

30 August 2013

Army Public Health Weekly Update

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**Investigational Drug
Available Directly
from CDC for the
Treatment of Free-
Living Ameba
Infections**

CDC now has an expanded access investigational new drug (IND) protocol in effect with the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to make miltefosine available directly from CDC to clinicians for treatment of free-living ameba (FLA) infections in the United States.



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U.S. MILITARY

Malingering and factitious disorders and illnesses, active component, U.S. Armed Forces, 1998-2012

July 2013 - ...During the 15-year surveillance period, 5,311 service members had at least one health care encounter during which a provider recorded a diagnosis of malingering or factitious illness in the first diagnostic position of the administrative record of the encounter. Over 80 percent of the subject service members had only one such encounter and most (83.9%) of the diagnoses were for malingering. There were higher (unadjusted) rates of these diagnoses among recruit trainees, those under age 20, and junior enlisted service members. Trends in these diagnoses during the surveillance period and the small

Hurricane Sandy Rebuilding Strategy

President Obama signed an Executive Order on December 7, 2012 creating the Hurricane Sandy Rebuilding Task Force. The President charged the Task Force with identifying and working to remove obstacles to resilient rebuilding while taking into account existing and future risks and promoting the long-term sustainability of communities and ecosystems in the Sandy-affected region.

In recognition of the increased risk the region and the nation face from extreme weather events, the Rebuilding Strategy includes recommendations that, if implemented, will improve our ability to withstand and recover effectively from future flood-related disasters.



numbers of diagnoses made during deployment do not suggest a discernible correlation between malingering and factitious illness and deployment to combat theater. [Medical Surveillance Monthly Report](#)

Military civilian medical workers quit after furloughs

28 August - Nearly 3,400 military medical workers quit this year in the months when furloughs were threatened or being carried out because of spending cuts known as sequestration. The vast majority of those losses were with Army medical facilities. Lt. Gen. Patricia Horoho, the Army's surgeon general, says one out of 20 of her civilian medical doctors, nurses and other health workers -- or 2,700 out of 42,000 civilian health employees -- left their jobs for work elsewhere. She said departing staffers included highly skilled clinicians, scientists, researchers and other health workers. Eighteen percent were doctors and nurses, her staff says. Medical support assistants, dental assistants, medical records technicians and administrative support personnel also quit or retired. Many of those leaving went to work for the Department of Veterans Affairs which was not included in the budget cuts, Horoho says. [USA Today](#)

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GLOBAL

Global MERS count tops 100 with latest from Saudi Arabia

23 August - In a brief statement, Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Health (MOH) has reported three more cases of Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus (MERS-CoV), apparently pushing the global case count over 100. The agency said two of the cases involve a 31-year-old male citizen who has several chronic diseases and is in stable condition in intensive care, and a 55-year-old male citizen who has no symptoms. The older man had contact with a confirmed case-patient. Both cases are in the Asir province in the country's southwest. In addition, the ministry said a 51-year-old man in Riyadh who had chronic illnesses has died of a coronavirus infection, but it didn't specify whether or not his case was reported previously... The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) today updated its MERS-CoV page to reflect the new Saudi cases. [CIDRAP](#)

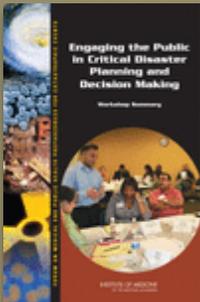
Kidney donor may have passed on skin cancer

27 August - A case report provides the "first convincing evidence" for a direct donor contribution to a kidney recipient's skin squamous cell carcinoma. Skin tumor cells with the donor genotype were found in the kidney recipient, reported Anne Janin, MD, PhD, of the University Caen Basse Normandie in Caen, France, and colleagues. They also found that the patient "harbored a TP53 mutation on codon 175," which is associated with an increased risk of invasive skin squamous cell carcinoma (SCC) in kidney transplant recipients,

Engaging the Public in Critical Disaster Planning and Decision Making

Public engagement allows citizens to give government officials input about pending policy decisions. While average citizens may lack the expertise to comment on technical issues related to emergencies, they are very capable of deliberating on the values underlying public policy decisions.

