

5 April 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.

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Article: **Health of women after wartime deployments**

## Cognitive Rehabilitation Therapy for Traumatic Brain Injury: Model Study Protocols and Frameworks to Advance the State of the Science

As the signature wound of the American military conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, TBI has increasingly gained attention over the past 15 years. As one form of treatment for TBI, CRT is a systematic, goal-oriented approach to helping patients overcome cognitive impairments.

The 2011 IOM report's conclusions revolved around the fact that there is little continuity among research studies of the effectiveness of different types of CRT, and there exist only small amounts of evidence demonstrating

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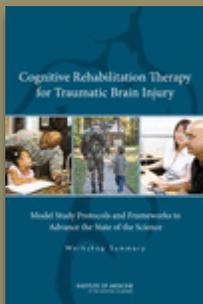
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the effectiveness of using CRT to treat TBI, though the small amount of evidence generally indicates that CRT interventions have some effectiveness.

In October 2012, the IOM held a workshop to discuss the barriers for evaluating the effectiveness of CRT care and for identifying suggested taxonomy, terminology, timing, and ways forward for CRT research. This document summarizes the workshop.



### 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

### Army researches small device to reduce female UTIs

3 April - ...The most common health risk for deployed military women is urinary tract infection, or UTI, according to [Lt. Col. Nancy] Steele and other military researchers. UTI is often a result of reduced hydration and voluntarily holding urine for a prolonged time, counter measures some women have taken in order avoid exposure to potential dangers or difficult situations. But Female Urinary Diversion Devices, known as FUDDs, are changing that habit by allowing for both "privacy and protection," said Capt. Kelly Hasselman, the female engagement team, or FET, commander for 1st Brigade, 1st Armored Division, in Kandahar, Afghanistan... [The] push to get the devices into the inventory for her female Soldiers seems to be welcome.... The Soldiers of the FET presented some suggestions for improving the device, including a mesh carrying case, and offering options on how other gear might be redesigned to better accommodate for its use. [Army.mil](#)

### Drinking, drugs more common for kids of deployed

3 April - Teens and preteens with a parent deployed in the military may be more likely to binge drink or misuse prescription drugs, according to a new study... Arndt and his colleagues analyzed statewide survey data from Iowa students in 2010, when 1.2 million American children had a parent in the active duty military. They compared data from 1,700 kids of deployed parents and 57,000 kids from non-military families, including sixth, eighth and 11th graders. Twelve percent of sixth graders with a deployed parent had tried alcohol and seven percent had consumed five or more drinks in one sitting, compared to four and two percent of children of non-military parents, respectively. Among eleventh graders, 29 percent of military children had binge drank in the past month and 15 percent had smoked pot, compared to 22 percent and 10 percent of non-military kids. Fifteen percent of all kids and teens in the deployed-parent group compared to seven percent of other youth had misused prescription drugs in the past month, the researchers reported in the journal *Addiction*. [Reuters](#)

### External causes of traumatic brain injury, 2000-2011

March 2013 - This report summarizes frequencies, distributions, and trends of external causes of traumatic brain injuries (TBIs) that are recorded on standardized records of medical encounters of U.S. military members. Causes of TBI were reported for 100 percent of cases hospitalized in military facilities, but were relatively infrequently reported in other treatment settings (i.e., military outpatient facilities, combat theater and civilian medical facilities). During 2008-2011 in all clinical settings combined, 24,115 service members had TBI case-defining medical encounters with recorded injury causes. Accidents represented 74 percent of recorded causes; the most frequently reported specific causes were motor vehicle traffic accidents (20%), falls (20%), and being struck by or struck against an object (15%). Similar proportions of TBIs were reportedly due to intentional "assaults" unrelated to war (11%) and "battle injuries" (11%). [Medical Surveillance Monthly Report](#)

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## Fact sheet: BRAIN initiative

