

10 June 2016

Army Public Health Weekly Update

Army Public Health Center

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U.S. MILITARY

Among U.S. military, Army members face highest suicide risk

6 June - Suicide rates have been increasing among all active U.S. Navy, Air Force and Army personnel, but those in the Army appear to be most at risk, new research indicates. An analysis of all U.S. military suicides between 2005 and 2011 revealed that the suicide rate among Army members was roughly double that seen among the second highest risk group, the Marines. The investigation further revealed that guns are the principal cause of most military suicides. Firearms were implicated in more than 62 percent of all suicide cases that have a definitive cause of death, the study found. [HealthDay](#)

Blast TBI may do distinct damage in brain

9 June - Soldiers who sustain a blast traumatic brain injury (TBI) have a distinct pattern of astroglial scarring in their brains, which may account for the neurological and psychiatric symptoms that often accompany these injuries, researchers found. In a postmortem analysis of brains from eight military personnel who survived explosive attacks -- grenades, mortars, improvised explosive devices -- all had astroglial scarring in the subpial glial plate, penetrating cortical blood vessels, grey-white matter junctions, and structures lining the ventricles, according to Daniel Perl, MD, of the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences in Bethesda, Md., and colleagues. None of the comparison cases -- men with impact TBI, opiate use, or healthy controls -- had any astroglial scarring in those areas. [MedPage Today](#)

Company commanders can now better track non-deployable soldiers

5 June - The Army's newest system to track soldier deployability not only tells company-level leaders who is on the shelf and why, it also provides commanders with tools to bring their soldiers back to fighting status. The Commander Portal, part of Army Medicine's Medical Readiness Transformation program, went live Wednesday morning, and nearly 10,000 soldier profiles had been accessed by the next day, said Col. (Dr.) George Goodwin, chief of the Medical Readiness Division in the Office of the Surgeon General. About 90,000 leaders can access the portal, which gives a snapshot of unit readiness, offers access to soldier profiles, alerts commander when medical issues arise and allows messaging between leaders and medical providers. [Army Times](#)

Post-refractive surgery complications and eye disease, active component, U.S. Armed Forces, 2005–2014

May 2016 - ... This report provides an estimation of incident [refractive surgery (RS)] for vision correction purposes in the active component of the U.S. military from 1 January 2005

Video: BG Sentinel 2 Mosquito Trap: Assembly, Placement and Operation

This instructional video details the set-up of the newest mosquito trap in the DoD inventory. The BG Sentinel 2 trap is designed to collect the vector mosquitos responsible for transmitting Zika, dengue, chikungunya and yellow fever.



Fact Sheet: Uranium

Uranium may cause adverse health effects through radiological and heavy metal toxicity. The chance of adverse health effects of uranium varies according to the amount taken into the body, route of exposure, chemical form, and specific isotope.

External exposures to uranium are of little concern. If inhaled or ingested, uranium can cause chemical and radiological injury to organs and tissues. The toxicity of uranium is primarily due to its chemical health effects.

through 31 December 2014 and the prevalence of post-RS complications and eye disease in the 1-year period after RS. During the surveillance period, a total of 121,571 subjects without a diagnosis of eye disease other than hyperopia, myopia, or astigmatism in the previous year received a single incident RS procedure. In the 1-year period after RS, 5.3% of subjects with preoperative hyperopia or myopia had treatment-persistent (unresolved) hyperopia or myopia; 2.0% of subjects with preoperative astigmatism had treatment-persistent (unresolved) astigmatism; and 3.8% were diagnosed with tear film insufficiency. In general, most outcomes showed higher prevalences in Army and Air Force personnel versus Navy and Marine Corps personnel, in women versus men, in officer versus enlisted personnel, and in aviation and Special Forces personnel. A wide variation in outcome prevalences was noted by procedural military treatment facility.

[Medical Surveillance Monthly Report](#)

Study shows sleep disturbances common among military spouses

8 June - A new study found that spouses of military service members experience significant sleep problems, which can impact their health and psychosocial functioning. Results show that 44 percent of spouses reported sleeping 6 hours or less per night. Approximately 54 percent of the sample endorsed daytime impairment due to sleep problems, and 62 percent reported experiencing daytime fatigue at least 1-2 times per week. Spouses of currently or previously deployed service members endorsed poorer sleep quality and more fatigue than spouses of service members who had never deployed. [Medical Xpress](#)

Texas floods: 9 soldiers killed in Fort Hood accident

5 June - The soldiers who died when an Army truck overturned in floodwaters at Fort Hood ... were motor transport operators, tasked with driving troops and cargo on bases and battlefields. Staff Sgt. Miguel Angel Colonvazquez; Specialists Yingming Sun and Christine Faith Armstrong; Pvts. First Class Brandon Austin Banner and Zachery Nathaniel Fuller; Pvts. Isaac Lee Deleon, Eddy Raelaurin Gates and Tysheena Lynette James; and Cadet Mitchell Alexander Winey were all killed in last week's accident in Texas, the army said. The soldiers were on a training mission when their vehicle got stuck in flooded Owl Creek in a remote section of the post Thursday. Troops in a following vehicle were able to rescue three of their comrades from the floodwaters. ... Retired Col. Robert Morgan [said] that the LMTV may not operate well in high waters. ... Severe storms have pummeled Texas, leading to a record rainfall total in May. [CNN](#)

