

3 May 2013

# Army Public Health Weekly Update

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. Army Public Health Command



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

---

- Absolute and relative morbidity burdens attributable to various illnesses and injuries, U.S. Armed Forces, 2012
- Career-long mental health assessments proposed
- Service members surpass most federal health goals

### GLOBAL

---

- First confirmed Japanese tsunami debris in California
- Parasite 'resistant to malaria drug artemisinin'
- Protein in breast milk fights antibiotic resistance
- Rattling out TB: Scientists train rodents to diagnose disease
- WHO report: Global guidance on dual-use research needed

### INFLUENZA

---

- CDC: Weekly Influenza Surveillance Report
- DoD Global Laboratory-Based Influenza Surveillance Program
- European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control: Weekly Influenza Surveillance Overview
- Google.org: Flu Trends
- Naval Health Research Center: Febrile Respiratory Illness Surveillance Update
- PANDEMIC AND AVIAN INFLUENZA
- Chickens pegged as source of H7N9 Flu
- China: Human infection with avian influenza A(H7N9) virus – WHO update

### VETERINARY/FOOD SAFETY

---

- Papua New Guinea: Newcastle disease, poultry
- U.S.: Caffeinated chewing gum catches FDA's eye
- U.S.: Multistate outbreak of *Salmonella* Saintpaul infections linked to imported cucumbers

## 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

## Mental Health Month

This year the Army's theme for Mental Health Month is "Breaking the Silence." The Army is determined to decrease the stigma and get help to those who need it, by promoting dialogue between leaders, Soldiers, families, civilians and the community.

Army Medicine recognizes that behavioral health encompasses psychological, physical and spiritual resilience, and can impact each of these aspects regardless of age, race, religion, or income. During the years of 2000 through 2011, 936,283 active component service members were diagnosed with at least one mental disorder.

The Army database indicates that eight percent of the Soldiers deployed between 2001 and 2011 received a diagnosis of post traumatic stress disorder.

### STAND-TO!

## WELLNESS

---

- Adults consume 13% of calories from added sugars
- Diabetes warning over soft drinks
- Implants may delay breast cancer detection, raise death risk
- Justice Dept. to appeal judge's order on Plan B pill
- Most people aren't meeting exercise guidelines
- Smoking 'poses bigger risk to women'
- To motivate patients to change, doctors stop scolding
- Two doses of HPV vaccine may be just as effective as three, study shows

## USAFRICOM

---

- Madagascar: Food insecurity opens door to TB
- Nigeria: Polio eradication - what progress so far?
- Somalia: Building health systems from scratch
- Somalia famine 'killed 260,000 people'

## USCENTCOM

---

- Arab cities aim to build resilience to natural disasters
- Egypt: Female genital mutilation still widespread
- Saudi Arabia says five dead from new SARS-like virus
- Syria: Mass measles vaccination campaign for Syrian children underway

## USEUCOM

---

- European Immunization Week 2013 and new ECDC tools to support routine vaccination programmes
- Russia: Psychiatric institution fire kills at least 38
- Turkey: Crimean-Congo hemorrhagic fever
- United Kingdom: 'Heart-healing virus' trial starts

## USNORTHCOM

---

- U.S.-born kids have more allergies, asthma
- U.S.: California may have to move 3,000 inmates at risk for Valley fever
- U.S.: HIV vaccine study cancelled
- U.S.: Over-diagnosis and over-treatment of depression is common
- U.S.: Suicide among adults aged 35–64 years, 1999–2010
- U.S.: Task force calls for routine HIV testing for all adults

## USPACOM

---

- Can disaster risk reduction lessons be learned from China?
- India: Hospital roof collapses, injuring 8
- New Caledonia: Chikungunya
- Singapore: Dengue cases continue to rise
- Sri Lanka: Malaria, imported

## USSOUTHCOM

---

- Argentina: In therapy? In Argentina, it's the norm
- Latin America threatened by mounting cancer epidemic

**Nominate a  
Colleague for the  
Lienhard Award and  
Sarnat Prize**

The Institute of Medicine is accepting nominations for **The Gustav O. Lienhard Award** and **The Rhoda and Bernard Sarnat International Prize** in Mental Health through Monday, May 6.

The Lienhard Award recognizes individuals for outstanding achievement in improving health care services in the United States.

The Sarnat Prize recognizes individuals, groups, or organizations for outstanding achievement in improving mental health.