Public engagement can help inform members of the community, include their input in disaster planning to increase legitimacy and acceptance, and reveal public misunderstandings, biases, and areas of deep disagreement.



according to the brief report published online in the Journal of Clinical Investigation. Furthermore, in a biopsy of the kidney graft performed 7 years prior to the diagnosis of skin cancer, researchers found the presence of p53+ cells that contained the same TP53 mutation. [Medpage Today](#)

Limited HIV therapy beneficial for infants immediately after diagnosis



23 August - Researchers have found that giving antiviral therapy for a limited time to HIV-infected babies soon after diagnosis prevents damage to their immune systems and delays the need for long-term drug therapy. The [South African study](#), which enrolled 377 HIV-positive infants between six and 12 weeks of age, divided the babies into three groups. Beginning at age seven weeks, one group received antiviral drugs, or ART, and stopped close to their first birthday. The second group of infants receiving ART stopped around the age of two. [VOA](#)

Rotavirus rates fell in adults, too, after vaccine

27 August - Fewer older children and adults were hospitalized for severe diarrhea once the U.S. started vaccinating babies against rotavirus in 2006, according to a new study. Rotavirus is one cause of the "stomach flu," or gastroenteritis, and introduction of the rotavirus vaccine has already been tied to a drop in related hospitalizations among preschoolers. But whether vaccinating babies would also confer protection for older people was unclear, researchers said. "This study confirms the benefits of the rotavirus vaccine program, but it also shows there's an unexpected benefit to the population at large," Ben Lopman, who worked on the study at the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, said. "This is one example of what we call herd immunity," he told Reuters Health. "By vaccinating young children you prevent them from getting sick, but you also prevent them from transmitting (rotavirus) to their siblings and their parents." [Reuters](#)

Study adds lung damage to arsenic's harmful effects



23 August - Arsenic has been linked to cancer, cardiovascular disease and cognitive deficits. A new study confirms that even low exposure to the toxic element in drinking water can impair lung function. And smoking makes the damage worse. The study was part of a long-term project conducted in Bangladesh, where nearly half the population - some 77 million people - live in areas where groundwater wells contain harmful amounts of arsenic. Over five years, researchers tested the lung function of 950 individuals who came to their clinic with respiratory symptoms. Then, they correlated that with the patients' arsenic levels. The results, reported in the American Journal of Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine, show that the severity of arsenic's effects depend on the dose. [VOA](#)

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WHO push for HCW hand hygiene called simple, effective

23 August - The World Health Organization's (WHO's) strategy for better hand hygiene in healthcare workers (HCWs) is easily implemented and can make a major impact on patient safety worldwide, says a study published today in *Lancet Infectious Diseases*. It is well known that transmission of healthcare-related infections occurs mainly via the hands of HCWs. The WHO's strategy is simple and inexpensive and includes such practices as ensuring that alcohol-based hand rub is available at the point of patient care, training HCWs on the most important times during patient care for hand hygiene, and posting visual reminders of hand hygiene in the workplace... Overall compliance increased from 51% before the intervention (95% confidence interval [CI], 45.1 to 56.9) to 67% afterward (CI, 61.8 to 72.2), and all sites reported sustained or further-improved compliance 2 years following the study period.