US Army's smart earplugs spare soldiers from loud noises

5 June - ... The military branch has been gradually rolling out a smart earplug, TCAPS (Tactical Communication and Protective System), that adapts to the audio realities of war. The smartphone-linked device softens louder noises, but amplifies quieter ones; if your squad leader needs to issue a command, you'll hear it over the din of battle. It's a relatively

**Fact Sheet:
N/PDR-77 Radiac
Set - Choosing the
Proper Probe**

The AN/PDR-77 Radiac Set is a multipurpose radiation detection system. Its versatile, rugged design makes it ideal for nuclear accident and incident response.

This fact sheet provides guidance on selecting the most appropriate probe to use with the AN/PDR-77 Radiac given various scenarios. This fact sheet will not train you on the proper use of the AN/PDR-77.



simple system, but it's very flexible. Some versions link to a soldier's existing communications, and it'll play nicely with hearing aids. TCAPS is far from ubiquitous. Only 20,000 of the earplugs are in the field, and it's doubtful that every single person in the infantry will get one when they cost around \$2,000 a pop. ... More than anything, the technology provides confidence -- you know you'll get crucial audio cues without going deaf. [Engadget](#)

War wounds that time alone can't heal

No doubt in the course of your life, you did something, or failed to do something, that left you feeling guilty or ashamed. What if that something was in such violation of your moral compass that you felt unable to forgive yourself, undeserving of happiness, perhaps even unfit to live? That is the fate of an untold number of servicemen and women who served in Iraq, Afghanistan, Vietnam and other wars. Many participated in, witnessed or were unable to help in the face of atrocities, from failing to aid an injured person to killing a child, by accident or in self-defense. For some veterans, this leaves emotional wounds that time refuses to heal. It radically changes them and how they deal with the world. It has a name: moral injury. ... Shira Maguen ... who studies and treats vets suffering from moral injury, said, "We have a big focus on self-forgiveness. We have them write a letter to the person they killed or to a younger version of themselves. We focus on making amends, planning for their future and moving forward," especially important since many think they have no future. [The New York Times](#)

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GLOBAL

Fighting Lyme disease in the genes of Nantucket's mice

7 June - ... Although deer help spread ticks that carry Lyme, Dr. Esvelt explained to about two dozen residents at the meeting, the disease can also be controlled earlier in the tick's food chain. Ticks typically contract the pathogen from white-footed mice, which they often feed on while still larvae, passing it on to humans and other mice when they bite again. Using new genome-engineering tools, he proposes to create mice that are immune to the Lyme-causing pathogen, or to a protein in the tick's saliva, or both, to break the cycle of transmission. ... If that worked — and there is reason to think it would — he would then apply for permission to release thousands of the mice on a smaller, uninhabited island. If the number of infected ticks proved to be sufficiently reduced after two years, Nantucket could be next. The release of a few hundred thousand engineered mice over the course of about a year, Dr. Esvelt said, would ensure a stable population of resistant mice.

[The New York Times](#)

**Technical
Information Paper:
Foot Marching,
Load Carriage, and
Injury Risk**

This Technical Information Paper describes injuries associated with foot marching and operational military tasks such as patrolling that require Soldiers to carry heavy loads of equipment and supplies. These are often referred to as "load-carriage" injuries in scientific literature.

During these activities, Soldiers often carry the heaviest loads on their backs in backpacks or rucksacks. Adding to the Soldiers' loads are other items such as body armor and protective clothing, ammunition, and other supplies on various parts of their body

Microsoft finds cancer clues in search queries

7 June - Microsoft scientists have demonstrated that by analyzing large samples of search engine queries they may in some cases be able to identify internet users who are suffering from pancreatic cancer, even before they have received a diagnosis of the disease. ... The researchers focused on searches conducted on Bing, Microsoft's search engine, that indicated someone had been diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. From there, they worked backward, looking for earlier queries that could have shown that the Bing user was experiencing symptoms before the diagnosis. Those early searches, they believe, can be warning flags. ... The researchers reported that they could identify from 5 to 15 percent of pancreatic cases with false positive rates of as low as one in 100,000. [The New York Times](#)

OECD warns of rising premature deaths, costs of air pollution

9 June - Outdoor air pollution could cause 6 to 9 million premature deaths and represent an economic cost of around \$2.6 trillion a year by 2060 unless action is taken, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) said in a report released on Thursday. The OECD examined the economic consequences of air pollution and found that it could cost 1 percent of gross domestic product - or \$2.6 trillion a year - by 2060. The economic cost would rise with a surge in related annual healthcare bills to \$176 billion from \$21 billion in 2015 and with lost work days rising to 3.7 billion from 1.2 billion. A reduction in crop yields as a result of dirty air would also weigh on most countries' economies, the report said. ... The biggest rises in mortality rates from air pollution are forecast to be in India, China, Korea and central Asian countries such as Uzbekistan, where rising populations and congested cities expose more people to power plant emissions and traffic exhaust.