**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.

**U.S. MILITARY**

---

**Absolute and relative morbidity burdens attributable to various illnesses and injuries, U.S. Armed Forces, 2012**

April 2013 - In 2012, more service members (n=600,006) received medical care for injuries and poisonings than any other morbidity-related category. In addition, injuries and poisonings accounted for more medical encounters (n=2,203,706) than any other morbidity category and one-fifth (20.8%) of all medical encounters overall. Mental disorders accounted for more hospital bed days (n=270,078) than any other morbidity category and nearly half (49.6%) of all hospital bed days overall. Together, injuries and poisonings, and mental disorders accounted for nearly two-thirds (62.2%) of all hospital bed days and two-fifths (40.2%) of all medical encounters. Mental disorders also accounted for the most lost work time (n=349,464 lost duty days; 26.0% of the total). **Medical Surveillance Monthly Report**

**Career-long mental health assessments proposed**

30 April - An Indiana lawmaker wants to expand military suicide prevention programs to include an annual mental health assessment for active and reserve members, with reports from supervisors about any relationship or financial issues that might trigger stress or suicidal tendencies. Sen. Joe Donnelly, a Democrat and member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, is calling his proposal the Jacob Sexton Military Suicide Prevention Act, named for an Indiana National Guard specialist who took his own life in 2009 while on leave from a deployment to Afghanistan. The bill, S 810, is the first piece of legislation introduced by the newly elected Donnelly. **Army Times**

**Service members surpass most federal health goals**

26 April - A wide-ranging Defense Department survey released this week finds that active duty service members are healthier in most categories than their civilian counterparts and exceed most federal health objectives. Results of the 2011 Department of Defense **Health Related Behaviors Survey of Active Duty Military Personnel** found that soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines and Coast Guardsmen beat federal goals for weight management and exercise and in the use of seat belts and motorcycle helmets. The results indicate that the military is a national leader in healthy living habits, **Dr. Warren Lockette**, chief medical officer of TRICARE and deputy assistant secretary of defense for **Clinical and Program Policy**, said at an April 22 media roundtable discussion. **MHS**

[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](#)

## GLOBAL

---

### First confirmed Japanese tsunami debris in California

26 April - Federal officials say a fishing boat that washed ashore in Northern California is the first debris to reach the state that's been confirmed as having come from the Japanese tsunami. The Del Norte Triplicate reports (<http://bit.ly/15MeRTI>) that the 20-foot vessel belongs to the marine sciences program at Takata High School in the town of Rikuzentakata in the Iwate prefecture. It washed ashore in Crescent City on April 7... NOAA spokeswoman Keeley Belva says the skiff is the first confirmed debris from the 2011 tsunami in California. In total, 27 items from among more than 1,600 reports of debris have been firmly traced back to the tsunami. [ABC News](#)

### Parasite 'resistant to malaria drug artemisinin'



28 April - New drug-resistant strains of the parasite that causes malaria have been identified by scientists. Researchers found parasites in western Cambodia that are genetically different from other strains around the world. These organisms are able to withstand treatment by artemisinin - a frontline drug in the fight against malaria. Reports of drug resistance in the area first emerged in 2008. The problem has since spread to other parts of South East Asia. [BBC](#)

### Protein in breast milk fights antibiotic resistance

1 May - A protein discovered in human breast milk, which goes by the Shakespearean-sounding acronym, HAMLET, reportedly fights drug-resistant bacteria when added to antibiotics. The researchers say HAMLET could be used to boost the effectiveness of medications against the rising number of drug-resistant and dangerous bacteria. [VOA](#)

### Ratting out TB: Scientists train rodents to diagnose disease



1 May - Rats are notorious for spreading nasty diseases. Think the plague, lassa fever and even salmonella. But could some jumbo-size African rodents help health workers diagnose diseases more quickly? They just might. A group in Tanzania is training rats to detect tuberculosis in people.

The critters in question are African giant pouched rats... The critters have very poor vision, which they make up for with a keen sense of smell... The team trains the critters with a Pavlovian click-and-reward approach... A trained rat can correctly pick out a TB sample about two-thirds of the time, Beyene says. The rate increases to about 80 percent when two or three animals are put on the task. [NPR](#)

## WHO report: Global guidance on dual-use research needed

1 May - Participants in a World Health Organization (WHO) meeting held in February agreed that a binding global agreement to govern potentially dangerous life-sciences research is unlikely, but global guidance on the thorny issue could help nations figure out their own policies, according to a WHO report of the meeting. The conference, held Feb 26 to 28, focused on "dual-use research of concern" (DURC)—studies whose results could be used for good or harm. The term gained currency in the wake of the controversy that erupted late in 2011 over experiments in which two teams of scientists developed lab-modified H5N1 viruses capable of airborne transmission in ferrets. The detailed reports of those two studies were published in 2012, but debate and concern have continued over how to govern research that renders pathogens more dangerous or poses similar kinds of risks. [CIDRAP](#)

[top of page...](#)

## INFLUENZA

---

### CDC: Weekly Influenza Surveillance Report

During week 16 (April 14-20, 2013), influenza activity decreased in the United States.