2 April - ... [T]he President unveiled a bold new research initiative designed to revolutionize our understanding of the human brain. Launched with approximately \$100 million in the President's Fiscal Year 2014 Budget, the BRAIN (Brain Research through Advancing Innovative Neurotechnologies) Initiative ultimately aims to help researchers find new ways to treat, cure, and even prevent brain disorders, such as Alzheimer's disease, epilepsy, and traumatic brain injury. The BRAIN Initiative will accelerate the development and application of new technologies that will enable researchers to produce dynamic pictures of the brain that show how individual brain cells and complex neural circuits interact at the speed of thought... DARPA is interested in applications—such as a new generation of information processing systems and restoration mechanisms—that dramatically improve the way we diagnose and treat warfighters suffering from post-traumatic stress, brain injury, and memory loss. [The White House](#)

## How deployment stress affects families

2013 - Even when we are not at war, military families often deal with stresses such as frequent moves or the absence of a parent. Deployment to war creates additional issues for a family to handle. Families face a number of challenges before, during, and after deployment. This emotional cycle of deployment begins when news of deployment is released to the family. It starts with a short period of strong emotions, such as fear and anger. As departure grows closer, a period of detachment and withdrawal may occur. This can happen to prepare for the person being physically gone. [Military.com](#)

## New survey reveals troops' drinking, drug use

1 April - A new worldwide survey of active-duty troops shows that they are engaging in harmful behaviors less than they did in 2008, with incidents of binge drinking, smoking, illegal drug use and suicide attempts on the decline. [Army Times](#)

## Veterans seeking mental health care for sexual assault face unacceptable hurdles

4 April - [A report](#) released last week by the Institute of Medicine that assessed the health needs of Iraq and Afghanistan war veterans made national headlines by revisiting the high rate of sexual assault in the U.S. armed forces. While the Pentagon estimates that as many as one in three women experience sexual assault while serving in the military and 86 percent of these crimes go unreported, one particularly chilling study cited in the report showed that servicewomen who experience sexual assault in the military are nine times more likely to develop post-traumatic stress disorder, or PTSD, compared to other female veterans. What the report failed to mention is that when female veterans seek mental health services through the Department of Veterans Affairs, or VA, for PTSD related to sexual assault, they face long wait times, and their claims are more likely than other PTSD claims to be dismissed because of a lack of documentation. [Center for American Progress](#)

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## Body's anti-HIV 'training manual' offers vaccine hopes

3 April - The body's own "training manual" for attacking HIV has been recorded by US scientists and it is hoped it can be used to design vaccines. HIV mutates in order to survive the onslaught of a patient's immune system. However, some patients develop highly effective antibodies that can neutralise huge swathes of HIV mutants... When someone is infected with HIV, their body produces antibodies to attack it. But the virus mutates and evades the offensive, so the body produces new antibodies that the virus then evades and the war goes on. However, after about four years of this struggle some patients hit on to a winner by targeting something the virus finds harder to change - an Achilles heel... some researchers believe that vaccines that encourage the body to produce these "broadly neutralising antibodies" may give people immunity to the virus. [BBC News](#)

## Cystic fibrosis bug 'can spread between patients'



30 March - A dangerous infection which is becoming more common in people with cystic fibrosis can spread between patients, UK researchers say in *The Lancet*. Doctors previously thought the *Mycobacterium abscessus* bacteria could only be caught from water and soil. But hospitals around the world may now have to change the way patients are treated, the study says. Around 3-10% of cystic fibrosis patients in Europe and the US are infected with the hard-to-treat bug. There are around 9,000 people with cystic fibrosis in the UK although around one-in-25 people carries the faulty gene which causes the condition. [BBC](#)

## On Twitter, anti-vaccination sentiments spread more easily than pro-vaccination sentiments

4 April - On Twitter, a popular microblogging and social-networking service, statements about vaccines may have unexpected effects -- positive messages may backfire, according to a team of Penn State University researchers led by Marcel Salathé, an assistant professor of biology. The team tracked the pro-vaccine and anti-vaccine messages to which Twitter users were exposed and then observed how those users expressed their own sentiments about a new vaccine for combating influenza H1N1 -- a virus strain responsible for swine flu. The results... may help health officials improve strategies for vaccination-awareness efforts. [EurekaAlert!](#)

## Polio to be eradicated by 2018

3 April - The World Health Organization has stated that they aim to eradicate polio by the year 2018. Since 1988, when the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI) was launched, immunization efforts have significantly reduced the number of polio cases. However, in order to achieve full eradication of the disease, there needs to be a great deal more

funding. They estimate that the six year plan to eradicate the polio will cost close to \$5.5 billion. Through a series of immunization efforts, the incidence of polio has decreased by more than 99 percent since 1988 - when it was endemic in more than 125 countries.