[CIDRAP News Scan](#)

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INFLUENZA

Cardio notes: Flu vaccine may ward off MI

26 August - Influenza vaccination may have the added benefit of reducing the risk of heart attacks... Although influenza infection was not a significant predictor of heart attack after accounting for other factors, receipt of the flu vaccine was associated with a reduced likelihood of having an acute myocardial infarction (MI), a case-control study showed... [E]vidence of influenza infection was found in 12.4% of MI patients and 6.7% of the controls (odds ratio 1.97, 95% CI 1.09-3.54). After adjustment for potential confounders, influenza infection was not associated with acute MI, but influenza vaccination was. Those who were vaccinated were 45% less likely to have an acute MI (OR 0.55, 95% CI 0.35-0.85), a finding consistent with a prior study. [Medpage Today](#)

CDC: Weekly Influenza Surveillance Report

During week 33, 5.4% 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 6.1% for week 33. [FluView](#)

Google.org: Flu Trends

28 August – Estimates of flu activity based on certain Internet search queries indicate that the level of flu activity in the northern hemisphere ranges from minimal to low. In the southern hemisphere flu activity ranges from minimal to moderate (Chile, South Africa Australia and New Zealand). [Google.org Flu Trends](#)

PANDEMIC AND AVIAN INFLUENZA

Protection by face masks against influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 virus on trans-Pacific passenger aircraft, 2009

September 2013 - In response to several influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 infections that developed in passengers after they traveled on the same 2 flights from New York, New York, USA, to Hong Kong, China, to Fuzhou, China, we assessed transmission of influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 virus on these flights... We compared exposures of 9 case-passengers with those of 32 asymptomatic control-passengers. None of the 9 case-passengers, compared with 47% (15/32) of control-passengers, wore a face mask for the entire flight (odds ratio 0, 95% CI 0–0.71). The source case-passenger was not identified. Wearing a face mask was a protective factor against influenza infection. [Emerging Infectious Diseases](#)

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VETERINARY/FOOD SAFETY

CDC: Not All Cyclospora Cases Linked to Taylor Farms de Mexico

27 August - In a Monday update on the nationwide Cyclospora outbreak from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the agency stated that not all of the more than 600 current cases reported in 22 states and New York City are directly related to each other. Many of the recent cases have been reported from Texas, so CDC is collaborating with state and local health officials there by interviewing ill people about their exposure two weeks before becoming sick and identifying a cluster of those who reported eating at the same restaurant. "The preliminary analysis of results from this ongoing cluster investigation in Texas does not show a connection to salad mix, leafy greens, and salad mix components produced at Taylor Farms de Mexico," the latest CDC update reported. Officials with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)... officials found that conditions and practices at the facility and the farms during the assessment "were in accordance with known food safety protocols." On Aug. 25, Taylor Farms resumed export of salad mix, leafy greens and salad mix components to the U.S. [Food Safety News](#)

Fonterra products didn't have botulism bacteria after all, NZ tests show

28 August - Dairy giant Fonterra's products at the centre of a global contamination scare this month did not contain a bacteria that could cause botulism, and posed no food safety threat, New Zealand officials said on Wednesday. The Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI)

said tests showed that whey protein concentrate manufactured by the world's largest dairy processor contained *clostridium sporogenes*, which cannot cause botulism, but which at elevated levels can be associated with food spoilage. Original tests conducted by Fonterra and a New Zealand government research institute had indicated the presence of clostridium botulinum, raising fears that infant formula and sports drinks made from the product and widely exported could be potentially dangerous. [Reuters](#)

Measles-like virus blamed for Atlantic dolphin deaths



27 August - A virus that is similar to measles in humans is suspected of killing hundreds of Atlantic bottlenose dolphins since July, US officials said Tuesday. Morbillivirus infects the lungs and the brain, causing pneumonia and abnormal behavior, and is often fatal, experts at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration said. The outbreak has killed 333 bottlenose dolphins in the mid-Atlantic region since July, and may endure for a year, possibly topping the last major outbreak 25 years ago, which killed over 740 animals. "We are now calling this a morbillivirus outbreak," said Teri Rowles of the NOAA Fisheries Marine Mammal Health and Stranding Response Program. [Phys.org](#)

