

6 June 2014

Army Public Health Weekly Update

U.S. Army Public Health Command



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DOD Smartphone App has Tools for Psychological Health

A DOD-funded smartphone app whose tools have been used in their physical form for a decade to treat patients with anxiety, stress, negative thinking and more is now available free to the public, and it's being studied for use in those with more serious psychological health problems, experts involved in the app's funding and use said.



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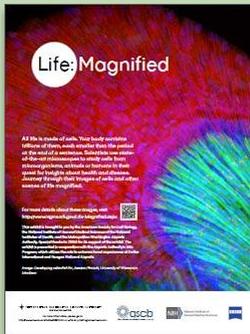
- Dengue cases in Americas rose 5-fold in 10 years
- Dominican Republic and Haiti: Chikungunya cases surge

"Life: Magnified" Online

Life: Magnified is an exhibit of scientific images showing cells and other scenes of life magnified by as much as 50,000 times. The exhibit is on display at Washington Dulles International Airport's Gateway Gallery from June through November 2014.

Here we feature high-resolution versions of all 46 images in the collection along with longer captions than in the airport exhibit.

In this online gallery, you'll see cells from all around the body—brain, blood, eye, skin, liver, muscle. Each type of cell teaches different lessons about how life works.



U.S. MILITARY

Doctor shortage is cited in delays at V.A. hospitals

29 May- ...At the heart of the falsified data in Phoenix, and possibly many other veterans hospitals, is an acute shortage of doctors, particularly primary care ones, to handle a patient population swelled both by aging veterans from the Vietnam War and younger ones who served in Iraq and Afghanistan, according to congressional officials, Veterans Affairs doctors and medical industry experts. The department says it is trying to fill 400 vacancies to add to its roster of primary care doctors, which last year numbered 5,100. "The doctors are good but they are overworked, and they feel inadequate in the face of the inordinate demands made on them," said Senator Richard Blumenthal, Democrat of Connecticut and a member of the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee. "The exploding workload is suffocating them."

[New York Times](#)

Natick studies how fatigue affects Soldiers



2 June - A new collaborative study at Natick Soldier Research, Development and Engineering Center looks at biomechanics and cognitive responses simultaneously to help determine how fatigue affects both the mind and body of Soldiers.

Researchers at Natick Soldier Research, Development and Engineering Center, known as NSRDEC, are testing Soldiers as they complete a prolonged march while carrying a load totaling 88 pounds... Every Soldier's peak VO2 -- maximal oxygen intake -- is measured and used as a measure of his or her fitness level. During the studies, Soldiers are pushed past 50 percent of their peak VO2. This is the level of exertion used in this research to define the onset of fatigue for Soldiers... While continuing to analyze data from the first phase of the study, Hasselquist said that "our goals of achieving the onset of fatigue were met. During that second hour, we see a creeping up in the energy cost over the 50 percent peak VO2 levels." The second phase, currently ongoing, looks at recovery from fatigue. [Army.mil](#)

New research links Iraq dust to ill soldiers

2 June - Titanium and other metals found in dust at a base in Iraq have been linked to the dust found in six sick soldiers' lungs, according to a study set to be released Monday. "We biopsied several patients and found titanium in every single one of them," said Anthony Szema, an assistant professor at Stony Brook School of Medicine who specializes in pulmonology and allergies. "It matched dust that we have collected from Camp Victory" in Iraq. The dust is different from dust found elsewhere in that human lungs are unable to dispel it through natural immune-system processes. The Iraq dust comes attached to iron and copper, and it forms polarizable crystals in the lungs, Szema said. The particles — each bit 1/30th the size of a human hair — have sharp edges. [USA Today](#)

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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.

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Numbers and proportions of U.S. military members in treatment for mental disorders over time, active component, January 2000–September 2013

May 2014 - Annual numbers of service members who received treatment for mental disorders and the annual numbers of treatment courses increased steadily from 2004–2012. More than half of service members who received such treatment had only one treatment course, but the annual numbers of such single treatment courses increased by 60% during the 13-year surveillance period. Annual numbers of treatment courses that consisted of more than 30 encounters increased 5.6-fold between 2001 and 2012 and the mean number of days per treatment course markedly increased during the last half of the period. [Medical Surveillance Monthly Report](#) (page 2)

VA, military care different, often confused

31 May - It's not just veterans who are having trouble with healthcare. Now the health system for active duty military is under the microscope, too. Longstanding issues with an overburdened system for caring for the nation's veterans have burst into the news recently, particularly with allegations of fraudulent record-keeping to hide the size of the waiting list for care at the Phoenix Veterans Affairs Health Care System. And just this week, Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel ordered a 90-day review of quality issues in the military health system. That action came following two unexplained deaths at an Army hospital in North Carolina that led to the sacking of several top officials there, although Defense officials said the actions were unrelated. [MedPage Today](#)