- **Viral Surveillance:** Of 3,384 specimens tested and reported by collaborating laboratories, 250 (7.4%) were positive for influenza.
- **Pneumonia and Influenza Mortality:** The proportion of deaths attributed to pneumonia and influenza (P&I) was below the epidemic threshold.
- **Influenza-Associated Pediatric Deaths:** Five pediatric deaths were reported.
- **Geographic Spread of Influenza:** Three states reported widespread influenza activity and three states reported regional influenza activity. [FluView](#)

### DoD Global Laboratory-Based Influenza Surveillance Program

- During Week 17, 59 specimens were tested from 19 locations. 26 specimens were tested from 18 locations. There was one influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 and three influenza B viruses detected.
- To date this influenza season, 3,648 specimens have been tested from 81 locations of which 1,065 were positive for influenza A (947 A(H3N2), 107 A(H1N1)pdm09, five co-infections, and six A/not subtyped).
- To date this influenza season, 356 specimens were positive for influenza B. Of these, there were 14 B/Yamagata, two B/Victoria, and two B & enterovirus co-infections. The lineage is pending or unknown for 338 specimens.

- There have been 244 other respiratory viruses isolated (58 adenovirus, 91 RSV, 86 parainfluenza, and nine enterovirus) cumulatively this season.
- To date, a total of 126 laboratory-confirmed cases of human infection with avian influenza A(H7N9) virus including 24 deaths have been reported to WHO. Contacts of the confirmed cases are being closely monitored. [USAF School of Aerospace Medicine](#)

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

In week 16/2013 (15–21 April 2013):

- Twenty-four countries reported low-intensity transmission while three countries (Latvia, the Netherlands and Sweden) still reported medium intensity. Decreasing or stable trends were reported by almost all reporting countries.
- The proportion of influenza-positive sentinel specimens (26%) has continued to decrease since the peak observed in week 5/2013 (61%).
- Since week 40/2012, 47% of sentinel surveillance specimens testing positive for influenza virus have been type A and 53% type B. Of the influenza A viruses subtyped, the proportion of A(H1)pdm09 viruses was 62%.

With influenza activity continuing to decline or having already returned to baseline levels in all reporting countries after more than three months of active transmission, the 2012–13 influenza season appears to be coming to an end. [Weekly Influenza Surveillance Overview](#)

## Google.org: Flu Trends

2 May – Estimates of flu activity based on certain Internet search queries indicate that the level of flu activity in the northern hemisphere ranges from minimal and low in most areas to moderate in Russia. In the southern hemisphere the range is from minimal to low.

[Google.org Flu Trends](#)

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

For the week ending 27 April 2013:

- Influenza: There were no new cases of NHRC laboratory-confirmed influenza among US military basic trainees. NHRC has capability to test for the novel H7N9 influenza virus
- Adenovirus: Sporadic adenovirus cases at basic training centers in 2013.
- 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](#)

## PANDEMIC AND AVIAN INFLUENZA

### Chickens pegged as source of H7N9 Flu



25 April - Evidence from a single patient infected with the novel avian influenza virus H7N9 points to transmission from live poultry, Chinese researchers reported. The virus isolated from a 64-year-old man who died from the infection was "almost identical" to that isolated from a chicken taken from a wet market with epidemiological ties to the patient, Lanjuan Li, MD, of Zhejiang University in Hangzhou, China, and colleagues reported online in *The Lancet*. The finding suggests that live poultry could be the source of the H7N9 outbreak, which has sickened 108 people in eastern China and killed 22 according to the latest official update from the World Health Organization. Investigations into the source are ongoing. [MedPage Today](#)

### China: Human infection with avian influenza A(H7N9) virus – WHO update

2 May - As of 2 May 2013 (16:00 CET), the National Health and Family Planning Commission, China notified WHO of an additional two laboratory-confirmed cases of human infection with avian influenza A(H7N9) virus. The first patient is a 58-year-old man from Fujian province who became ill on 21 April 2013 and the second patient is a 69-year-old man from Hunan province who became ill on 23 April 2013. Additionally, two patients earlier reported have died. To date, a total of 128 laboratory-confirmed cases of human infection with avian influenza A(H7N9) virus including 26 deaths have been reported to WHO. Contacts of the confirmed cases are being closely monitored. [WHO](#)