[Reuters](#)

Panel endorses 'gene drive' technology that can alter entire species

8 June - A revolutionary technology known as "gene drive," which for the first time gives humans the power to alter or perhaps eliminate entire populations of organisms in the wild, has stirred both excitement and fear since scientists proposed a means to construct it two years ago. Scientists dream of deploying gene drive, for example, to wipe out malaria-carrying mosquitoes that cause the deaths of 300,000 African children each year, or invasive rodents that damage island ecosystems. But some experts have warned that the technique could lead to unforeseen harm to the environment. ... On Wednesday, the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine, the premier advisory group for the federal government on scientific matters, endorsed continued research on the technology, concluding after nearly a yearlong study that while it poses risks, its possible benefits make it crucial to pursue. The group also set out a path to conducting what it called "carefully controlled field trials." [The New York Times](#)

**Technical
Information Paper:
Determining
Eligibility for EPR
Funding of a
Vyleater® Vial
Disposal System**

This Technical Information Paper discusses and evaluates Environmental Program Requirements (EPR) funding eligibility for the purchase and use of a vial disposal system, such as the Vyleater, to reduce and consolidate certain laboratory hazardous wastes (HW).

Seasonal dynamics of bacterial meningitis: a time-series analysis

June 2015 - ... We used country-level data from 66 countries, including from 47 countries outside the meningitis belt in sub-Saharan Africa. A persistent seasonality was detected in 49 (96%) of the 51 time-series from 38 countries eligible for inclusion in the wavelet analyses. The mean timing of disease activity had a latitudinal trend, with bacterial meningitis seasons peaking during the winter months in countries in both the northern and southern hemispheres. The three pathogens shared similar seasonality, but time-shifts differed slightly by country. [The Lancet](#)

Study on new blood test points to personalized depression treatment

7 June - Scientists have developed a blood test that can predict whether people with depression will respond to common antidepressants, a discovery that could bring in a new era of personalized treatment for people with the debilitating mental illness. Guided by this test, the researchers said, doctors should in future be able to direct depressed patients with a certain level of inflammation in their blood towards earlier treatment with a more potent course of antidepressants, possibly including combining two medications, before they get worse. [Reuters](#)

ZIKA VIRUS

Congress will work on \$1.1 billion measure to fight Zika, McConnell says

8 June - With public health officials warning of a fast-spreading emergency, House and Senate negotiators will work to reconcile legislation aimed at providing up to \$1.1 billion to combat the Zika virus and the mosquitoes that carry it, Senator Mitch McConnell said on Wednesday. The Senate last month approved \$1.1 billion — far less than the \$1.9 billion sought by the Obama administration — in a regular appropriations measure, after four months of sparring with the White House. The House, in turn, approved \$622 million in a stand-alone measure that requires all of the money to be reallocated from existing programs, including efforts to fight Ebola. The White House and congressional Democrats have accused Republicans of putting Americans at grave risk by slow-walking the legislation to fight Zika. ... Senate Democrats held a news conference urging Republicans to move faster and approve the full amount of money sought by the White House. "The mosquitoes are not waiting for Congress to act," said Senator Chuck Schumer, Democrat of New York. [The New York Times](#)

**Fact Sheet:
Oriental Hornets**

Oriental hornets can be a public health concern, since these large, aggressive insects are capable of inflicting multiple, painful bites and stings. Their home range includes portions of southern Europe, southwestern Asia, northeastern Africa and Madagascar.

These insects will establish colonies and forage for food and water in areas frequented by humans. Within their home range, Oriental hornets are considered agricultural pests. The adults will feed on orchard and vine crops, strip vegetation from ornamental shrubs and trees to construct nests, and attack honey bee colonies.

There are concerns that Oriental hornets will be accidentally transported into the United States and become established.



Delay pregnancy in Zika-affected countries, WHO urges

9 June - If you and your partner live where in a country where the Zika virus is actively spreading via the bite of an infected mosquito, the World Health Organization wants you to consider delaying pregnancy to avoid having a baby with brain damage or other birth defects. ... The WHO advisory falls in line with recommendations from the Puerto Rico secretary of health, Dr. Ana Rius-Armendáriz, and the governments of Brazil, Colombia, El Salvador and Jamaica. It appears to encourage health care providers in all affected countries to follow suit. ... Last week, the WHO revised its guidelines for sex and Zika for anyone returning from travel to an affected country, saying couples should wait a full eight weeks to have unprotected sex or attempt to conceive a baby, even if there are no symptoms of the disease. Past guidance had been for four weeks. [CNN](#)

Findings highlight Zika eye problems, long risk of sexual spread

8 June - Two new case reports added more detail to the Zika virus clinical picture, with one from Brazil describing congenital eye problems in a baby born without microcephaly and the other a report from France documenting sexual transmission 44 days after the male partner's infection—a much longer delay than earlier reports. [CIDRAP](#)

