brought hail and heavy rains and destroyed tens of thousands of homes, damaged roads and ports and cut electricity and water supplies in southern Chinese cities. It was the strongest typhoon to hit southern China in 41 years, with wind speeds reaching 216 kilometers per hour (130 mph), according to the China Meteorological Administration. It also caused 94 deaths in the Philippines earlier last week and at least 11 in Vietnam over the weekend. Another typhoon, Matmo, packing sustained winds of 139 kph (85 mph) was approaching Taiwan and forecast to hit its east-central coast Wednesday morning. [MSN Weather](#)

## India: Brain disease kills scores in India's east

22 July - An outbreak of encephalitis has killed 60 people in two weeks in the eastern Indian state of West Bengal, a top health official has said, calling the situation "alarming". Hundreds of mainly children die across India each year from the mosquito-borne virus, but West Bengal is not normally one of the worst-hit states... West Bengal health services director Biswaranjan Satpathy said late on Monday there had been a sudden rise in cases and deaths between July 7 and 20... India's most populous states of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar further north are ravaged by encephalitis every year as mainly malnourished children succumb to the disease. [Al Jazeera](#)

## India to investigate corruption in healthcare after TV sting operation

22 July - India has ordered an investigation into doctors and laboratories suspected of offering kickbacks for referring patients for medical tests, following a sting operation by a TV news channel. Hindi news channel News Nation TV showed laboratories in the national capital offering commissions as high as 50 percent to doctors who referred patients to their diagnostic centers. The diagnostic market is the fastest growing segment of India's \$74 billion healthcare industry, according to consultancy PwC, with the segment forecast to grow to \$17 billion by 2021 from \$3.4 billion in 2011. Newly appointed Health Minister Harsh Vardhan has vowed to clean up the health system, which he says is riddled with corruption, a problem that pervades public life in India. [Reuters](#)

## Japan: No evidence of Agent Orange in barrels on Okinawa



24 July - There is no evidence that dozens of empty chemical drums, unearthed last year on former U.S. military property, contained the toxic defoliant Agent Orange, according to a Japanese government report. The Okinawa Defense Bureau of the Ministry of Defense tested the final 61 of 83 barrels that were

unearthed from land adjacent to the Kadena Air Base fence line. While it found they contained ingredients used in Agent Orange, they were of the incorrect consistency and quantities, leading officials to believe they were to be used as a common herbicide. The defense bureau also reiterated that it was unlikely that the barrels were a health risk. Tests have shown the air and water, on and off base, are safe. [Stars and Stripes](#)

## Myanmar: Muslims in remote Rakhine suffer worsening health crisis

24 July - Since international aid groups were forced out of the area in February and March, members of the minority Muslim Rohingya community who relied on them say basic health care services have all but disappeared. Worst affected are those in Northern Rakhine State (NRS), home to most of Myanmar's 1.3 million Rohingya who are stalked by sickness and malnourishment and as yet untouched by reforms under a semi-civilian government which took power in 2011. [Reuters](#)

## Philippines: Measles outbreak in Sulu, Maguindanao, Marawi

23 July - A measles outbreak has been declared in Sulu, Maguindanao, and Marawi, according to Department of Health - Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (DOH-ARMM) Secretary Dr. Jojo Sinolinding. Sinolinding told ABS-CBN News the declaration of the outbreak is due to the high numbers of confirmed cases and fatalities in the areas. According to the data shared by DOH-ARMM, Maguindanao has the highest number of cases with 8 fatalities. Next is Sulu with 90 cases with 5 deaths. Basilan, excluding Isabela City, also has 24 cases but with no fatality. Sinolinding encouraged all health officials to be on alert and to undertake all necessary measures to manage the situation. [ABS-CBN News](#)

[top of page...](#)

### USSOUTHCOM

---

## PAHO's chikungunya count jumps 24%, to 442,000

21 July - Chikungunya cases in the Americas increased last week by a dramatic 24%, to 442,310, with the Dominican Republic accounting for most of the new illnesses, according to the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO). Guadeloupe, Haiti, and Martinique each contributed thousands of new cases to the total as well, PAHO said in its Jul 18 update on the epidemic, which began on St. Martin last December. [CIDRAP](#)

## Peru: Oil spill in Amazon sickens villagers, kills fish

23 July - ...This rupture of Peru's 39-year-old northern crude oil pipeline has terrified Kukama villagers along the Marañón River. People's complaints of nausea and skin rashes

are aggravated by nervousness about eating the fish, concerns about their lost income and fear that oil will spread throughout the tropical forest and lakes when seasonal flooding begins in November. Cuninico, a village of wooden, stilt-raised, palm-thatched houses, is home to about 130 families but several hundred families in other communities also fish nearby. Three weeks after they discovered the spill, the villagers still have more questions than answers about the impacts. "It sounds like an environmental debacle for the people and the ecosystem," said David Abramson, deputy director of the National Center of Disaster Preparedness at Columbia University's Earth Institute in New York. "There is a need for public health and environmental monitoring at a minimum of four levels – water, fish, vegetation and the population," he said... Government officials have not officially announced how much crude oil spilled. However, in a radio interview, Energy and Mines Minister Eleodoro Mayorga mentioned 2,000 barrels, which is 84,000 gallons. [Scientific American](#)

[top of page...](#)

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

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

The *Army Public Health Weekly Update* does not analyze the information as to its strategic or tactical impact on the US 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 this Web site 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 Health Information Operations avoids 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.

Articles appearing in the Update do not necessarily represent US Army Medical Department opinions/views, policy, or guidance, and should not be construed or interpreted as being endorsed by the US Army Medical Department.

The *Army Public Health Weekly Update* is published by the Health Information Operations Program, Deputy Chief of Staff for Communication, United States Army Public Health Command.