[top of page...](#)

#### VETERINARY/FOOD SAFETY

---

### Papua New Guinea: Newcastle disease, poultry

2 May - The Papua New Guinea [PNG] Government has declared Sandaun or West Sepik province "a disease area" following the detection of the contagious Newcastle bird disease in the PNG-Indonesia border villages of Wutung and Musu and the provincial capital Vanimo. This means that the movement of poultry and poultry products out of Sandaun province is banned until further notice. However, commercially produced chicken meat and eggs entering the province from other PNG suppliers are exempted from the prohibition. Agriculture and livestock minister Tommy Tomscoll announced the declaration and prohibition in a full page advertisement published in the country's daily newspapers.

[ProMED-mail](#)

## U.S.: Caffeinated chewing gum catches FDA's eye

30 April - Wrigley's new caffeinated gum has caught the attention of the Food and Drug Administration, which says it will investigate the effects of added caffeine on children and teens. [Alert Energy Caffeine Gum](#) was introduced this week by [Mars Inc.'s Wrigley division](#). One piece contains 40 milligrams of caffeine, the same amount you'd get in a half a cup of coffee. The gum comes in two flavors: mint and fruit. When it's chewed, the caffeine is released into your saliva. Some gets swallowed as if you were drinking coffee or a soda; some is absorbed directly into the bloodstream through the cheeks and under the tongue. The only time the FDA has approved added caffeine in a food was in the 1950s for cola drinks, says Michael Taylor, the agency's deputy commissioner for foods and veterinary medicine, in a statement Monday. The caffeinated gum is the latest to add caffeine, he says. [CNN](#)

## U.S.: Multistate outbreak of *Salmonella* Saintpaul infections linked to imported cucumbers

25 April - A total of 73 persons infected with the outbreak strain of *Salmonella* Saintpaul have been reported from 18 states. 27% of ill persons have been hospitalized, and no deaths have been reported. State public health officials are interviewing ill persons to obtain information regarding foods they might have eaten and other exposures in the week before illness. Preliminary information indicates that consumption of imported cucumbers is the likely source of infection for the ill persons. On April 24, 2013, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration placed Daniel Cardenas Izabal and Miracle Greenhouse of Culiacán, Mexico on Import Alert... Currently, there is no evidence that contaminated cucumbers supplied by Daniel Cardenas Izabal and Miracle Greenhouse are still on the market. [CDC](#)

[top of page...](#)

### WELLNESS

---

## Adults consume 13% of calories from added sugars

1 May - The intake has declined over the past decade, but it's still higher than American Heart Association recommendations. The trends are moving in the right direction: People are downing less added sugar in their diets, but health experts say Americans still consume too much. About 13% of adults' daily calories come from added sugars in things like cake and regular soda, according to government statistics, out today. Men consume about 335 calories a day from added sugars; women, 239 calories. These are sugars added to processed and prepared foods but not sugar added at the table. About two-thirds (67%) of added sugars come from food; the other third (33%) from beverages. [USA Today](#)

## Diabetes warning over soft drinks



24 April - Drinking one or more cans of sugary soft drinks a day is linked to an increased risk of diabetes in later life, a study suggests. A can a day raises the relative risk of Type-2 diabetes by about a fifth, compared with one can a month or under, say European scientists. The report in the

journal [Diabetologia](#) mirrors previous US findings. A diabetes charity recommends limiting sugary foods and drinks as they are calorific and can cause weight gain. The latest research was carried out in the UK, Germany, Denmark, Italy, Spain, Sweden, France and the Netherlands. [BBC](#)

## Implants may delay breast cancer detection, raise death risk

1 May - Women with breast implants could run the risk of having breast cancer diagnosed at later stages, when survival might be worse, according to Canadian researchers. Breast implants can make it more difficult to diagnose breast cancer early because they block some areas of the breast on mammograms, experts say. "Women who currently have breast implants and those considering breast augmentation should be aware of the possible long-term health effects of cosmetic breast implants," said lead author Eric Lavigne, a Ph.D. graduate in epidemiology with the faculty of medicine at University Laval, in Quebec City. "They should also be reassured that physicians and other health professionals will continue to offer the best medical practices to these women," he added. [Medline Plus](#)