Military discloses at least 11 troops infected with Zika virus this year

3 June - At least 11 U.S. troops have been infected with the Zika virus since January, nearly all of whom traveled to countries where the mosquito-borne illness is prevalent, a Pentagon health report published Friday disclosed. In addition, four dependents of servicemembers ... and two military retirees contracted the illness, according to the report. It underscored the risks to military personnel of child-bearing age exposed to the virus during deployments. ... Among the 17 infected are four women, though none were pregnant, said Dr. Jose Sanchez, deputy chief of Armed Forces Health Surveillance Branch. Troops suffering from the Zika were four soldiers, three Airmen, a Marine and three members of the Coast Guard, according to Sanchez. The first confirmed case was diagnosed in late January, the report said. Fifteen of the 17 had traveled to South America or the Caribbean. They included four who visited Columbia, three who went to the Dominican Republic and three who visited Puerto Rico. One person had traveled to Brazil, which is dealing with a Zika epidemic. [USA TODAY](#)

Senators call on Pentagon to protect servicemembers from Zika

8 June - U.S. senators Tim Kaine and Mark Warner are urging the Pentagon and the U.S. State Department to protect military servicemembers and other Americans overseas from the Zika virus. A group of senators reports more than a dozen servicemembers and military

CDC Guideline for Prescribing Opioids for Chronic Pain

Date: Wednesday, June 22, 2016

Time: 2:00 - 3:00 pm
(Eastern Time)

Participate by Phone:
888-769-0686
(U.S. Callers)

1-312-470-0194
(International Callers)

Passcode:3377346

[Participate by Webinar](#)

dependents have been infected with the virus. ... "The World Health Organization estimates that between three and four million people will become infected with the Zika virus over the next year in the Americas alone. This estimate does not include the countries outside of the Americas, in which the primary vector for Zika - the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito - is also present," wrote the senators in a letter to Defense Secretary Ashton Carter and Secretary of State John Kerry. [CBS19](#)

WHO: Array of Zika birth defects equals new syndrome

3 June - Because of mounting reports that maternal Zika virus infections are linked to a wider range of birth defects than previously thought, the World Health Organization (WHO) today announced that the collective effects represent a new congenital syndrome, with efforts under way to define it. ... Current evidence and unpublished data coming into the WHO are showing a wider range of birth defects besides microcephaly, including craniofacial disproportion, spasticity, seizures, irritability, eye problems, and brainstem dysfunction, leading to, for example, feeding difficulties. The WHO said clinicians are seeing a range of severity, including neurologic problems in babies born with normal head circumference, similar to those associated with other maternal infections. Unpublished data from Colombia and Panama, however, hint that Zika virus might be linked to other problems in babies, affecting the genitourinary, cardiac, and digestive systems, according to the report. [CIDRAP](#)

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INFLUENZA

CDC: Flu View - Weekly U.S. Influenza Surveillance Report

For 2015-2016 Influenza Season Week 21 ending May 28, 2016:

- Pneumonia and Influenza (P&I) Mortality Surveillance:
 - NCHS Mortality Surveillance Data: Based on National Center for Health Statistics mortality surveillance data available on June 2, 2016, 5.9% of the deaths occurring during the week ending May 14, 2016 (week 19) were due to P&I. This percentage is below the epidemic threshold of 7.0% for week 19.
 - 122 Cities Mortality Reporting System: During week 21, 6.3% of all deaths reported through the 122 Cities Mortality Reporting System were due to P&I. This percentage was below the epidemic threshold of 6.5% for week 21.
- Influenza-Associated Pediatric Mortality: Four influenza-associated pediatric deaths were reported to CDC during week 21. Two deaths were associated with an influenza A (H1N1)pdm09 virus. ... One death was associated with an influenza A virus for which no subtyping was performed, and one death was associated with an influenza B virus. [CDC](#)

Video: Enlisting Mosquitoes to Fight Zika

Scientists in California are testing the use of bacteria-infected *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes to reduce their numbers and prevent the spread of the Zika virus.



Flu episode may yield years of future protection against same virus subtype

3 June - A study from Spain suggests that people who are infected by the influenza A viruses H3N2 or H1N1 may have better than 60% protection against new infections by the same subtype for several years afterward. ... The researchers ... enrolled 1,170 patients with medically attended flu-like illness. ... The researchers found that patients previously infected with the 2009 H1N1 virus had 63% protection (95% confidence interval [CI], 16%-84%) against infection with H1N1 in the 2013-14 season, and those who had a previous H3N2 infection had 65% protection (95% CI, 13%-86%) against another H3N2 illness. Protection provided by the vaccine was considerably lower, the analysis showed. Overall adjusted vaccine effectiveness (VE) was 31% (95% CI, 5%-50%). By subtype, VE was 45% (95% CI, 12%-65%) for H1N1 and 20% (95% CI, -16%-44%) for H3N2. [CIDRAP Flu Scan](#) (first item)

Hong Kong suspends live poultry trade on bird flu concerns: Xinhua

5 June - Hong Kong decided on Sunday to suspend trade in live poultry after a spot check at a local street market revealed the presence of H7N9 bird flu virus, China's official Xinhua News Service reported on Monday. The report, citing a statement from Hong Kong's food and environmental hygiene department, said that so far the source of the virus, found in a fecal sample, has not been identified. The report said that the Hong Kong health department had contacted three of the four people working at the market and none had bird flu symptoms. Hong Kong will hold a special meeting on Monday to evaluate risks and determine how long the suspension will last. [Reuters](#)