Vitter wants 27 healthcare facilities in VA bill

4 June - Sen. David Vitter (R-La.) called on Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee Chairman Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.) to include the construction of 27 veterans' healthcare facilities in his bill aimed at fixing dysfunction within the VA system. Vitter has asked for unanimous consent several times to pass a bill that would authorize the construction of those outpatient facilities, but Sanders has objected, saying it should be included in a broader VA bill... Sanders is reportedly working with Republicans on a compromise that would merge dueling bills to overhaul the VA health system after reports that some veterans waited more than 100 days on secret waiting lists designed to hide backlogs in the system. [The Hill](#)

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GLOBAL

Companies quietly apply biofuel tools to household products



30 May - Consumer products containing ingredients made using an advanced form of engineering known as synthetic biology are beginning to show up more often on grocery and department store shelves... That technology is synthetic biology, which involves the creation of biological systems intended for specific purposes. Synthetic biology, originally aimed at producing biofuels, has been around for about 20 years, but applications have only recently begun to emerge across several industries including cosmetics, flavorings and scents. Unilever recently announced that it was using algae oil made by a company called Solazyme in Lux, a popular soap... An ingredient crucial to malaria drugs, artemisinin, is already being produced from a yeast altered through synthetic biology. [New York Times](#)

Evidence for camel-to-human transmission of MERS coronavirus

4 June - We describe the isolation and sequencing of Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus (MERS-CoV) obtained from a dromedary camel and from a patient who died of laboratory-confirmed MERS-CoV infection after close contact with camels that had rhinorrhea. Nasal swabs collected from the patient and from one of his nine camels were positive for MERS-CoV RNA. In addition, MERS-CoV was isolated from the patient and the camel. The full genome sequences of the two isolates were identical. Serologic data indicated that MERS-CoV was circulating in the camels but not in the patient before the human infection occurred. These data suggest that this fatal case of human MERS-CoV infection was transmitted through close contact with an infected camel. [New England Journal of Medicine](#)

Google Glass enters the operating room

1 June - ...Dr. Parekh has been using Glass since last year, when Google began selling test versions of its device to thousands of handpicked "explorers" for \$1,500. He now uses it to record and archive all of his surgeries at Duke, and soon he will use it to stream live feeds of his operations to hospitals in India as a way to train and educate orthopedic surgeons there. "In India, foot and ankle surgery is about 40 years behind where we are in the U.S.," he said. "So to be able to use Glass to broadcast this and have orthopedic surgeons around the world watch and learn from expert surgeons in the U.S. would be tremendous." At Duke and other hospitals, a growing number of surgeons are using Google Glass to stream their operations online, float medical images in their field of view, and hold video consultations with colleagues as they operate. [New York Times](#)

Hemorrhagic fevers can be caused by body's antiviral interferon response

4 June - Hemorrhagic fevers caused by Lassa, dengue and other viruses affect more than one million people annually and are often fatal, yet scientists have never understood why only some virus-infected people come down with the disease and others do not. But now, virologists and immunologists at The Scripps Research Institute (TSRI) have found a major clue to the mystery of "hemorrhagic fever" syndromes. In findings reported this week in an Early Edition of the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, the team showed that Interferon Type I (IFN-I) immune proteins are key drivers of a viral syndrome in mice that closely mimics these human hemorrhagic fevers. "Blocking IFN-I signaling in certain genetic mouse strains completely prevented disease signs such as vascular leakage leading to death," said TSRI Associate Professor of Immunology Roberto Baccala, who, with TSRI Professor Michael Oldstone, led this study. [Medical Xpress](#)

Investment in midwifery can save millions of lives of women and newborns

3 June - ... The 73 African, Asian and Latin American countries represented in the "State of the World's Midwifery 2014: A Universal Pathway – A Woman's Right to Health" suffer 96% of the global burden of maternal deaths, 91% of stillbirths and 93% of newborn deaths, but have only 42% of the world's midwives, nurses and doctors. The report urges countries to invest in midwifery education and training to contribute to closing the glaring gaps that exist. Investments in midwifery education and training at agreed international standards can yield – as a study from Bangladesh shows – a 1,600% return on investment. [WHO](#)

MERS Watch: Saudis missed cases, deaths

3 June - Saudi Arabian health officials have missed more than 100 cases of Middle East coronavirus (MERS), including nearly 100 previously unreported deaths, since May 2013. In a statement published today, the Saudi health ministry said a "rigorous examination of data" had revealed the country had 688 cases since the virus was first recognized in 2012, but not all were reported. That's up markedly from the 575 the ministry had been reporting the day before. Also, the death toll from the virus rose to 282 from 190, the ministry statement said. But despite the new totals, the recent drop in reported cases is real, according to Tariq Madani, MD, of the ministry's MERS command and control center. [MedPage Today](#)