Salmonella in spices prompts changes in farming



27 August - Spices grown in the mist-shrouded [Western Ghats](#) [in India] have fueled wars, fortunes and even the discovery of continents, and for thousands of years farmers harvested them in the same traditional ways. Until now... In a study of more than 20,000 food shipments, the [United States Food and Drug Administration] found that nearly 7 percent of spice lots were contaminated with salmonella, twice the average of all other imported foods. Some 15 percent of coriander and 12 percent of oregano and basil shipments were contaminated, with high contamination levels also found in sesame seeds, curry powder and cumin. Four percent of black pepper shipments were contaminated... Mexico and India had the highest share of contaminated spices. About 14 percent of the samples from Mexico contained salmonella, the study found, a result Mexican officials disputed. India's exports were the second-most contaminated, at approximately 9 percent, but India ships nearly four times the amount of spices to the United States that Mexico does, so its contamination problems are particularly worrisome, officials said. [New York Times](#)

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BMI not a good measure of healthy body weight, researchers argue

22 August - When it comes to defining what body weight is considered healthy, one type of measurement does not fit all, some scientists say. Body mass index is the standard metric for determining who is normal-weight, overweight and obese, but BMI is not an accurate measure of fat, and doesn't explain the causes of poor health, scientists argue in an editorial today (Aug. 22) in the journal *Science*. [Live Science](#)

Foam parties pose eye risk



23 August - Foam parties are all fun and games until participants get the stuff in their eyes and have to go to the emergency room, health officials warned. Following a flood of ER visits involving eye injuries in late May 2012, state and local investigators identified a total of 56 people attending a foam party at a nightclub in Collier

County, Fla., who had sought treatment, according to a report in the August 23 issue of the *CDC's Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*... More than 90% of those interviewed reported severe eye pain and irritation. Other common complaints included eye redness, conjunctivitis, and visual impairment. In 11 cases, ER staff could not test visual acuity in at least one eye because the individual could not open it. [Medpage Today](#)

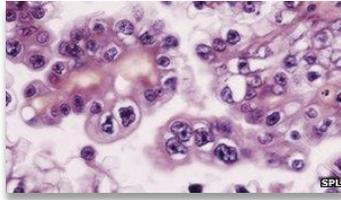
IUD usage still low in young women

26 August - Intrauterine devices (IUDs) remain unpopular as a contraceptive method among girls and young women, although their use has increased significantly in recent years, according to a cross-sectional survey. From 2002 to 2010, IUD use among teenagers increased more than ten-fold and more than doubled among women 20 to 24, resulting in overall usage rates of 2.5% and 5.4%, respectively. Nulliparous young women were least likely to report use of an IUD. [Medpage Today](#)

Most medications okay during breast-feeding

27 August - Most drugs taken by nursing mothers do not pose a risk to their infants, according to the American Academy of Pediatrics. However, an analysis of potential risks versus benefits is necessary for some agents, particularly those that concentrate in human milk, have long half-lives, or could result in clinically significant exposures in the infant, the group writes in *Pediatrics*. The AAP provides a brief overview on painkillers, antidepressants, substance abuse treatments, and common herbal remedies. For more complete and current drug data, it recommends that clinicians turn to LactMed, part of the National Library of Medicine's Toxicology Data Network. [NEJM Journal Watch](#)

Ovarian cancer screening 'has potential'



26 August - A new way of screening for ovarian cancer is showing "potential", according to researchers in the US. Tumours in the ovaries are hard to detect in the earliest stages meaning it can be too late to treat them effectively by the time they are found. A trial of 4,051 women, reported in the journal *Cancer*, showed the method could identify those needing treatment. But a huge study taking place in the UK will give a final verdict on the test when it is completed in 2015. [BBC News](#)

The same tents that seal storms out can seal carbon monoxide in



25 August – [If] the weather suddenly turns nasty on your next camping trip, or nights are just colder than you expected, don't be tempted to bring your cook stove inside. Levels of poisonous carbon monoxide (CO) from the burning stove can build up fast... In several 20-minute burns inside the two types of tents, [researchers] tested the output of a popular backpacking stove as it heated a pan of water. In each trial, described online in the journal *Wilderness & Environmental Medicine*, they either burned unleaded gasoline or used "white gas," the cleaner-burning petroleum fuel that is commonly sold with camp stoves and lanterns. Burning unleaded gas inside the four-season tent led to far-and-away the most carbon monoxide... But in just 20 minutes, even the "cleaner" white gas raised levels of carbon monoxide inside the four-season tent above the 150 parts-per-million limit that occupational safety groups say workers shouldn't be exposed to for more than 15 minutes. Inside the breezier three-season tents, CO levels stayed under 100 ppm with both types of fuel. "But that was just a 20-minute test," Betten says. "If you fired it up for an hour or two — or fell asleep — it's tough to say what would happen." [NPR](#)