NHRC: Febrile Respiratory Illness Surveillance Update

For 2016 Week 22 (through 4 June 2016):

- Influenza: Twenty-three cases of NHRC laboratory-confirmed influenza (A/H3) among US military basic trainees at MCRD Parris Island. These new cases presented for care 11-20 May and all were unvaccinated.
- FRI surveillance at all eight U.S. military basic training centers indicated FRI rates were elevated at Fort Benning and CGTC Cape May. [Naval Health Research Center](#)

USAFSAM: DoD Global, Laboratory-Based, Influenza Surveillance Program

During 15 - 28 May 2016 (Surveillance Weeks 20 & 21), a total of 56 specimens were collected and received from 25 locations. Results were finalized for 52 specimens from 22 locations. During Week 20, three influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 and six influenza B viruses were identified. Four influenza B viruses were identified during Week 21. Approximately 22% of specimens tested positive for influenza during Week 20. The percent positive for Week 21 increased to approximately 28%, as fewer specimens were received. The influenza percent

DOD Warrior Games June 15-21

The U.S. Army will host the DOD Warrior Games at the United States Military Academy in West Point, New York.

The Games are an adaptive sports competition for wounded, ill and injured service members and veterans.

Approximately 250 athletes participate in eight sporting events, representing teams from the Army, Marine Corps, Navy/Coast Guard, Air Force, U.S. Special Operations Command and United Kingdom Armed Forces.

Athletes compete in archery, cycling, field, shooting, sitting volleyball, swimming, track and wheelchair basketball.

STAND-TO!
THE OFFICIAL FOCUS OF THE U.S. ARMY

positive for the season is currently 26%. [US Air Force School of Aerospace Medicine](#)

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VETERINARY/FOOD SAFETY

Ebola virus hotspots across Africa revealed - New study

7 June – A groundbreaking new study into the Ebola virus has revealed that hotspots for the disease may be more widespread, and carried by a greater number of animal species, than previously suspected. Findings also highlighted a strong link between the Ebola virus and tropical rainforests, contributing valuable knowledge to efforts to contain the spread of the ongoing outbreak in West Africa. ... Challenging the preconception that the Ebola virus is mainly carried by three species of fruit bats, the study produced an additional list of more than 60 species of animals flagged as potential carriers of the disease, including rodents, primates, ungulates (hoofed mammals), a civet and a shrew. This finding has implications for the hunting and butchering of wild animals for food, or what is known as bushmeat. [Center for International Forestry Research](#)

Poultry-linked *Salmonella* sickens 324 in 35 states

3 June - In what seems to be an annual occurrence, the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) yesterday reported a wave of *Salmonella* infections linked to live poultry, consisting of seven separate outbreaks that have sickened 324 people in 35 states. Investigations have linked the outbreaks to contact with live poultry including chicks and ducklings from multiple hatcheries. Illnesses began in January, and 66 people have been hospitalized. One death has been reported, but the CDC said *Salmonella* isn't thought to have been a contributing factor. Similar outbreaks last year involving four *Salmonella* strains sickened at least 252 people in 43 states, and one in 2014 linked to three strains resulted in 363 cases from 43 states and Puerto Rico. ... Of the sick people, 27% (88) are children aged 5 years or younger. [CIDRAP](#)

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WELLNESS

Electronic cigarette use among working adults – United States, 2014

10 June - The prevalence of e-cigarettes use among U.S. adults has increased in recent years, particularly among current and former cigarettes smokers. In 2014, an estimated 3.7% of U.S. adults, including 15.9% of current cigarette smokers and 22.0% of former cigarette

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.

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smokers, currently used e-cigarettes every day or some days. In 2014, an estimated 5.5 million (3.8%) of 146 million U.S. working adults were current e-cigarette users. An estimated 16.2% of current cigarette smokers, 15.0% of other combustible tobacco users, and 9.7% of smokeless tobacco users currently used e-cigarettes. The highest e-cigarette use prevalence was among workers in accommodation and food services (6.9%) industry, and among workers in food preparation and serving related occupations (6.8%). [Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Update](#)

Graphic cigarette warnings deter smokers

8 June - Putting graphic pictorial health warnings on cigarette packages was required by a law passed in 2009, but a tobacco company convinced a federal appellate court to delay implementation, claiming there was no evidence that pictures helped people quit. Now a randomized controlled trial, published in JAMA Internal Medicine, has provided the evidence. In a four-week trial, 2,149 smokers were randomly assigned to use packs of cigarettes with either pictorial or text-only warnings. At the end of each week, researchers surveyed the participants about their smoking. ... [By] the end of the study, 40 percent of those in the pictorial warning group had quit for at least a day, and 5.7 percent were not smoking during the seven days before their final interview, compared with 34 percent and 3.8 percent respectively in the text-only group. The pictorial warnings were more effective for both sexes and across races, ethnicities and socioeconomic levels. [The New York Times](#)