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

4 June - On 1 June 2014, the National IHR Focal Point for Jordan reported to WHO an additional case of Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus (MERS-CoV) in Amman, Jordan. The case is 26-year-old male health-care worker... He is currently in a stable condition. He has no known comorbidities, but does have a history of contact with a

laboratory confirmed MERS-CoV health-care worker case reported to WHO on 11 May 2014. He has no history of travel and no history of contact with animals... Globally, 681 laboratory-confirmed cases of infection with MERS-CoV including 204 related deaths have officially been reported to WHO. [WHO](#)

Short-term malaria reduction by single-dose azithromycin during mass drug administration for trachoma, Tanzania

June 2014 - Single-dose mass drug administration of azithromycin (AZT) is underway to eliminate trachoma worldwide. Studies in Ethiopia showed a reduction in all-cause childhood deaths after administration... In the first month after treatment but not in subsequent months, *Plasmodium falciparum* infections were reduced by 73% (95% CI 43%–89%) in treatment versus control villages and differences remained significant ($p = 0.00497$) in multivariate models with village-level random effects. Genetic sequencing of *P. falciparum* ribosomal L4 protein showed no mutations associated with AZT resistance.

[Emerging Infectious Diseases](#)

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INFLUENZA

CDC: Weekly Influenza Surveillance Report

During week 21, ending May 24, 2014, 5.9% of all deaths reported through the 122-Cities Mortality Reporting System were due to Pneumonia and Influenza (P&I). This percentage was below the epidemic threshold of 6.7% for week 21. [FluView](#)

DoD Global Laboratory-Based Influenza Surveillance Program

Supplemental EUCOM Report through Week 22: 29 September 2013 - 31 May 2014

- In cooperation and agreement with U.S. Army Public Health Command Region-Europe (PHCR-E), the DoD Global, Laboratory-based, Influenza Surveillance Program has analyzed data from Landstuhl Regional Medical Center (LRMC), Germany. LRMC's laboratory is the forward laboratory for military sites in Europe. This analysis does not include rapid antigen testing.
- To date this influenza season, testing has been completed on 1,407 specimens from 25 locations. Of those specimens tested, 445 were positive for influenza (133 influenza A(H1N1)pdm09, 200 influenza A(H3N2), 31 A/not subtyped, four influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 and A(H3N2) co-infections, 19 influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 co-infections,

32 influenza A(H3N2) co-infections, 13 influenza A/not subtyped co-infections, and 13 influenza B).

- There have been 470 other respiratory viruses isolated (25 adenovirus, 84 human metapneumovirus, 27 parainfluenza virus, 85 RSV, 178 rhinovirus/enterovirus, and 71 non-influenza co-infections) cumulatively this season. [USAF School of Aerospace Medicine](#)

H7N9 hospitalizes two more in China

4 June - Chinese health officials have reported two more H7N9 influenza infections, both in Jiangsu province, according to a statement today from Hong Kong's Centre for Health Protection (CHP) based on information it received from the mainland's National Health and Family Planning Commission. The patients are a man and woman, both age 51, who are hospitalized... The two new cases in Jiangsu province boost the overall outbreak total to 449, according to a list of human H7N9 cases maintained by FluTrackers, an infectious disease news message board. So far, 313 cases have been reported in the outbreak's second wave, which has tapered off to a handful of cases each week. For comparison, 136 cases were reported during the first H7N9 wave last spring. [CIDRAP News Scan](#) (third item)

Naval Health Research Center: Febrile Respiratory Illness Surveillance Update

For week 21 (through 24 May 2014):

- Influenza: No new cases of NHRC laboratory-confirmed influenza among US military basic trainees.
- *C. pneumoniae* found in recent FRI and pneumonia cases at Ft. Leonard Wood
- 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](#)

Needle-free flu vaccine produces 'non-inferior' immune response

30 May - A needle-free jet injector vaccine delivery system produced an immune response comparable to that of a flu shot, according to a study today in *The Lancet* by industry and other researchers. The investigators randomly assigned 627 volunteers aged 18 to 64 in the University of Colorado health system to receive bioCSL's Afluria influenza vaccine via jet injector and 623 to receive the intramuscular version. The jet injector technology was developed by PharmaJet of Golden, Colo. Study participants' immune response to Afluria when given by jet injector met criteria for non-inferiority for all six co-primary end points, the authors reported. They added, "The device had a clinically acceptable safety profile, but was associated with a higher frequency of local injection site reactions than was the use of needle and syringe." [CIDRAP News Scan](#) (second Item)

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Foodborne norovirus outbreaks — United States, 2009–2012