[Medical News Today](#)

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## INFLUENZA

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### Armed Forces Health Surveillance Center: DoD Influenza Surveillance Summary

- In Week 12 (through 23 March 2013), ILI and Pneumonia and Influenza (P&I) incidence rates continued to decrease in all regions except ILI unvaccinated rates in EUCOM, which increased this week. This season, there have been 295 reportable medical event (RME) influenza cases among service members (82.0% were vaccinated); an additional 311 cases have been reported among other beneficiaries.
- Across the overseas DoD laboratory surveillance network, influenza activity was at low levels except in Europe, where moderate levels of influenza activity were detected with co-circulation of influenza A/H1, A/H3, and B.
- Current vaccine coverage in the active component of the U.S. Armed Forces is 97%.  
[AFHSC DoD Influenza Surveillance Summary](#)

### CDC: Weekly Influenza Surveillance Report

During week 12 (March 17 – 23, 2013), influenza activity decreased in the United States.

- Viral Surveillance: Of 5,332 specimens tested and reported by collaborating laboratories, 702 (13.2%) were positive for influenza.
- Pneumonia and Influenza Mortality: The proportion of deaths attributed to pneumonia and influenza (P&I) was at the epidemic threshold.
- Influenza-Associated Pediatric Deaths: Five pediatric deaths were reported.
- Geographic Spread of Influenza: Six states reported widespread influenza activity; Puerto Rico and 8 states reported regional influenza activity. [FluView](#)

### DoD Global Laboratory-Based Influenza Surveillance Program

- During Week 12, 52 specimens were tested from 23 locations. There was one influenza A(H3N2) virus and 16 influenza B viruses detected (see Table 1).
- To date this influenza season, 3,332 specimens have been tested from 80 locations of which 1,031 were positive for influenza A (924 A(H3N2), 96 A(H1N1)pdm09, five co-

infections, and six A/not subtyped).

- To date this influenza season, 297 were positive for influenza B. The onset of influenza B cases compared to influenza A has been somewhat later in the season.
- There have been 216 other respiratory viruses isolated (48 adenovirus, 88 RSV, 71 parainfluenza, and nine enterovirus) cumulatively this season. [USAF School of Aerospace Medicine](#)

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

During week 12/2013 (18-24 March 2013):

- Nine countries reported wide geographic spread with seven of them reporting medium intensity activity.
- Decreasing or stable trends were reported by almost all reporting countries.
- 45% of tested sentinel specimens were positive for influenza virus. This proportion has declined since week 5/2013, but still remained at a high level, consistent with continuing significant influenza activity.
- 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(H1N1)pdm09 viruses has been 63%.

In all reporting countries, influenza activity continued to decline or had already returned to baseline levels. [Weekly Influenza Surveillance Overview](#)

## Google.org: Flu Trends

5 April – Estimates of flu activity based on certain Internet search queries indicate that the level of flu activity in the northern hemisphere ranges from minimal in Bulgaria to high in Russia and in the southern hemisphere ranges from minimal to low. [Google.org Flu Trends](#)

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

For the week ending 23 March 2013:

- Influenza: There was one case of NHRC laboratory-confirmed influenza A/H1N1 and three cases of influenza B among US military basic trainees.
- Adenovirus: Sporadic adenovirus cases at basic training centers in early 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](#)

## USAPHC: U.S. Army Influenza Activity Report

For the week ending 23 March 2013 (Week 12), Army influenza-like illness (ILI) activity continues decreasing. The CDC reports the proportion of civilian outpatient visits for ILI is

now below the national baseline of 2.2%. Influenza B continues to exceed influenza A among typed specimens in both the Army and civilian populations.