Meet the ultra-fat, super-cushioned running shoe

8 June - Can fat-soled shoes that appear to have been constructed in part from marshmallows help you run better? The first study of a new kind of thickly cushioned running shoe suggests that this type of footwear may not make running any easier. But it probably also will not make it harder. And nobody knows yet whether these maximalist running shoes, as they're called, are the answer to preventing the painful injuries that sideline as many as 90 percent of runners at some point. [The New York Times](#)

Nature Made vitamins and supplements recalled due to possible *Salmonella* or *Staphylococcus aureus* contamination

8 June - Pharmavite LLC has recalled specific lots of Nature Made® products ... due to possible *Salmonella* or *Staphylococcus aureus* contamination. ... The recalled products were distributed nationwide to various major retailers. [Outbreak News Today](#)

Obesity rates rising among women: CDC

7 June - More American women than ever are obese, while the number of men carrying around far too many pounds has held steady, new research shows. And a second study finds U.S. teens are another group that continues to struggle with obesity. ... Forty percent of American women and 35 percent of men were obese in 2013-2014, reflecting an increase

among women but not among men, the report found. Among children, 17 percent were obese in 2011-2014, while nearly 6 percent were extremely obese. The prevalence of obesity seesawed among young children, but increased slightly among teens, researchers found.

[WebMD](#)

Study: Antibiotics given for suspected STDs often not needed

9 June - In a hospital emergency department (ED) study, more than 75% of patients who were given antibiotics for suspected gonorrhea or chlamydia were later found to be free of the infections, according to a study to be presented at an infection control conference this week. The authors said the findings illustrate the difficult balance between treating people appropriately for possible sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and avoiding unnecessary antibiotic use, which contributes to bacterial resistance. [CIDRAP](#)

Synthetic drugs pose alarming U.S. overdose risk: DEA chief

7 June - Synthetic designer drugs, especially synthetic opioids like fentanyl ... pose an "unprecedented" threat for U.S. overdoses and deaths, especially among youth, the country's top anti-drug official said on Tuesday. The U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration has been cracking down on synthetic drugs since they began gaining popularity in 2010. But because each newly designed drug needs to be separately banned through a "clunky and cumbersome" process, the problem continues to spiral, DEA head Chuck Rosenberg told a U.S. Senate committee. "For every one substance we've controlled, legislatively or administratively, there are 11 more out there that are uncontrolled," Rosenberg said. ... Rosenberg testified that the DEA has seen a particularly alarming rise in illicit use of the fentanyl. ... More than 11 million people illegally consume prescription painkillers for non-medical purposes each year, and overdoses are likely to increase as fentanyl is introduced to that market, according to Rosenberg. [Reuters](#)

What is intermittent fasting, and is it healthy?

8 June - ... [A] growing body of research suggests that cycling super low-calorie days into your normal eating plan could potentially improve your health. ... The idea [behind Intermittent Fasting (IF)] is to cycle between periods of regular eating and fasting, during which you severely restrict your calorie intake or don't consume any food at all. Some people fast for hours, while some may go for a full day or longer. ... Fasting may improve your overall health and extend your life, likely due to the ways that it affects cell and hormone function, according to several studies. In one recent study in *Cell Metabolism*, for example, periodic fasting was linked to lower risks of heart disease, diabetes, cancer, and aging. ... The long-term effects of fasting diets aren't well understood. Much of the research on the topic has been done across short time frames. [CNN](#)

Women 'nearly twice as likely to have anxiety' as men

6 June - Women are nearly twice as likely to experience anxiety as men, a global review reveals. Its authors from Cambridge University say that as well as women, young people under 35 and those with health problems are particularly affected. They estimate that four in every 100 people have anxiety. The review of 48 published pieces of work says more research is needed to find out which other communities are at high risk. ... North America is thought to be worst affected, with eight in 100 people having anxiety, and East Asia least affected (three in 100). [BBC News](#)

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USAFRICOM

Africa: Two-hour test boosts HIV care in rural Africa

9 June - A blood diagnostic kit that can detect infectious diseases such as HIV and hepatitis B in just two hours is helping to track and better treat diseases in resource-poor regions of the world. The device - SAMBA (Simple AMplification Based Assay) - was developed by a team of Cambridge scientists headed by Dr Helen Lee, who says the device is robust, simple and precise. ... More than ten years in development, the first iteration of the machine had to be completely re-designed to overcome environmental factors, such as dust and heat. ... The simple test uses a tiny drop of the patient's blood which is loaded into the machine and mixed with a combination of chemicals and reagents in a disposable cartridge that changes color if a virus is present in the blood or plasma sample. It also evaluates the viral load in a patient's blood, critical for determining the effectiveness of treatment. [Reuters](#)

Democratic Republic of Congo: Malaria "out of control" in Congo with sick children dying at home

9 June - Malaria in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is "out of control" with many parents letting their sick children die at home because they cannot afford treatment, a medical charity said as it ramps up its emergency response. Children under 13 made up 80 percent of the 45,000 malaria outpatients Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF) has treated in the last four weeks in Haut-Uele Province in northeastern DRC. ... The government asked MSF to step in after recording more than 93,000 malaria cases in four health zones in the province in the first 16 weeks of 2016 - almost four times the figure for 2015. [Reuters](#)