3 June - Norovirus is the leading cause of acute gastroenteritis and foodborne disease in the United States, causing an estimated one in 15 U.S. residents to become ill each year as well as 56,000–71,000 hospitalizations and 570–800 deaths, predominantly among young children and the elderly. Whereas noroviruses often spread through person-to-person contact, foodborne transmission can cause widespread exposures and presents important prevention opportunities... During 2009–2012, a total of 1,008 foodborne norovirus outbreaks were reported to [the National Outbreak Reporting System (NORS)], constituting 48% of all foodborne outbreaks with a single known cause. Outbreaks were reported by 43 states and occurred year round. Restaurants were the most common setting (64%) of food preparation reported in outbreaks. Of 520 outbreaks with factors contributing to contamination reported, food workers were implicated as the source in 70%. Of 324 outbreaks with an implicated food, most resulted from food contaminated during preparation (92%) and food consumed raw (75%). [Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report](#)

Multi-state outbreak of Salmonella Newport infections linked to organic sprouted chia powder

2 June - The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is collaborating with public health officials in several states and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to investigate a multistate outbreak of Salmonella Newport infections. Results from this ongoing investigation indicate that organic sprouted chia powder distributed by Navitas Naturals of Novato, Calif. is the likely source of this outbreak. Chia powder is made from ground dried chia seeds... A total of 12 ill persons infected with the outbreak strain of Salmonella Newport have been reported from seven states. The number of ill persons identified in each state is as follows: Arizona (1), California (2), Connecticut (1), Massachusetts (1), New York (4), Utah (1), and Wisconsin (2). [Infection Control Today](#)

U.S. orders farmers to report deadly pig virus cases

5 June - U.S. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack on Thursday ordered farmers to start reporting cases of a deadly pig virus and pledged over \$26 million in funding to combat the disease, pushing back against criticism of his handling of a widespread outbreak. Vilsack, speaking to a roomful of farmers at an industry gathering in Iowa, said they must tell the U.S. Department of Agriculture about outbreaks of Porcine Epidemic Diarrhea virus (PEDv) effective immediately to help control the spread of the disease. The USDA had said in April it would require reporting of cases of PEDv and Swine Delta Coronavirus, but provided few details. [Reuters](#)

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WELLNESS

After 5 months of sales, Colorado sees the downside of a legal high



31 May - Five months after Colorado became the first state to allow recreational marijuana sales, the battle over legalization is still raging. Law enforcement officers in Colorado and neighboring states, emergency room doctors and legalization opponents increasingly are highlighting a series of recent problems as cautionary lessons for other states flirting with loosening marijuana laws... [Two] deaths, combined with reports of groggy, nauseated children visiting emergency rooms, forced the state to tighten its labeling and packaging rules for edible marijuana. Regulators are also considering whether to set lower limits on the amount of THC, the psychoactive component of marijuana, that can be packed into one cookie or chocolate bonbon. Even supporters of legalization such as Mr. Vicente say Colorado needs to pass stricter rules about edible marijuana. [New York Times](#)

Malnutrition 'damages gut bacteria'



5 June - Child malnutrition has long-term effects on gut health that affect development even after treatment, a study suggests. A team studied the gut health of malnourished children in Bangladesh. [Writing in the journal Nature](#) they said the bacterial make-up was not fully restored to normal after food supplements were given. They say the finding might explain why children often fail to grow normally even after treatment... Dr Sathish Subramanian, of Washington University, said: "Although therapeutic food-based interventions have resulted in a significant decline in deaths from malnutrition, many children never fully recover. "We found that children who were malnourished had gut microbial communities that were not consistent with their chronological ages. "Moreover, the severity of a child's malnourishment was tied closely with the degree of immaturity of his or her gut microbial community, and this immaturity could not be durably repaired with standard treatments." [BBC News](#)

MDMA can be fatal in warm environments

4 June - A moderate dose of MDMA <<http://www.drugabuse.gov/drugs-abuse/mdma-ecstasy-molly>>, commonly known as Ecstasy or Molly, that is typically nonfatal in cool, quiet environments can be lethal in rats exposed to conditions that mimic the hot, crowded, social settings where the drug is often used by people, a study finds. Scientists have identified the therapeutically-relevant cooling mechanism to enable effective interventions

when faced with MDMA-induced hyperthermia... [Medical] interventions aimed at increasing the efficiency of whole-body cooling by targeting blood vessel constriction in the skin could be therapeutically relevant for counteracting the development of MDMA-induced hyperthermia. [NIH](#)