- ILI Activity: Army incident ILI outpatient visits in week 12 were 3% higher than the same week last year.
- Influenza cases: One hospitalized influenza case was reported to USAPHC in week 12. 91 hospitalized cases have been reported during this influenza season, 79 in dependents and 12 in Active Duty.
- Acute Respiratory Disease at BCT sites: ARD rates remain low; rates did not increase significantly at any sites during week 12.
- Viral specimens: During week 12, 190 of 924 (21%) laboratory specimens tested were positive for respiratory pathogens. Influenza B accounted for 51% of positive specimens. Most of the influenza positive specimens were from ERM (44%); 18% were from PRM, and 16% from WRM. [USAPHC U.S. Army Influenza Activity Report](#)

## PANDEMIC AND AVIAN INFLUENZA

### China: Human infection with influenza A(H7N9) virus in China - update

4 April – On 4 April 2013 (14:00 CET), the Chinese health authorities notified WHO of an additional four laboratory-confirmed cases, including three deaths, due to human infection with influenza A(H7N9)... There is no link between the laboratory-confirmed cases. To date, the total number of confirmed cases of human infection with influenza A(H7N9) virus in China is 11, including 5 deaths. More than 400 close contacts of the confirmed cases are being closely monitored. Thus far, none of them have developed any symptoms of illness. The Chinese government is actively investigating this event and has heightened disease surveillance. Retrospective testing of recently reported cases with severe respiratory infection may uncover additional cases that were previously unrecognized. An inter-government task force has been formally established, with the National Health and Family Planning Commission leading the coordination along with the Ministry of Agriculture and other key ministries. The animal health sector has intensified investigations into the possible sources and reservoirs of the virus. [WHO](#)

### H5N1 cases dropped in 2012, but fatality rate rose

2 April – The world registered fewer human infections with H5N1 avian influenza in 2012, but the fatality rate was a little higher than in previous years, the World Health Organization (WHO) noted in a recent review of the year's data... Thirty-two human H5N1 cases were confirmed last year, as compared with 62 in 2011, 48 in 2010, and 73 in 2009, the WHO reported. There were 11 cases in Egypt in 2012, 9 in Indonesia, 4 in Vietnam, 3 in Cambodia, 3 in Bangladesh, and 2 in China. The virus is considered endemic in poultry in five of those six countries, and a recent study suggested it is endemic in the sixth, Cambodia, as well...

The case-fatality rate for confirmed cases in 2012 was 62.5% (20 of 32 cases), the report says. That topped the 55% for 2011, 50% in 2010, and 44% in 2009, but it was still close to the overall CFR of 59% (360 of 610) for cases reported to the WHO since 2003. [CIDRAP](#)

## Scientists race to gauge pandemic risk of new bird flu

3 April - Genetic sequence data on a deadly strain of bird flu previously unknown in people show the virus has already acquired some mutations that might make it more likely to cause a human pandemic, scientists say. But there is no evidence so far that the H7N9 flu - now known to have infected nine people in [China](#), killing three - is spreading from person to person, and there is still a chance it might peter out and never fully mutate into a human form of flu. Just days after authorities in [China](#) announced they had identified cases of H7N9, flu experts in laboratories across the world are picking through the DNA sequence data of samples isolated from the patients to assess its pandemic potential. One of the world's top flu experts, Ab Osterhaus, who is based at the Erasmus Medical Center in The Netherlands, says the sequences show some genetic mutations that should put authorities on alert and entail increased surveillance in animals and humans. "The virus has to a certain extent already adapted to mammalian species and to humans, so from that point of view it's worrisome," he told Reuters in a telephone interview. [Reuters](#)

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### VETERINARY/FOOD SAFETY

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## Canada: Botulism, gefilte fish

31 March - The Canadian Food Inspection Agency and Central-Epicure Food Products Limited are warning the public to not consume 2 of their gefilte fish brands. The Central-Epicure Ready to Serve Sweet and Ready to Serve Savoury gefilte fish products may be contaminated with *Clostridium botulinum*; toxins produced by these bacteria can cause botulism, a life-threatening illness. The fish was sold in Ontario and Quebec in 600 gram packages with a best before date of 13 Apr 2013 (UPC code 061279 00440 3 & 061279 00440 7). There have been no illnesses reported in association with the product. [ProMED-mail](#)