## Justice Dept. to appeal judge's order on Plan B pill

1 May - Obama administration seeks to block decision that would end all age restrictions on May 5. Action comes day after FDA allowed emergency contraception to be sold to girls 15 years old without prescription. The Justice Department said late Wednesday that it is appealing a U.S. judge's order that lifted all age limits on buying the Plan B "morning-after" birth control pill without a prescription. The appeal, along with a request for an injunction, would not affect the Food and Drug Administration's decision Tuesday to allow the emergency contraceptive to be sold without a prescription to women and girls at least 15 years old. [USA Today](#)

## Most people aren't meeting exercise guidelines

2 May - Most adults in the USA aren't meeting the federal physical activity recommendations for both aerobic exercise and muscle-strengthening activity, according to government statistics out today. About 79% of adults don't meet the physical activity guidelines that advise getting at least 2½ hours a week of moderate-intensity aerobic activity such as brisk walking, or one hour and 15 minutes a week of vigorous-intensity aerobic activity, such as jogging. Plus, the guidelines recommend that adults do muscle-strengthening activities, such as push-ups, sit-ups or exercise using resistance bands or weights. These activities should involve all major muscle groups and be done on two or more days a week, the guidelines say. [USA Today](#)

## Smoking 'poses bigger risk to women'



30 April - Smoking may pose a bigger health threat to women than men, say researchers. Women who smoke have a higher risk of cancer than men, Norwegian investigators found. They looked at the medical records of 600,000 patients and discovered the bowel cancer risk linked to smoking was twice as high in women than men. Female smokers had a 19% increased risk of the disease while male smokers had a 9% increased risk, [Cancer Epidemiology, Biomarkers & Prevention](#) reports. [BBC](#)

## To motivate patients to change, doctors stop scolding

29 April - Instead of telling patients what to do and scolding them when they don't do it, clinicians ask the individual what changes he or she is willing and able to make, and then promote patients' desire, confidence and commitment to following through. Doctors who lecture or give scary warnings can cause patients to become defensive and disengage, says Stephen Rollnick, a professor of health-care communication at Cardiff University, in Wales, and a founder of the nonprofit Motivational Interviewing Network of Trainers, whose members provide training, coaching and consultation in 35 countries. [Wall Street Journal](#)

## Two doses of HPV vaccine may be just as effective as three, study shows

30 April - The human papilloma virus (HPV) vaccine is widely viewed as an effective way to protect women from both cervical cancer and genital warts. But doctors suspect the high cost and inconvenience associated with the vaccine, which consist of three shots given over the course of six months, may be preventing women and young girls from receiving it. "It is one of the most expensive routinely used childhood vaccines," Dr. Simon R.M. Dobson, of the the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, told FoxNews.com This dilemma spurred Dobson and his colleagues to examine whether the vaccine could still be effective if doctors skipped the second shot, administering only the first and third doses. [Fox News](#)

[top of page...](#)

### USAFRICOM

---

## Madagascar: Food insecurity opens door to TB

1 May - Health experts fear the interruption of food assistance in Madagascar is increasing incidence of tuberculosis (TB) in Toliara, the capital city of Madagascar's southern Atsimo-Andrefana region. Malnutrition and TB are intimately linked: Malnutrition weakens the immune system, increasing [susceptibility to the disease](#), while TB reduces appetite, worsens the absorption of micronutrients and alters patients' metabolism. [IRIN](#)

## Nigeria: Polio eradication - what progress so far?

30 April - The 3rd African Vaccination Week (AVW), organized by the African Region of World Health Organization (WHO) April 22 to 28, 2013, came under the theme, 'Save Lives. Prevent disabilities. Vaccinate', and accomplished heightened continent-wide awareness of the place of routine immunization against vaccine-preventable diseases. All 46 member-states of WHO in the African region participated in efforts to strengthen immunization programmes around the continent against diphtheria, haemophilus influenzae serotype b infection, hepatitis B, influenza, measles, meningitis, mumps, pertussis, pneumococcal pneumonia, poliomyelitis (polio), rubella, tetanus, tuberculosis, and yellow fever. The ceremonies drew attention to the importance of immunization for children and why it is necessary to protect them against all vaccine-preventable diseases. [All Africa](#)

## Somalia: Building health systems from scratch



26 April - ...While the conflict is not over, insecurity has diminished since the withdrawal of insurgent group Al-Shabab in 2011. This relative security is allowing Mohamed to focus on preventative healthcare, a luxury she did not have two years ago. In March 2013, she admitted 26 cases with measles, 19 with tuberculosis, 14 with tetanus and nine with meningitis. She is frustrated because all of these diseases are immunizable. Six of the children admitted that month died. Mohamed hopes this year to immunize 1,000 children per month in the hospital's tiny but brightly painted vaccination room. Two volunteers sit at a desk, another monitors those coming in and out. They say they became volunteers when donors pulled out and staff were let go. By 1pm that day, they had vaccinated 28 children. "A huge improvement in a short time - if peace holds," Mohamed said. [IRIN](#)