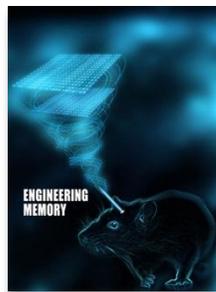
NIDA review catalogs cannabis risks

5 June - "Marijuana has been associated with substantial adverse effects, some of which have been determined with a high level of confidence," concluded a review by top officials at the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA). Regular and/or heavy recreational use of cannabis has been strongly linked with addictive behaviors, motor vehicle accidents, lung dysfunction, and "diminished lifetime achievement," according to NIDA Director Nora Volkow, MD, and three of her deputies. And such health problems as abnormal brain development, increased abuse of other drugs, and new-onset or exacerbated schizophrenia, depression, and anxiety have been identified in marijuana users, the review found with a medium level of confidence. "As policy shifts toward legalization of marijuana, it is reasonable and probably prudent to hypothesize that its use will increase and that, by extension, so will the number of persons for whom there will be negative health consequences," the officials wrote in the review, published in the June 5 issue of the New England Journal of Medicine. [MedPage Today](#)

Scientists use laser therapy to repair teeth

29 May - Cavities in teeth may someday be repaired using laser therapy. U.S. researchers are using the technology to regrow the tissue inside damaged teeth. Since the 1960's, physicians have used laser therapy to repair damaged tissue and destroy unwanted cells... Now, Harvard University researchers are using low-power lasers to repair teeth. A bioengineer at the school's Wyss Institute, David Mooney, says scientists aimed laser light for a few minutes on damaged teeth in rats... After about 12 weeks, researchers removed the temporary filling and used x-rays to reveal the growth of new bone-like tissue called dentin. The laser light stimulated the regeneration by activating biologically dormant molecules called growth factors. [VOA](#)

Shining a light on memory



2 June - Using a flash of light, scientists have inactivated and then reactivated a memory in genetically engineered rats. The study, supported by the National Institutes of Health, is the first cause-and-effect evidence that strengthened connections between neurons are the stuff of memory. "Our results add to mounting evidence that the brain represents a memory by forming assemblies of neurons with strengthened connections, or synapses, explained Roberto Malinow, M.D., Ph.D., of the University of California, San Diego (UCSD), a grantee of NIH's National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH). "Further, the findings suggest that weakening synapses likely disassembles neuronal assemblies to inactivate a memory."...

"Beyond potential applications in disorders of memory deficiency, such as dementia, this improved understanding of how memory works may hold clues to taking control of runaway emotional memories in mental illnesses, such as post-traumatic stress disorder," said NIMH director Thomas R. Insel, M.D. [NIH](#)

Study examines efficacy of taxes on sugary drinks

2 June - A new study of how taxes might be used to curb consumption of sugary drinks suggests that applying a tax based on the amount of calories contained in a serving rather than its size would be more effective. The study, financed by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, which has long advocated taxing sodas and other sugary drinks as part of its efforts to reduce childhood obesity, found that consumption of calories in drinks would drop 9.3 percent if a tax of four-hundredths of a penny for every calorie was added to the price, but fall by just 8.6 percent under a tax of half a cent for each ounce in a can or bottle. [New York Times](#)

Viagra frisky might be melanoma risky

3 June - Men who used the erectile-function drug sildenafil (Viagra) had almost twice the risk of melanoma compared with men who never used the drug, a study of 26,000 men showed. Recent sildenafil use was associated with an 84% greater risk of melanoma. Use of the drug had no association with the risk of nonmelanoma skin cancers, according to Jiali Han, PhD, of the Indiana University School of Public Health in Indianapolis, and co-authors. Moreover, erectile function per se did not correlate with melanoma risk, they reported in *JAMA Internal Medicine*. [MedPage Today](#)

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USAFRICOM

Sierra Leone: Ebola

4 June - Level 2, Practice Enhanced Precautions. As of May 27, 2014, the Sierra Leone Ministry of Health reported 7 confirmed cases of and several deaths from Ebola in Kailahun District, Sierra Leone. The district is located in the eastern region of the country, near the borders with Guinea and Liberia. Guinea and Liberia have also reported cases of Ebola... CDC recommends that travelers to Sierra Leone avoid contact with blood and body fluids of infected people to protect themselves. [CDC Travelers' Health](#)

South Sudan: WHO warns of cholera spread

2 June - The World Health Organization reports that cholera is spreading rapidly in South Sudan's capital city, Juba. The WHO says aid agencies and the Ministry of Health are intensifying efforts to stop the spread of the disease in the city and to prevent outbreaks in

other parts of the country. The WHO reports more than 1,000 cases of the disease, including 27 deaths in Juba, with unconfirmed cases reported in other parts of this war-torn country, including in Jonglei, Lakes and Upper Nile states. Dr. Dominique Legros, a WHO cholera specialist, says the unsanitary conditions of the displaced persons' camps and the onset of the rainy season are expected to accelerate the spread of this often fatal disease. [VOA](#)

West Africa: Ebola virus disease – update

4 June – **Guinea:** Between 29 May and 1 June 2014, 37 new cases and 21 new deaths were reported from the following 5 districts: Conakry, 3 new cases and 0 deaths; Gueckedou, 11 new cases and 13 deaths; Macenta, 4 new cases and 1 death; Telimele, 19 new cases and 5 deaths; and Boffa, 0 new cases and 2 deaths. The cumulative number of cases and deaths attributable to EVD in Guinea is now 328 (laboratory confirmed 193, probable 80, and suspected 55) including 208 deaths... The number of contacts currently being followed countrywide is 604.