Democratic Republic of Congo: WHO says new yellow fever case in Congo transmitted locally

9 June - A new case of yellow fever detected in the Democratic Republic of Congo's capital was transmitted by a local mosquito, the World Health Organization said on Wednesday,

raising the possibility of a wider outbreak of the disease in the country. The case, confirmed this week after testing by the Pasteur Institute in Dakar and the National Institute of Biomedical Research, was not an imported case from neighboring Angola as other recent cases were, WHO spokesman Eugene Kabambi said. [Reuters](#)

WHO declares West Africa free of Ebola transmission

9 June - Today the World Health Organization (WHO) declared Liberia free of Ebola transmission—meaning the last patient in the country tested negative for a second time 42 days ago—a step that marks the third time West Africa has been declared free of Ebola after its massive outbreak in 2014 and 2015. The previous two times the WHO declared the region free of Ebola transmission, in January and March, flare-ups occurred within a matter of hours, restarting the process. .. The agency has declared an end to Ebola transmission in the country three previous times, starting on May 9, 2015. The most recent flare-up involved a woman and her two children, one of whom tested negative for the virus for a second time two 21-day incubation periods ago, thus becoming the last known case-patient in the region. Sierra Leone declared an end to Ebola transmission on Mar 17, and Guinea followed on Jun 1. [CIDRAP News Scan](#) (first item)

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USCENTCOM

Saudi Arabia: Saudi Arabia reports new camel-associated MERS case

9 June - Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Health (MOH) today reported a MERS infection in a patient from the northwestern part of the country. The MERS-CoV (Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus) case involves a 59-year-old Saudi man from Tabuk, a city near Saudi Arabia's border with Jordan. He is hospitalized in stable condition and is not a healthcare worker. The MOH said that the source of his infection as "primary (contact with camels)." The country had gone 5 days without a MERS case; before that, it experienced an 18-day stretch with no cases. The man's illness raises Saudi Arabia's MERS total since 2012 to 1,385 cases, 592 of them fatal. [CIDRAP News Scan](#) (second item)

Syria: Amid war, UN warns Syrians smoking is a grave health risk

9 June - The World Health Organization has identified another grave risk to the health of Syrians in their war-torn country: tobacco. In a statement last week, the U.N. health agency warned that "notwithstanding the current crisis in the country," Syrian officials should collaborate with the U.N. health agency to control the use of tobacco and water pipes

among its people, especially young adults, women and teenagers. WHO's Syria representative, Dr. Elizabeth Hoff, warned that using tobacco and water pipes endangers the health and lives of smokers and people around them. Hoff said using water pipes to smoke shisha, a common pastime in the Middle East, is 20 times more dangerous than cigarette smoking. [ABC News](#)

Syria: Back with a vengeance in Syria

7 June - Cutaneous leishmaniasis, previously contained in Syria, has returned—taking advantage of overwhelmed medical facilities, massive displacement, and lack of clean water driven by the conflict—and it's on the move. Around 82,000 people in Syria in 2013 were estimated to carry the disease, spread by sand fly bites, according to the Syrian-American medical society. Before the conflict, most of the victims were in Aleppo and Damascus; now, most of the cases are being found in Raqqah, Deir Azzor and Hasakah—ISIS strongholds. A CDC study attributed the shift to the ecologic disruption of sand fly habitats and population displacement. [Global Health NOW](#) (fourth item)

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USEUCOM

Ireland: Abortion ban violated woman's human rights, U.N. panel says

9 June - Ireland's ban on most abortions subjects women to cruel, degrading and discriminatory treatment, and should be lifted in cases of fatal fetal abnormalities, a committee of United Nations human rights experts said on Thursday. The committee found that Ireland had violated a pregnant woman's human rights by forcing her to choose between carrying her fetus to term — knowing it would not survive — or traveling abroad for an abortion. The committee urged Ireland to change its laws — “including, if necessary, its Constitution” — to allow abortions and to let medical providers give information on abortion services “without fearing being subjected to criminal sanctions.”

[The New York Times](#)

Serbia must improve disabled children's care to join EU: HRW report

8 June - Serbia shuts disabled children away in institutions with substandard care and the European Union must make better treatment for them a prerequisite for joining its ranks, Human Rights Watch said on Wednesday. A report by the rights watchdog said Serbia, which has begun negotiations to join the EU, has ratified United Nations conventions on the rights of children and of people with disabilities as well as against all forms of torture. But its investigators found that parents of children born with disabilities were pressured to put

them into state-run institutions where they were mostly neglected, got little schooling and were cut off from their families. [Reuters](#)

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USNORTHCOM

Canada: Syphilis - Increases reported in Nunavut

4 June - Nunavut health officials are sounding the alarm about a territory-wide outbreak of syphilis seen this year. According to recent data, they have reported 51 cases during the first five months of 2016. In all of 2015, health officials reported 68 cases.