## Somalia famine 'killed 260,000 people'



2 May - Nearly 260,000 people died during the famine that hit Somalia from 2010 to 2012, a study shows. Half of them were children under the age of five, says the report by the UN and the US-funded Famine Early Warning Systems Network (Fews Net). The UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) said humanitarian aid needed to be provided more quickly. The crisis was caused by a severe drought, worsened by conflict between rival groups fighting for power. The number of deaths was higher than the estimated 220,000 people who died during the 1992 famine. [BBC](#)

[top of page...](#)

## Arab cities aim to build resilience to natural disasters



29 April - Prevention may be better than a cure, but for the authorities in Arab cities and towns, natural disasters up to now have been largely about coping with them after they have taken place. "We react to disasters without any planning; we just go for the response, and you know that without any planning you can't do the proper things," Abdulmalek Al-Jolahy, first deputy minister at Yemen's Ministry of Public Works and Highways, told IRIN. But disaster prevention experts say the region took a step in the right direction this month, with the official finalization of the [Aqaba Declaration on Disaster Risk Reduction in Cities](#). [IRIN](#)

## Egypt: Female genital mutilation still widespread

30 April - Egyptian activists are concerned that the rise of Islamist politicians could undermine years of work to discourage female genital mutilation. The practice, and the movement against it, however, have far deeper roots in the country. To its supporters, it is a sign of purity, community and religious devotion. To its opponents, it marks the physical manifestation of a woman's degradation. [VOA](#)

## Saudi Arabia says five dead from new SARS-like virus

2 May - [Saudi Arabia](#) said five more people have died of a deadly new virus from the same family as SARS, and two other people were in intensive care. The seven cases were discovered in al-Ahsa governorate in the Eastern Province, the Saudi news agency SPA quoted the Saudi Health Ministry as saying in a statement late on Wednesday. A Saudi man died in March from the virus. [Reuters](#)

## Syria: Mass measles vaccination campaign for Syrian children underway

30 April - U.N. and international aid agencies are stepping up a vaccination campaign in Syria and neighboring countries to contain measles outbreaks in the region. The U.N. Children's Fund says many Syrian children are at risk of killer diseases because they are not receiving routine immunizations. The U.N. Children's Fund reports hundreds of cases of measles have broken out among children in Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq and Turkey over the past year. In the case of Turkey, UNICEF says some 3,000 to 4,000 measles cases have been reported across the country, including 300 among Syrian refugees. UNICEF spokeswoman Marixie Mercado said so far, no child has died from measles, but that could change at any time. [VOA](#)

[top of page...](#)

## European Immunization Week 2013 and new ECDC tools to support routine vaccination programmes

25 April - The eighth European Immunization Week (EIW) takes place between 22 and 27 April 2013 [1]. EIW promotes the core message that the immunisation of every child is vital to prevent diseases and protect life. This initiative is led and coordinated by the World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe (WHO/Europe) and implemented by the countries of the European Region. For one week in April, countries across the Region unite under the EIW slogan – Prevent. Protect. Immunize. – and carry out activities to inform and engage target audiences and to address challenges regarding immunisation. These activities include training sessions for healthcare workers, dissemination of informational materials, workshops, press conferences, among other things. [Eurosveillance](#)

## Russia: Psychiatric institution fire kills at least 38



26 April - At least 38 people are dead after a fire quickly spread through a one-story, wooden psychiatric facility north of Moscow. Russian investigators believe that the blaze may have been caused by a short circuit... Officials say many of the patients, ages 20-76, were heavily sedated due to severe mental issues. Those who were able to wake up tried to escape the flames through the windows, but many of them had bars on them. Russia's Emergency Ministry says that some of the windows had bars due to safety rules, but it is not known why other windows were blocked... Russia is no stranger to disasters. In 2011, more than 10 thousand people died in fires across the former Soviet Union. In the first nine months of 2012, more than 75,000 people died. [VOA](#)