Sierra Leone: Between 29 May and 1 June 2014, 13 new cases (3 confirmed and 10 suspected) and no new deaths were reported from Kailahun (12 new cases and 0 death) and Kenema (1 new case and 0 deaths). This brings the cumulative total number of cases to 79 (18 confirmed, 3 probable, and 58 suspected), including 6 deaths.

Liberia: One suspected case from nearby Kailahun, Sierra Leone died in Foya, Liberia. The dead body was taken back to Kailahun for burial. Eleven (11) contacts were identified and are being followed up. [WHO](#)

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USCENTCOM

Egypt: Eleven Egyptians diagnosed with malaria in Aswan – MOH

31 May - Egypt's Health Ministry said on Saturday that eleven Aswan residents have been diagnosed with Malaria but are in stable condition. The ministry added that the cases are receiving treatment at an Aswan hospital and will be released starting Sunday, the state news agency said. The ministry has sent a team to support the hospital's doctors and has begun procedures to prevent the spreading of the disease. It said that so far it has taken blood samples from 561 people in the village where the disease appeared. [allAfrica](#)

Saudi Arabia: Hajj and Umrah Alert

4 June - Level 2, Practice Enhanced Precautions. The annual Hajj pilgrimage to Mecca, Saudi Arabia, is among the largest mass gatherings in the world. Hajj draws about 3 million Muslims from around the world, and more than 11,000 Americans make the pilgrimage

each year. This year, Hajj will take place from approximately October 2–7, 2014. Umrah is a similar pilgrimage that can be undertaken at any time of the year, but it is likely to be more crowded during the month of Ramadan (approximately June 28 to July 28, 2014) than at other times of the year. Because of the crowds, mass gatherings such as Hajj and Umrah are associated with unique health risks. [CDC Travelers' Health](#)

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USEUCOM

Europeans, U.S. differ over safety of Ranbaxy facility

5 June- European regulators said on Thursday they have completed their assessment of drug manufacturing violations at Ranbaxy Laboratories Ltd's facility in Toansa, India, and although deficiencies were found, they pose no risk to public health. The regulators said they were satisfied by corrective measures put in place by the company after U.S. regulators found deviations in January. The assessment stands in stark contrast to the response of U.S. regulators to the deficiencies found at the plant. The Food and Drug Administration barred Ranbaxy from making and selling pharmaceutical ingredients from the Toansa facility "to prevent substandard quality products from reaching U.S. consumers." [Reuters](#)

The Balkans: Landslides, land mines complicate Balkan flood cleanup

30 May - As water recedes across the Balkans, residents are gradually returning to their homes but both landslides and land mines are complicating the cleanup after the region's largest flood on record. International organizations have come to the rescue of disaster-stricken Serbia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, where at least 74 people died and almost 900,000 were evacuated earlier this month... The heavy rainfall precipitated more than 1,400 landslides in Bosnia, There was also a risk that some of the 120,000 unexploded mines remaining there from the 1992-1995 war following the breakup of Yugoslavia could be unearthed by floodwaters, the International Medical Corps said. [Wall Street Journal](#)

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Canada: Salmonella outbreak traced to feeder mice in Canada not linked to U.S.

4 June - A salmonella outbreak traced to frozen mice has popped up in Canada but it is not connected to a similar outbreak in the United States. Canadian health authorities said that 20 people have fallen ill this year, including three patients who were hospitalized. Officials have interviewed 15 people, with 12 saying they touched snakes and feeder rodents. In the United States, 37 people in 18 states, including Oregon, have been sickened in an outbreak reported last month. Oregon's public health veterinarian, Emilio DeBess, cracked the case by interviewing sick people in Oregon. Then federal authorities did their traceback work, pinpointing the brand Arctic Mice, which is sold in PetSmart stores, as the cause. [Oregonian](#)

Puerto Rico confirms its 1st chikungunya case

29 May - Health officials in Puerto Rico have confirmed the first chikungunya case in the U.S. territory. Health Secretary Ana Rius says the patient is a 16-year-old girl who lives in Puerto Rico's capital, San Juan. Rius said Thursday that officials are investigating how the girl contracted the mosquito-borne disease. She said the girl did not require hospitalization. There have been more than 60,000 suspected cases of chikungunya across the Caribbean since the region's first locally transmitted case was recorded in December. [Yahoo! News](#)