[Outbreak News Today](#)

U.S.: Better water system maintenance needed to prevent Legionnaires' disease outbreaks

7 June - More effective water management might have prevented most of the Legionnaires' disease outbreaks CDC investigated from 2000 through 2014. ... Problems identified in these building-associated outbreaks included inadequate disinfectant levels, human error, and equipment breakdowns that led to growth of *Legionella* bacteria in water systems. CDC is releasing a new [toolkit](#) today to help building owner and managers prevent these problems. Legionnaires' disease is on the rise. In the last year, about 5,000 people were diagnosed with Legionnaires' disease and more than 20 outbreaks were reported to CDC. [CDC](#)

U.S.: FDA seeks suspension of 4,402 illegal prescription drug websites

9 June - The U.S. Food and Drug Administration said on Thursday it, along with international authorities, has formally sought to suspend 4,402 websites that illegally sell potentially dangerous, counterfeit or unapproved prescription drugs to U.S. consumers. The move is part of a global effort being led by the INTERPOL, the world's largest police organization, to identify the makers and distributors of illegal prescription drugs. ... The FDA and the U.S. Customs and Border Protection inspected international mail facilities (IMFs), and then sent formal complaints to domain registrars requesting the suspension of the 4,402 websites, the U.S. health regulator said. In addition, the FDA said it has also issued warning letters to operators of 53 websites that illegally sell unapproved and misbranded prescription drug products to U.S. consumers. [Reuters](#)

U.S.: Middle-aged African-Americans more likely than whites to die of stroke

8 June - In middle age, black Americans are four times more likely to die of stroke than whites, a U.S. study suggests. But the reason doesn't appear to be differences in care after a

stroke. Instead, it's because African-Americans have more strokes at age 45 and throughout middle age, the study found. ... By age 55, blacks were about three times more likely to die of stroke than whites. The odds of death from stroke were roughly doubled for blacks at age 65 compared to whites. [Reuters](#)

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USPACOM

Thailand: First in Asia, Thailand eliminates mother-to-child transmission of HIV

7 June - ... The World Health Organization announced on Wednesday that Thailand has become the first Asian country to eliminate mother-to-child transmission of HIV and syphilis. Elimination of transmission is defined as a reduction of transmission to such a low level that it no longer constitutes a public health problem. Last year, Cuba was the world's first country to receive WHO validation for eliminating mother-to-child transmission of HIV. But Thailand, which is home to about 450,000 people living with HIV, is "the first with a large HIV epidemic to ensure an AIDS-free generation," the WHO said in a statement.

[Reuters](#)

Sri Lanka: Sri Lanka reports increase in Melioidosis

6 June - Sri Lankan health officials are warning the public of the increases of the deadly bacterial infection, Melioidosis, and the risks particularly after the recent floods, landslides and upcoming monsoon season. According to health officials, through May 2016, 28 cases have been reported. This compares to recent years—2011 (6 cases during entire year), 2012 (5), 2013 (10), 2014 (23) and 65 cases last year. ... Dr. Enoka Corea said, "With early identification of Melioidosis, the patients can be treated effectively and deaths prevented," she says, pointing out that the mortality rate is a shockingly high 1 in 4 among those stricken by this disease. [Outbreak News Today](#)

Vietnam: Toxic fish in Vietnam idle a local industry and challenge the state

8 June - Since a devastating fish kill blighted the waters along 120 miles of coastline in central Vietnam, hundreds of people are believed to have fallen ill from eating poisoned fish. Here in the fishing village of Nhan Trach, the squid that sustain the local economy have virtually disappeared. And a fishing ban has left hundreds of traps sitting unused on the beach and dozens of small fishing boats idle. ... While the immediate cause appears to have been toxic waste from a nearby steel mill, fury over the episode has exploded into a national issue, posing the biggest challenge to the authoritarian government since a spate of anti-

Chinese riots in 2014. ... But two months after the fish started washing up on beaches here, the government has yet to announce the cause of the disaster or identify the toxin that killed marine life and poisoned coastal residents. [The New York Times](#)

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USSOUTHCOM

PAHO reports 2,400 new chikungunya cases in the Americas

6 June - The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) late last week reported 2,446 new chikungunya cases to bring the 2016 total in the Americas to 117,829 cases. ... Honduras reported the most new cases, with 1,174, bringing its total for the year to 9,489. Colombia was next, with 824 new cases and 15,625 total. Many countries, however, have not reported new cases for many weeks. PAHO reported a new chikungunya-related death, in Nicaragua, raising the number of 2016 fatalities to 16. The other 15 deaths were in Brazil.

[CIDRAP News Scan](#) (first item)

WHO notes 57 cases of Oropouche fever in Peru

6 June - The World Health Organization (WHO) on Jun 3 reported 57 cases of Oropouche fever in an area of Peru that had not previously reported cases of the midge-borne disease, which produces similar symptoms as other arbovirus diseases like Zika, chikungunya, and dengue. Most of the 57 cases were from town in the Cusco region of Peru, which is in the Amazon rainforest basin and had not reported cases before, the WHO said. Forty-five of the cases (79%) were detected in January, compared with four (7%) in February and eight (14%) in March. All patients have recovered following symptomatic treatment, and there were no fatalities. [CIDRAP News Scan](#) (second item)

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