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USAFRICOM

Ethiopia polio case signals expanding African threat



23 August - Ethiopia recently detected a polio infection in a young child, the country's first case since 2008 and an event thought to be part of a growing outbreak across the Horn of Africa. The case was detected in an 18-month-old child from the Warder district, which borders Somalia, where 108 polio

infections have already been detected this year, according to the latest update from the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI). The illness involved wild poliovirus type 1 (WPV1). Carol Pandak, who leads Rotary International's polio eradication program, said the detection of a case in Ethiopia isn't surprising, the Voice of America (VOA) reported yesterday. "This area has been considered high risk because of its proximity to Somalia," she said. [CIDRAP](#)

South Africa: A clinic focuses on prostitutes to fight HIV

28 August - South Africa has come a long way in dealing with AIDS. The country has been successful in getting drug treatment to millions of people infected with HIV. But the country still has one of the highest rates of HIV infection in the world — and the virus continues to spread. Nearly 400,000 South Africans are infected with HIV each year. One health clinic in the heart of Johannesburg is attempting to break the HIV cycle by focusing on people at extremely high risk for infection — prostitutes. Some researchers estimate that about two-thirds of sex workers in South Africa are HIV positive. Providing them with basic health care, including access to antiviral drugs, can save their lives while reducing the chance that they'll spread HIV to clients. The University of the Witwatersrand is running clinics specifically for prostitutes. [NPR](#)

Uganda: New campaign aims to prevent motorbike accidents

29 August - ...The rate of accidents is staggering. A 2010 study done by the country's largest referral hospital found that boda-boda drivers and passengers suffered 75 percent of road traffic injuries, and took up over 60 percent of the hospital's surgery budget. For Andrew Sekitoleko, a doctor at a Kampala hospital, these numbers are hardly surprising. "It is dangerous because you are the body of the vehicle, so there is no protection and it is just your body on the tarmac," he said. "Or many people have talked of flying off the bike and into a ditch or into a van or right onto the tarmac. You could get hit by another car that is passing by. Most of the time you are going to see a head injury, but almost any body part can be affected." Part of the problem, Sekitoleko explained, is the lack of helmets. Uganda passed a helmet law in 2004, but it is rarely enforced. [VOA](#)

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USCENTCOM

Afghanistan: Taliban attacks kill 12 Afghan civilians, including aid workers, in 2 separate incidents

27 August- Insurgents shot and killed 12 civilians in two separate incidents over the weekend, including six aid workers employed on government projects, officials said Tuesday. The bodies of six victims were found in the Gulran district of western Herat province, said Jamel Danish, media adviser for the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation. Five were

Afghan employees of the International Rescue Committee who had been kidnapped on Sunday, and the U.S.-based group said it was temporarily suspending operations. It has worked in Afghanistan since 1988. The sixth victim worked for the ministry... Rohullah Samon, spokesman for eastern Paktia province, said six unidentified civilians were also found Tuesday by a roadside. He had no other details. [Washington Post](#)

Kyrgyzstan: Boy dies of bubonic plague

27 August - A 15-year-old herder has died in Kyrgyzstan of bubonic plague - the first case in the country in 30 years - officials say. The teenager appears to have been bitten by an infected flea. The authorities have sought to calm fears of an epidemic and have quarantined more than 100 people. Bubonic plague, known as the Black Death when it killed an estimated 25 million people in Europe during the Middle Ages, is now rare. World Health Organisation epidemic disease expert Eric Bertherat told the BBC there were about 400 cases of bubonic plague reported in 2012. [BBC](#)