U.S.: Community-onset MRSA levels vary across US

3 June - A 4-year survey of methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) at five medical centers across the United States found that the incidence of community-onset (CO) MRSA cases varied considerably, with trends in New York City and Los Angeles going in opposite directions, according to a report in *Clinical Infectious Diseases*... Nationally, the report notes, CO MRSA rose from the 1990s through the 2000s, but HO rates have decreased recently. A total of 4,171 episodes of bacteremia were counted at the five centers. Los Angeles had a 57% decline in CO MRSA rates from 2009 to 2011, from 0.42 to 0.18 per 1,000 patient-days, while CO MSSA rates remained stable, the report says. In contrast, CO MRSA rates tripled at a center in New York City, from 0.11 to 0.34 cases per 1,000 patient-days. [CIDRAP News Scan](#) (first item)

U.S.: Guidance to US clinicians regarding new WHO polio vaccination requirements for travel

2 June - On 5 May 2014, the Director-General of the World Health Organization... issued [polio] vaccination requirements for travelers in order to prevent further spread of the disease... U.S. clinicians should be aware of possible new vaccination requirements for patients planning travel for greater than four weeks to countries with ongoing poliovirus transmission. The May 5 WHO statement names 10 such countries, three designated as

"exporting wild poliovirus" (Cameroon, Pakistan and Syria [Syrian Arab Republic]) that should "ensure" recent (4 to 52 weeks before travel) polio boosters among all departing residents and long-term travelers (of more than 4 weeks), and an additional seven countries "infected with wild poliovirus" (Afghanistan, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Iraq, Israel, Somalia and Nigeria) that should "encourage" recent polio vaccination boosters among residents and long-term travelers. [CDC](#)

U.S.: FDA to require warnings on sunlamp products

29 May - Today, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration issued a final order reclassifying sunlamp products and ultraviolet (UV) lamps intended for use in sunlamp products from low-risk (class I) to moderate-risk (class II) devices. The order also requires that sunlamp products carry a visible black-box warning on the device that explicitly states that the sunlamp product should not be used on persons under the age of 18 years. [FDA](#)

U.S.: Ohio mumps outbreak tops 400, measles outbreak goes over 200

2 June - The number of mumps cases reported in Central Ohio has reached 404 cases as of today, according to a Columbus Public Health (CPH) press release Monday. 220 of the cases are linked to the Ohio State University outbreak that began in early March. How bad is the mumps outbreak in Ohio? CPH officials say that last year, there were 438 cases recorded nationwide. Although mumps is typically a mild infection, there are complications that are possible with the viral infection. CPH reports that 13 people required hospitalization from their illness, a dozen males suffered with orchitis while four women have faced oophoritis. One patient has suffered either partial or complete hearing loss. The Buckeye State measles outbreak, which began in April, has topped 200 cases standing at 206 cases and seven hospitalizations. Knox County, the epicenter of the outbreak, accounts for 128 of the cases (62%). [Global Dispatch](#)

U.S.: Putting a public health lens on incarceration

2 June - The United States is facing an epidemic of incarceration -- people in jail or prisons - - demanding national attention and a systemic response. Ernest Drucker, my colleague and a professor of epidemiology as well as family and community medicine, classifies incarceration as an epidemic because it is a situation with widespread and rapid onset over 35 years, it affects a disproportionately large number of people within a population, and its spread and adverse effects are felt even by those who are not incarcerated... To focus attention on solutions, [leaders from public health schools are meeting in New York this week](#) to consider the persistent societal, economic, and human rights problems that result from incarceration and the toll it continues to take on healthy populations, on individuals at risk for incarceration, and on our communities. [Huffington Post](#)

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Australia: Virus outbreak worries Aust doctors

4 June - Dozens of Australian babies are infected by a virus that has no cure, doctors say. Professor Theo Sloots says 46 babies are infected with parechovirus, which has spread to Queensland. At least 11 cases have been confirmed in the state since December. "The outbreak is Australia-wide now and we believe there are at least four types of the virus," the Queensland Paediatric Infectious Diseases (QPID) laboratory director told reporters in Brisbane... Parechovirus is a respiratory and intestinal disease that causes fever, irritability, rash and diarrhoea, but severe cases can develop into hepatitis or encephalitis. [Daily Mail](#)

Guam: Conjunctivitis outbreak continues

2 June - The Department of Public Health and Social Services (DPHSS) reports that the conjunctivitis outbreak that began earlier this month continues unabated with a total of 248 cases reported by health care providers. The week ending May 24 saw the greatest number of conjunctivitis cases reported to date for 2014 with 110 reported. All ages are being affected with the youngest patient being less than 1 month and the oldest being 82 years of age. Both sexes are affected but males outnumber females slightly by 114 to 107 cases. [Pacific News Center](#)