## U.S.: E. coli outbreak sickens 24, CDC

29 March - A U.S. outbreak of E. coli has sickened 24 people, with Farm Rich frozen food suspected as a likely source of the infection, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said on Friday. The outbreak strain of Shiga toxin-producing Escherichia coli O121, or STEC O121, has been reported in 15 states, the CDC said in a statement. New York state health officials found the strain in an open package of Farm Rich brand frozen chicken quesadillas from an ill person's home, the CDC said. [Reuters](#)

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## WELLNESS

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### As world meat consumption grows, US appetite wanes

For the first time on record, U.S. per-capita meat consumption has declined for four consecutive years, according to the most recent figures from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The six percent drop between 2006 and 2010 is the largest sustained decline since recordkeeping began in 1970. Reasons for the decline are at least partly economic: rising prices and a bad U.S. economy have made meat less affordable for American consumers. But there are intriguing signs that a cultural shift may be underway, as well. [VOA](#)

### Blood test might spot pancreatic cancer early, study finds

29 March - A new blood test that detects deadly pancreatic cancer earlier than usual might slightly improve patients' odds for survival, a small Japanese study suggests. "This new diagnostic test may be a safe and easy screening method that could improve the prognosis of patients with pancreatic cancer through earlier detection," said lead researcher Dr. Masaru Yoshida, an associate professor in the division of metabolomics research at Kobe University Graduate School of Medicine. "A drop of blood contains a lot of information." Currently, the 5-year survival rate for pancreatic cancer is less than 5 percent, largely because the cancer usually has spread by the time it is detected. The new approach relies on metabolomics technology, an emerging science that focuses on small molecules. The blood test measures byproducts of metabolism, called metabolites, found in the blood.

[Medline Plus](#)

### Eat fish, live longer?

1 April - Regularly eating fish rich in omega-3 fatty acids might lengthen your life, new research suggests. A study of more than 2,600 older adults found those with the highest blood levels of omega-3 fatty acids -- found in salmon, mackerel, herring, lake trout and albacore tuna -- lived more than two years longer on average than those with lower blood levels. "This is not a study of fish oil supplements, it's a study of blood omega-3 levels related to diet," said researcher Dr. Dariush Mozaffarian, an associate professor of epidemiology at the Harvard School of Public Health in Boston. The study, published April 1 in the journal *Annals of Internal Medicine*, doesn't prove that eating fish will increase longevity, but it does suggest a connection. [U.S. News and World Report](#)

### Male baldness 'indicates heart risk'

3 April - Men going thin on top may be more likely to have heart problems than their friends with a full head of hair, according to researchers in Japan. Their study of nearly 37,000 people, published in the online journal *BMJ Open*, said balding men were 32% more likely to have coronary heart disease. However, the researchers said the risks were less than for smoking or obesity... They showed that hair that went thin on the crown was associated with coronary heart disease. This was after adjusting for other risk factors such as age and family history. [BBC News](#)

## Sleep on it: How snoozing strengthens memories



April 2013 - When you learn something new, the best way to remember it is to sleep on it. That's because sleeping helps strengthen memories you've formed throughout the day. It also helps to link new memories to earlier ones. You might even come up with creative new ideas while you slumber. What happens to memories in your brain while you sleep?

And how does lack of sleep affect your ability to learn and remember? NIH-funded scientists have been gathering clues about the complex relationship between sleep and memory. Their findings might eventually lead to new approaches to help students learn or help older people hold onto memories as they age. [NIH News in Health](#)

## When a smoker lights-up may increase risk

2 April - The health risks of cigarette smoking are well known, such as cancer, emphysema and cardiovascular disease. But new research shows that when you smoke can make it even more risky. Tobacco remains the leading cause of preventable death, according to the World Health Organization. It estimates six million people die every year from smoking-related illnesses, most in low and middle income countries. A new study looks at smokers, who light-up right after waking up each morning. Penn State University researchers say those smokers are more likely to develop lung or oral cancer. [VOA](#)