Pakistan: 1,300 measles, dengue patients visit hospitals

26 August - The allied hospitals of [Rawalpindi], including Holy Family Hospital (HFH), Benazir Bhutto Hospital and District Headquarter Hospital, have this year so far handled 1,203 measles patients and 95 dengue fever suspects, out of which 16 died. According to the data collected by APP, a dengue and 12 measles patients have died at HFH and three measles patients at BBH since January this year... In 2011, around 2,600 such patients visited the hospitals with dengue symptoms and 783 were provided treatment. In 2012, more than 200 dengue suspected patients had visited the allied hospitals who were provided the required treatment and discharged after recovery. [Pakistan Observer](#)

Pakistan: Unofficial dengue count reaches 1,500 in Swat

28 August - Another five dengue cases surfaced in Shangla district on Tuesday, bringing the number of patients to over 500. According to the District Health Office, 351 cases have been registered between August 11 and 27. On the other hand, data collected by an Amankot youth group from private laboratories places the tally of dengue-infected patients to a staggering 1,500 in the district. The epidemic has caused much unrest among residents who have been showing up in large numbers at clinical laboratories for tests. Apart from private laboratories, the clinical laboratory at Saidu Teaching Hospital (STH) has been swamped with people. As a result, the laboratory is facing a shortage of technicians and insufficient facilities have created a backlog... According to STH's medical ward record, 120 patients testing positive for dengue fever were admitted. [The Express Tribune](#)

Pakistan warns of polio outbreak after fresh cases

28 August - Health officials in Pakistan on Wednesday warned of a serious polio outbreak after the disease was detected in 16 children in a tribal district where militant groups have banned vaccination. Doctor Khayal Mir Jan, the top health official in Pakistan's militant-infested North Waziristan tribal district, on the Afghan border, told AFP that thousands of children were at risk... "We are waiting for the result of the stool samples of another 42

children suspected of having the disease." Local warlord Hafiz Gul Bahadur banned polio vaccinations in Waziristan in June 2012, alleging the campaign was a cover for espionage.

[Medical Xpress](#)

Qatar: Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus (MERS-CoV) – WHO update

29 August - WHO has been informed of an additional two laboratory-confirmed cases of Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus (MERS-CoV) infection in Qatar... The results of both the cases were confirmed by an international reference laboratory. A total of 138 healthcare workers, family and community contacts have been screened in the country and so far all tested negative for MERS-CoV infection. Globally, from September 2012 to date, WHO has been informed of a total of 104 laboratory-confirmed cases of infection with MERS-CoV, including 49 deaths. [WHO](#)

Saudi Arabia: Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus (MERS-CoV) – WHO update

28 August - WHO has been informed of an additional eight laboratory-confirmed cases of Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus (MERS-CoV) infection in Saudi Arabia. The cases include two men with underlying medical conditions from Riyadh who died, three women and one man, also from Riyadh, and two men from Asir region. Additionally, a previously laboratory-confirmed case from the United Arab Emirates has died. [WHO](#)

Syria: U.S. allies, Arabs demand action against Syria

27 August - European and Arab nations joined Tuesday to condemn Syrian dictator Bashar Assad for gassing his own people as the United States pondered possible military action in its first direct intervention in the Syrian civil war. France, the United Kingdom and the Arab League said Syria must be held responsible for the attack... Syria challenged the Obama administration to prove its claim that military forces used chemical weapons in an attack that killed hundreds of civilians. [USA Today](#)

Syria: Long-term nerve damage feared after chemical attack

23 August - Even those who survived the suspected chemical weapons attack in Damascus - and many hundreds didn't - may have life-long disabilities and health problems for which there are few effective treatments... Antidotes and emergency treatments do exist for patients suffering the immediate effects of poisoning by a nerve agent - something many experts fear happened to the thousands affected in rebel-held areas of the Syrian capital on Wednesday. But if no help comes within the first hour or so, the chances become slim that an antidote drug like atropine or oxime, or the sedative diazepam, will do much good... "Longer term, the major risk is the result of significant restricted breathing," which could also lead to brain damage, said Alastair Hay, a professor of environmental toxicology and chemical weapons expert at Britain's Leeds University. [Reuters](#)