## Turkey: Crimean-Congo hemorrhagic fever

1 May - A man died as a result of Crimean-Congo hemorrhagic fever (CCHF), a sometimes fatal viral disease contracted from a tick bite, in the Black Sea province of Tokat on Sat 27 Apr 2013. He had been bitten by a tick while taking care of his animals in the fields on 17 Apr 2013. He extracted the tick by himself and did not immediately seek professional attention. He was taken to Tokat State Hospital and later transferred to the Gaziosmanpasa University Research and Treatment Hospital when his condition deteriorated. Doctors at the Gaziosmanpasa hospital stated that the man is the 1st person to die due to CCHF this year [2013] in Turkey; however, some patients are currently receiving treatment for the disease in other hospitals. According to data released by the Ministry of Health, 174 people died as a result of CCHF in Turkey between 2002 and 2012. [ProMED-mail](#)

## United Kingdom: 'Heart-healing virus' trial starts

30 April - Patients in the UK have been enrolled into a trial to see if an engineered virus can be used to heal their damaged and struggling hearts. The trial will use a virus to introduce genetic material into heart muscle to reverse the organ's decline. The British Heart Foundation said the idea had "great potential" but needed to be proven in clinical trials.

[BBC](#)

[top of page...](#)

## USNORTHCOM

---

## U.S.-born kids have more allergies, asthma

29 April - Kids and teens who are born abroad and immigrate to the United States are about half as likely to have asthma and allergies as those who are born in the U.S., according to a new study. Researchers surveyed the parents of 80,000 children in one of six languages and found that association held even after they took into account where families lived and how often they moved, as well as their race and income. "This is definitely something we see clinically and we're trying to better understand, what is it in our environment that's increasing the risk of allergic disease?" said Dr. Ruchi Gupta, who studies allergies at the Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine in Chicago but wasn't involved in the new research. [Reuters](#)

## U.S.: California may have to move 3,000 inmates at risk for Valley fever

1 May - As many as 3,000 prison inmates in central California deemed to be at risk from a potentially lethal lung disease may need to be moved to other regions under an order from a court-appointed federal overseer. The directive, issued on Monday, marks the latest effort to stem cases of valley fever, or coccidioidomycosis, at two prisons where the disease was found to have contributed to the deaths of nearly three dozen inmates from 2006 to 2011.

[Reuters](#)

## U.S.: HIV vaccine study cancelled



26 April - The U.S. National Institutes of Health has cancelled a study testing an experimental HIV vaccine because scientists concluded it did not prevent infection or reduce the amount of HIV in the blood. HIV is the virus that causes AIDS. The so-called HVTN 505 study began in 2009 and is one of several such studies underway to find an effective AIDS vaccine. The study involved over 2,500 volunteers, specifically men who have sex with men and transgender people who have sex with men. [VOA](#)

## U.S.: Over-diagnosis and over-treatment of depression is common

30 April - Americans are over-diagnosed and over-treated for depression, according to a new study conducted at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. The study examines adults with clinician-identified depression and individuals who experienced major depressive episodes within a 12-month period. It found that when assessed for major depressive episodes using a structured interview, only 38.4 percent of adults with clinician-identified depression met the 12-month criteria for depression, despite the majority of participants being prescribed and using psychiatric medications. [Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health News](#)

## U.S.: Suicide among adults aged 35–64 years, 1999–2010

3 May - ...To investigate trends in suicide rates among adults aged 35–64 years over the last decade, CDC analyzed National Vital Statistics System (NVSS) mortality data from 1999–2010. Trends in suicide rates were examined by sex, age group, race/ethnicity, state and region of residence, and mechanism of suicide. The results of this analysis indicated that the annual, age-adjusted suicide rate among persons aged 35–64 years increased 28.4%, from 13.7 per 100,000 population in 1999 to 17.6 in 2010. Among racial/ethnic populations, the greatest increases were observed among American Indian/Alaska Natives (AI/ANs) (65.2%, from 11.2 to 18.5) and whites (40.4%, from 15.9 to 22.3). By mechanism, the greatest increase was observed for use of suffocation (81.3%, from 2.3 to 4.1), followed by poisoning (24.4%, from 3.0 to 3.8) and firearms (14.4%, from 7.2 to 8.3). The findings underscore the need for suicide preventive measures directed toward middle-aged populations. [Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report](#)

## U.S.: Task force calls for routine HIV testing for all adults

29 April - An influential U.S. panel is calling for HIV screening for all Americans aged 15 to 65, regardless of whether they are considered to be at high risk, a change that may help lift some of the stigma associated with HIV testing. The new guidelines from the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF), a government-backed panel of doctors and scientists, now align with longstanding recommendations by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for testing of all adults aged 15 to 65, regardless of their risk. Guidelines issued by the USPSTF in 2005 had recommended HIV screening for high-risk individuals. [Reuters](#)