## You are what you eat -- even the littlest bites

28 March - Sometimes you just can't resist a tiny piece of chocolate cake. Even the most health-conscious eaters find themselves indulging in junk foods from time to time. New research by scientists at the University of Massachusetts Medical School (UMMS) raises the striking possibility that even small amounts of these occasional indulgences may produce significant changes in gene expression that could negatively impact physiology and health. [Science Daily](#)

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### USAFRICOM

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## Democratic Republic of Congo: Boost for healthcare

31 March - The British government has [announced](#) a major new programme aimed at providing essential healthcare to six million people in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The five-year, US\$270.7 million project will focus on rebuilding health facilities, training health workers, and supplying drugs and equipment. Civil war has destroyed much of the country's health infrastructure, as well as the road networks and vital services such as electricity, meaning patients often have to travel long distances to health centres that may not be equipped to handle their complications. [IRIN](#)

## Nigeria: Lassa fever, fatality

1 April - Lassa fever has killed one in person in Rivers state. Rivers State Commissioner for Health Dr. Sampson Parker, who disclosed this to a journalist in Port Harcourt, said the deceased died at the University of Port Harcourt Teaching Hospital before help could come his way. He said: "Just a few days ago, my attention was drawn to the isolation of the virus in a suspected case, and we lost the patient before any spirited attempt could be made to rescue him." The commissioner said the state government has risen to the challenges of the Lassa fever outbreak by intensifying surveillance and consolidating the established control structures...He said the state government has procured sufficient drugs and consumables to manage exposed persons and called on the people to maintain the best hygiene and cleanliness as well as to keep rodents out of their houses and working places. Last year [2012], the state recorded an outbreak of Lassa fever which claimed many lives. [ProMED-mail](#)

## Swaziland's dental dilemma

3 April - Having a toothache in Swaziland can be a lot more painful than it is in many other places. Most Swazis have never visited a dentist, because in a country where 70 percent of the population lives in absolute poverty, oral hygiene is considered a luxury. Swaziland's 1.2 million people are served by only nine private dentists: five are in the capital, Mbabane, four are doing business in the central commercial hub, Manzini, and one is located in the up-scale Mbabane suburb of Ezulwini. A further 15 dental practitioners are employed by the Ministry of Health, including nurses and dental hygienists, but none are specialists who can perform such procedures as root canal work or the fitting of false teeth. [IRIN](#)

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## USCENTCOM

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## Pakistan: Fighting in Pakistan's Tirah Valley displaces 40,000 people

1 April - Around 40,000 residents of Pakistan's Tirah Valley, close to the border with Afghanistan, have fled their homes after renewed fighting in the last few weeks, according to the Disaster Management Authority in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FDMA)... According to the Geneva-based Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, some 750,000 persons are already internally displaced in Pakistan due to conflict and natural disasters. [IRIN](#)

## Pakistan: Measles - 59 cases reported in the past three months

5 April - ...According to the World Health Organisation's (WHO) Weekly Epidemiological Bulletin – Disease early warning system (DEWS) and response in Pakistan, 59 cases of measles have been reported in the Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) so far this year.

According to the WHO, this figure climbs to a staggering 8,532 cases across the country, including 218 deaths. [Express Tribune](#)

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#### USEUCOM

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## Anthrax among heroin users in Europe possibly caused by same *Bacillus anthracis* strain since 2000

28 March - Injection anthrax was described first in 2000 in a heroin-injecting drug user in Norway. New anthrax cases among heroin consumers were detected in the United Kingdom (52 cases) and Germany (3 cases) in 2009-10. In June 2012, a fatal case occurred in Regensburg, Bavaria. As of December 2012, 13 cases had been reported in this new outbreak from Germany, Denmark, France and the United Kingdom. We analysed isolates from 2009-10 and 2012 as well as from the first injection anthrax case in Norway in 2000 by comparative molecular typing using a high resolution 31 marker multilocus variable-number tandem repeat analysis (MLVA) and a broad single nucleotide polymorphism (SNP) analysis. Our results show that all cases may be traced back to the same outbreak strain. They also indicate the probability of a single source contaminating heroin and that the outbreak could have lasted for at least a decade. However, an additional serological pilot study in two German regions conducted in 2011 failed to discover additional anthrax cases among 288 heroin users. [Eurosurveillance](#)