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Germany: Risk factors for *Chlamydia trachomatis* infection in adolescents, 2003–2006

22 August - Infections with *Chlamydia trachomatis* (CT) can lead to severe sequelae; however, they are not notifiable in Germany. We tested urine samples from participants of KiGGS (German Health Interview and Examination Survey for Children and Adolescents) for CT infections and linked the results to demographic and behavioural data from 1,925 participants (girls aged 15–17 years and boys aged 16–17 years) to determine a representative prevalence of CT infection in adolescents in Germany and to assess associated risk factors. Prevalence of CT infection was 2.2% (95% CI: 1.4–3.5) in girls and 0.2% (95% CI: 0.1–0.7) in boys. CT infection in girls was associated with higher use of alcohol, marijuana and cigarettes, lower social status, oral contraceptive use, pregnancy, repeated lower abdominal pain and higher rates of doctors' consultations within the preceding three months and consultation of gynaecologists within the last 12 months. In multiple logistic regression, we identified two predictors for CT infection: marijuana consumption often or several times within the last 12 months ($F(1,164)=7.56$; $p<0.05$) and general health status less than 'very good' ($F(1,164)=3.83$; $p=0.052$) [Eurosurveillance](#)

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U.S.: Dengue fever pops up in Florida

26 August - Dengue fever, a mosquito-borne illness, is back in Florida. A handful of cases have been confirmed in Martin and St. Lucie counties in the past week. The cases there prompted a public health alert. Another case was seen in Miami-Dade, where officials issued a mosquito-borne disease advisory. Dengue was commonplace in Florida until the 1930s. Air conditioning, window screens and better mosquito control helped break the dengue cycle. But in 2009, things changed. A dengue outbreak in Key West sickened at least 28 people. Investigators found that about 5 percent of 240 people they tested around Key West showed signs of having been infected by the virus that causes dengue. [NPR](#)

U.S.: Fracking health project puts numbers to debate

25 August - A project examining the local health impacts from natural gas drilling is providing some of the first preliminary numbers about people who may be affected, and the results challenge the industry position that no one suffers but also suggest the problems may not be as widespread as some critics claim. The Southwest Pennsylvania Environmental Health Project... found 27 cases where people in Washington County believe they were hurt by nearby drilling — seven cases of skin rashes, four of eye irritation, 13 of

breathing problems and three of headaches and dizziness... There are some surprises: Air pollution seems to be more of a threat than water pollution, and the huge processing stations that push gas into national pipelines may be more of a problem than the drilling sites themselves. [Tulsa World](#)

U.S.: National and state vaccination coverage among adolescents aged 13–17 years — United States, 2012

30 August- From 2011 to 2012, coverage increased for ≥ 1 [tetanus, diphtheria, and acellular pertussis] vaccine dose (from 78.2% to 84.6%), ≥ 1 [meningococcal conjugate] vaccine dose (from 70.5% to 74.0%) and, among males, ≥ 1 [human papillomavirus] vaccine dose (from 8.3% to 20.8%). Among females, vaccination coverage estimates for each HPV vaccine series dose were similar in 2012 compared with 2011. Coverage varied substantially among states... Large and increasing coverage differences between Tdap and other vaccines recommended for adolescents indicate that substantial missed opportunities remain for vaccinating teens, especially against HPV infection. [Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report](#)

U.S.: West Nile virus

27 August - As of [today], 45 states and the District of Columbia have reported West Nile virus infections in people, birds, or mosquitoes. A total of 421 cases of West Nile virus disease in people, including 13 deaths, have been reported to CDC. Of these, 197 (47%) were classified as neuroinvasive disease (such as meningitis or encephalitis) and 224 (53%) were classified as non-neuroinvasive disease. [CDC](#)