India's gang rapes — and the failure to stop them



30 May - In the past four decades, the number of reported rape cases in India surged nearly 900 percent to 24,923 in 2012, according to the statistics from National Crime Records Bureau. Since many rapes go unreported, the problem may be worse. There's familial pressure to keep quiet about the crime, and it's difficult

to know whether the increase means more rapes have occurred or shows a growing willingness among victims to come forward... According to one 2011 poll cited by the Times of India, nearly 25 percent of Indian men admitted committing an act of sexual violence, and roughly 20 percent of those polled conceded they had forced wives or partners to have sex. [In Uttar Pradesh, such] poverty, experts said, is vital to understanding the frequency of rape in India. Upper-caste men targeting lower-caste women — usually Dalit or "untouchables" — account for a large proportion of rapes. [Washington Post](#)

India: Spate of gastro cases in Mumbai - 350 down with typhoid in civic hospitals

3 June - The city is under a spell of gastro diseases, especially typhoid, even before monsoon sets in. Doctors said many of the patients need hospitalisation and are not

responding to medication. Chairperson of the BMC's health committee Geeta Gawli said civic hospitals have reported 350 cases of typhoid and related cases since January. "It is an unusual time of the year to get such high numbers of typhoid cases. At present, 10 per cent of patients admitted to our hospital have typhoid," said Dr Pratit Samdhani, consultant physician at Jaslok Hospital... Dr Khusrav Bhajan, intensivist at PD Hinduja Hospital said: "Most of these patients have resistant typhoid. They need more than the regular antibiotics required for treatment of typhoid. This has led to their extended stay in hospital." [dna](#)

Solomon Islands: Diarrhoea outbreak in Solomons killing children

4 June - The unsanitary conditions generated by the April floods have created the perfect circumstances for disease and thousands are sick... Chris Becha from the Solomon Islands' Ministry of Health has confirmed that in the past fortnight diarrhoea has claimed 16 lives... All of them are under five... With at least a thousand people being treated and thousands more under threat in six provinces across the country. [ABC Radio Australia](#)

Sri Lanka: Public warned of dengue and diarrheal disease post flood

2 June - Health officials have warned the public on dengue and diarrheal disease in the aftermath of floods caused by incessant rains in several parts of the Western Province. Deputy Municipal Commissioner for Health Services, Dr. Pradeep Kariyawasam told The Nation that the public needed to be aware of areas where water remained stagnated after a flood situation... He however stated that the extent of pipe water contamination had greatly reduced over the recent past. "We tested 4000 samples recently and found out that only 14 samples were contaminated. However, the public needs to exercise caution," he added. Further, those living in flood affected areas have also been advised to refrain from eating raw leafy vegetables. "They should be properly cooked," he said. [The Nation](#)

Vietnam: Health Ministry warns of unpredictable diseases in summer

30 May - The Health Ministry has warned of unpredictable development of diseases and epidemics during the hot summer and urged prompt preventive measures. At a press briefing on May 29 in Ho Chi Minh City, Deputy Director of the Health Ministry's Preventive Medicine Department Truong Dinh Bac said a total of 4,857 cases of measles were recorded in the country since the beginning of this year with most patients being children under 10. He noted that the number of new measles cases has dropped but close monitoring is still needed as not all children receive full vaccinations against the disease, particularly those in remote areas. [Vietnam Net](#)

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Dengue cases in Americas rose 5-fold in 10 years

30 May - The tally of dengue cases in the Americas increased fivefold from 2003 to 2013, but the fatality rate dropped a bit in the last 3 years because of improved case management, the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) reported yesterday. An average of more than 1 million cases were reported annually from 2009 through 2012, with more than 33,900 severe cases and 835 deaths annually, PAHO said in a press release. It said 2013 was one of the worst years ever, with 2.3 million cases, including 37,705 severe ones and 1,289 deaths. In contrast, only 517,617 cases were reported in 2003... The agency blamed the continued spread of dengue on uncontrolled, unplanned urbanization, lack of basic services, poor environmental management, and climate change, among other factors. Nearly 500 million people in the Americas are at risk for the disease, PAHO said. [CIDRAP](#)

Dominican Republic and Haiti: Chikungunya cases surge

2 June - Chikungunya infections in Caribbean countries spiked last week, led by quickly growing numbers mainly in the Latin parts of the region, according to the latest update from the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO). Also two new countries—Barbados and Chile—are investigating their first suspected or confirmed imported cases, according to media and infectious disease reporting system sources. The outbreak of the mosquito-borne disease has now reached 107,424 suspected or confirmed cases, which is 41,204 higher than the 66,220 cases reported the previous week, PAHO said in a May 30 update. It reported 1 more death from the disease, edging the total to 14. [CIDRAP](#)

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