## United Kingdom: Male bowel cancer on the increase, says Cancer Research UK

1 April - Bowel cancer rates among men have increased by more than a quarter in the last 35 years, a report has suggested. The Cancer Research UK study said this contrasted with a rise of just 6% in the rate for women over the same time. However, bowel cancer survival rates are improving with half of all patients living for at least 10 years after being diagnosed. It is not known why there should be such a large difference in the increase in rates between men and women. [BBC](#)

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#### USNORTHCOM

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## Mexico: Staying HIV-free for \$288

1 April - A new study suggests that most young gay men in Mexico City would pledge to stay [H.I.V.](#)-free, attend a monthly safe-sex talk and take regular H.I.V. tests to prove they were uninfected — all in return for just \$288 a year. Most male prostitutes would make the

same promise for \$156 a year, the study found. Because each person receiving H.I.V. treatment costs Mexico's public health system up to \$7,000 a year for drugs alone, payments that encourage men to stay uninfected could be a bargain, the authors argue.

[New York Times](#)

## U.S.: About one in five teen births a repeat pregnancy

3 April - Teen birth rates have been falling in the United States over the last 20 years, but that doesn't mean that it still isn't an issue. More than 365,000 girls between the ages of 15 to 19 gave birth in 2010, and almost 20 percent of them had previously given birth, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said in a [Vital Signs](#) report... The majority of repeat teen births (86 percent) are second births, but 13 percent of repeat births are a third child. Fourth through sixth pregnancies accounted for 2 percent of repeat teen births. [CBS](#)

[News](#)

## U.S.: A.D.H.D. seen in 11% of children as diagnoses rise

31 March - Nearly one in five high school age boys in the United States and 11 percent of school-age children over all have received a medical diagnosis of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, according to new data from the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. These rates reflect a marked rise over the last decade and could fuel growing concern among many doctors that the A.D.H.D. diagnosis and its medication are overused in American children. [New York Times](#)

## U.S.: As OSHA emphasizes safety, long-term health risks fester

30 March - ...Medical researchers, government officials and even chemical companies that once manufactured [n-propyl bromide, or nPB ] have warned for over a decade that it causes neurological damage and infertility when inhaled at low levels over long periods, but its use has grown 15-fold in the past six years. Such hazards demonstrate the difficulty, despite decades of effort, of ensuring that Americans can breathe clean air on the job. Even as worker after worker fell ill, records from the [Occupational Safety and Health](#)

[Administration](#) show that managers at Royale Comfort Seating, where Ms. Farley was employed, repeatedly exposed gluers to nPB levels that exceeded levels federal officials considered safe, failed to provide respirators and turned off fans meant to vent fumes. [New York Times](#)

## U.S.: CDC releases its first guidelines on managing Q fever

29 March - The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) this week released its first set of national guidelines for the diagnosis and management of Q fever, a zoonotic disease caused by the bacterium *Coxiella burnetii*. The pathogen is listed by the CDC as a Category B bioterrorism agent, meaning it is moderately easy to disseminate and causes moderate morbidity and low mortality. Because diagnosing Q fever is difficult, it has long been considered an underreported illness, the CDC says. Infection is usually caused by

inhaling bacteria from animal waste or soil, and the disease is an occupational risk for farmers and others who work with livestock. [CIDRAP News Scan](#)

## U.S.: FDA gives nod to longer use of nicotine patch, gum



1 April - Smokers who are trying to quit can use over-the-counter nicotine replacement gums, lozenges and skin patches for a longer period of time than previously recommended, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration announced Monday. Any nicotine-containing product is potentially addictive, but decades of research and use have shown that these products do not carry a high risk for abuse or dependence, according to the agency. Certain other warnings and limitations that were listed on the products' labels are also no longer necessary, the FDA said. This includes a warning that people should not use a nicotine replacement product if they are still smoking, chewing tobacco, using snuff or any other product that contains nicotine, including another nicotine replacement product. [Medline Plus](#)