[top of page...](#)

## Can disaster risk reduction lessons be learned from China?

29 April - China, which annually faces almost every disaster possible - including earthquakes, floods, cyclones and landslides - is doing something right in the field of disaster risk reduction (DRR), experts say. "China has learned from the experience of many years of heavy human and economic losses how important it is to put a cap on annual acceptable losses if it is to succeed in protecting its economic and social development. It is now aiming to keep disaster losses at no more than 1.5 percent loss of GDP," UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General for DRR Margareta Wahlström told IRIN on 29 April. "They are the first government in the world to publicly announce such a move and we hope others will follow this example." [IRIN](#)

## India: Hospital roof collapses, injuring 8

26 April - Part of a hospital building collapsed in central India on Friday after its roof came crashing down, injuring at least eight people, an official said. More than a dozen people were rescued after being trapped in the rubble of the Kasturba Gandhi Hospital in Bhopal, the capital of Madhya Pradesh state, state minister Babu Lal Gaur said. None of the injuries were serious. Police officer Upendra Jain said about two dozen people were believed to be on the first floor of the women's medical ward when its roof crashed down. The cause of the collapse was not immediately known. The hospital is operated by state-run Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd., Gaur said. Bhopal is about 750 kilometers (465 miles) south of New Delhi. [USA Today](#)

## New Caledonia: Chikungunya

30 April - The authorities in New Caledonia have confirmed that 3 people have been infected with chikungunya [virus]. A woman with chikungunya [virus infection] was identified in Poindimie in the far north. She had come from the Noumea area where authorities believe she was infected with the mosquitoborne disease, which has spread from Indonesia to Papua New Guinea. This comes as health services are stretched by a dengue outbreak, which this season has affected more than 8000 people and killed 3. The head of public health, Dr Jean Paul Grangeon, has appealed to the public to be very vigilant and to take measures to eliminate breeding grounds for the mosquitoes. He says chikungunya symptoms, such as fever and pains, are more severe than dengue, with possible relapses for several years. [ProMED-mail](#)

## Singapore: Dengue cases continue to rise



29 April - The number of dengue cases continues to rise, reaching almost 539 for the week ending April 27th. This is the highest weekly number recorded, since the last major outbreak in 2005. The total number of dengue cases so far this year has now hit more than 5,385, compared to last year's total of more than 4,632. The National Environment Agency provided these figures on Monday, a day after a national campaign was launched as part of concerted efforts to curb the epidemic. [Channel News Asia](#)

## Sri Lanka: Malaria, imported

30 April - Health officials have warned that although malaria is on the brink of being eliminated in Sri Lanka, there could be a re-emergence of the disease due to a rise in the number of "imported" cases. "We had 70 "imported" cases of malaria as against 23 indigenous cases last year [2012]. The imported cases included a large number of refugees who arrived from Benin in West Africa; they were tested at the airport and 50 were found to be positive. The rest were from India and Pakistan," Anti Malaria Campaign (AMC) sources told the Sunday Observer. They said due to sustained awareness programs by the AMC to eradicate the disease, the parasite reservoir in the island was now absent. "The risk is that the malaria vector is still abundant during long drought periods, especially in the North Central Province in areas such as Hambantota, Anuradhapura, Polonnaruwa, Mullaitivu, and Mannar. If someone brings the parasite with them after visiting a malaria-prone country such as African countries and India, there is a chance for another outbreak of the disease," they warned. [ProMED-mail](#)

[top of page...](#)

## USSOUTHCOM

---

## Argentina: In therapy? In Argentina, it's the norm

28 April - ...It's not just psychoanalysis that's popular in Argentina. The country has the distinction of being home to more psychologists per capita than anywhere else in the world. Almost half the country's psychologists are concentrated in the capital city of Buenos Aires. Portenos -- that's what residents of Buenos Aires call themselves -- say they don't have the same stigma about seeking mental health treatment as Americans. Whereas mental health treatment in the United States might be seen as something to keep secret, it's common in Buenos Aires to talk about emotional problems or what's going on in therapy. [CNN](#)

## Latin America threatened by mounting cancer epidemic

26 April - Latin America's growing prosperity is fueling a cancer epidemic that threatens to overwhelm the region unless governments take urgent preventive action, a study published on Friday warned. A multinational team of researchers found the current state of cancer

care and prevention in Latin America is incompatible with the socioeconomic changes taking place in the region, where an increasingly urban populace faces mounting lifestyle-related cancer risks. [VOA](#)

[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.