U.S.: California Rim Fire is 'one fifth contained'



28 August - Firefighters are slowly making progress against a sprawling wildfire that is now 20% contained in and around California's Yosemite National Park. But the Rim Fire continues to spread and now encompasses more than 288 sq miles (746 sq km), officials say. The flames are raining ash on a reservoir that supplies water and hydro-electric power to San Francisco. City officials say they are moving water to lower reservoirs and monitoring supplies for contamination. The blaze is also threatening thousands of homes and some of California's renowned giant sequoia trees. Some 3,700 firefighters are tackling the flames in difficult terrain. It has now burned an area larger than the land mass of Chicago, but firefighters hope a cooler forecast toward the end of the week will help contain the blaze. [BBC News](#)

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China hog farms pose major health risk

26 August – [In China], the meat of choice is pork and demand is going through the roof... About 70 miles southwest of Shanghai is Jiaxing. It's home to dozens of pig farms. Along its roads, veterinary pharmacies are slotted between feed stores. China doesn't require farmers to report the antibiotics they use but one recent study estimated that nearly half of China's antibiotics are fed to livestock... A big, crowded confinement farm like this one can be a hothouse for infection and disease. This is where the antibiotics come in and Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation (CAFO) operators often counter the threat of disease with daily doses of the drugs... [Michigan state microbiologist James] Tiedje and a group of Chinese scientists recently analyzed hog manure from three commercial farms in China and discovered the drug resistant bacteria were abundant... What was surprising in the study was the degree to which different genes for resistance to different drugs tended to cluster and hop around together. "This is what leads to the multiple drug-resistance-problem pathogens," Tiedje said. [PRI's The World](#)

Taiwan: Confirmed rabies cases rise to 104



27 August - The health authorities confirmed Tuesday three new cases of rabies in ferret-badgers, bringing the number of reported rabies infections to 104 since mid-July, when the first rabies case in Taiwan for more than 50 years was reported. The three new confirmed cases were reported from Nantou County's Yuchih

Township, Yunlin County's Gukeng Township and the Jiasian District of Kaohsiung, the Central Epidemic Command Center (CECC) for rabies said. According to CECC data, as of Tuesday, all the infections but one have involved wild ferret-badgers. The remaining case involved an Asian house shrew. There have been no reports of human infection. The cases were reported from 46 townships and districts in nine counties and municipalities in central, southern and eastern Taiwan, the CECC said. [Focus Taiwan](#)

Thailand to appeal after Philip Morris wins tobacco case

28 August - The Thai government plans to appeal a court victory by tobacco giant Philip Morris to keep larger health warnings off cigarette packets for sale in Thailand. The Central Administrative Court ruled last Friday to temporarily suspend a new health ministry regulation requiring tobacco warning labels to cover 85 percent of the visible pack, up from 55 percent now. "We have discussed with health minister and legal experts, and we will file an appeal to the Supreme Administrative court in the next two weeks," Nopporn Cheanklin, deputy director of the Health Ministry's Disease Control Department, told Reuters. The Thai unit of Philip Morris International Inc filed a lawsuit against the Public Health Ministry on June 26 that asked the Administrative Court to abolish the regulation, which would have taken effect on Oct 2... The Administrative Court's suspension will take effect until the court comes up with a final verdict. [Reuters](#)

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Dengue fever epidemic sparks public health emergency in Central America



27 August - A dengue epidemic is raging in Central America, from Honduras to Costa Rica. The virus has already claimed 60 lives, with a total of 120,000 cases. The Pan American Health Organisation fears the figures may "explode", with this year looking "unusually bad"... With the rising number of new cases, Honduras, El Salvador and Costa Rica announced a health emergency in July and launched campaigns to prevent the disease from spreading. Lacking adequate resources, Honduras, which has been hardest hit with at least 17 fatalities and 20,000 cases reported, appealed to the International Red Cross for help. [The Guardian](#)

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