## U.S.: NBSB unveils situational awareness, SNS recommendations

3 April – The National Biodefense Science Board (NBSB) today forwarded two sets of recommendations to federal departments that oversee emergency preparedness, one focused on enhancing situational awareness in health emergencies and the other on improving the nation's Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) by 2020... In its draft of the situational awareness report, the NBSB's key recommendation was that the HHS secretary designate a central situational awareness authority to coordinate all public health and healthcare situational awareness that has been collected, processed, and analyzed by agencies at the national level. [CIDRAP](#)

## U.S.: Self-reported hypertension and use of antihypertensive medication among adults

5 April - ...In 2009, the age-adjusted prevalence of self-reported hypertension ranged from 20.9% in Minnesota to 35.9% in Mississippi. The proportion reporting use of antihypertensive medications among those who reported hypertension ranged from 52.3% in California to 74.1% in Tennessee. From 2005 to 2009, nearly all states had an increased prevalence of self-reported hypertension, with percentage-point increases ranging from 0.2 for Virginia (from 26.9% to 27.1%) to 7.0 for Kentucky (from 27.5% to 34.5%). Overall, from 2005 to 2009, the prevalence of self-reported hypertension among U.S. adults increased from 25.8% to 28.3%. Among those reporting hypertension, the proportion using antihypertensive medications increased from 61.1% to 62.6%. [Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report](#)

## U.S.: Tulsa dentist may have put 7,000 patients at HIV risk

29 March - Health officials in the US state of Oklahoma have warned 7,000 patients their dentist may have exposed them to HIV and hepatitis B and C. Patients of Dr W Scott Harrington's practice in Tulsa were advised to test themselves at a free clinic set up by the state, health officials said. Health inspectors found rusty dental instruments and poor hygiene standards at the clinic. Dr Harrington has voluntarily closed the practice, officials said. [BBC](#)

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### USPACOM

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## Bangladesh reports 5 more Nipah virus cases, 4 fatal

3 April - Bangladesh has had 24 Nipah virus infections with 21 deaths so far this year, an increase of 5 cases and 4 deaths since the previous update on Mar 12, the country's Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research (IEDCR) reported yesterday. The cases have occurred in 14 districts, with patients ranging from 8 months to 60 years old. The virus spreads through drinking raw date palm sap and close contact with an infected person. Previous reports said Bangladesh had an average of 18 Nipah virus cases per year from 2001 through 2011. [CIDRAP News Scan](#)

## China's air pollution linked to millions of early deaths



2 April - More than 1 million people are dying prematurely every year from air pollution in China, according to a new analysis. "This is the highest toll in the world and it really reflects the very high levels of air pollution that exist in China today," says Robert O'Keefe of the Health Effects

Institute in Boston, who presented the findings in Beijing this week. Alarm has been growing in recent years about the air in China. On many days in many cities, it's thick with smog... In fact, about two-thirds of all the deaths from air pollution are now occurring in Asia, most of them in China. And air pollution has become the fourth leading cause of death in China.

"For the most part, the air pollution effects are generally manifested in frail populations — people with asthma are generally more susceptible to the effects of air pollution," O'Keefe says. "Also the very young and children who live in highly polluted areas for extended periods of time." [NPR](#)

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## Brazil: 108 people die from dengue

5 April - A total of 108 people died from dengue in the first quarter of 2013 in Brazil, where those infected with such diseases increased 279 percent, said the minister Health, Alexandre Padilha. Padilha emphasized that patients in just 12 weeks amounted to 635 000, against 167 000 200 recorded in the same period of 2012... Among the states with the highest incidence of the disease appear Mato Grosso do Sul (two thousand 948 cases per 100 000 inhabitants), Goiás billion (367 per 100,000), and Espírito Santo (801 per 100,000). [Prensa Latina](#)

## Honduras: Dengue rises by 40 percent

4 April - With the increase of dengue cases in San Pedro Sula, authorities of the Metropolitan Health Region have sounded alert and have resumed abatement work, awareness and fumigation in all four quadrants, in order to reduce infestation rates. According to the director of that office, Julio Rodriguez, earlier this year had an increase of cases ranged between 35 and 40 percent compared to 2012, being the southeast sector of the city where most patients have been reported. [La Tribuna](#)

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