

15 July 2016

Army Public Health Weekly Update

Army Public Health Center

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Contents

U.S. MILITARY

- Hopeful sign for combat veterans with nightmares, insomnia
- Incoming DHA Research and Development director brings new perspective
- Is traumatic brain injury associated with late-life neurodegenerative conditions?
- Predicting contagiousness to limit the spread of disease

GLOBAL

- Blood donor age, sex matters for transfusion success
- Five-nation study finds range of resistance to essential MDR-TB drugs
- How 3D printing can save lives
- New app lets public help map disasters, conflicts and outbreaks
- Patient proximity key in Korean MERS super-spreader event
- Use it or lose it: Visual activity regenerates neural connections between eye and brain
- ZIKA VIRUS
- Experts warn spraying may not be very effective against *Aedes*
- First Zika-related death in continental U.S. reported in Utah
- Four countries most at Zika risk due to Olympics travel: CDC
- New control strategies needed for Zika and other unexpected mosquito-borne outbreaks
- Partisan split delays Zika bill
- Researchers find Zika persists in female genital tract
- Zika epidemic may have peaked but will threaten U.S. for years
- Zika virus disease in the United States, 2015–2016

INFLUENZA

- CDC: Flu View - Weekly U.S. Influenza Surveillance Report
- China notes new H7N9 avian flu case, 3 new deaths; outbreak hits 800
- NHRC: Febrile Respiratory Illness Surveillance Update
- USAFSAM: DoD Global, Laboratory-Based, Influenza Surveillance Program
- WHO: Influenza Update

VETERINARY/FOOD SAFETY

- General Mills adds two Betty Crocker cake mixes to recall
- Promising findings for a Rift Valley fever outbreak prediction tool

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Twitter



YouTube

- USDA to share food safety data regularly on data.gov

WELLNESS

- Can running make you smarter?
- Congress approves bill to address addiction as a health problem
- Could artificial sweeteners make people more hungry?
- E-cigarettes could cut smoking-related deaths by 21 percent: study
- For coffee drinkers, the buzz may be in your genes
- Hassle of being a patient can turn into a crisis without sick leave
- Health problems have worsened for obese in U.S.
- No health benefit to replacing fat with carbs
- Pregnancy multivitamins 'are a waste of money'
- Study finds fat kills, casting doubt on 'obesity paradox'
- Tobacco product use among adults — United States, 2013–2014
- Work can be a stressful and dangerous place for many

USAFRICOM

- Male circumcision, HIV treatment can significantly reduce infections in African men
- South Sudan: Extreme hunger in South Sudan
- WHO: 88 more yellow fever cases in Angola bring total past 3,500

USCENTCOM

- Saudi Arabia: Two new Saudi MERS cases noted as experts air road map
- UN, Jordan agree 30-day ration for hungry Syrians on border

USEUCOM

- United Kingdom: One in eight women experience infertility

USNORTHCOM

- U.S.: Adolescent birth rate drops across all racial groups, annual report shows
- U.S.: FDA expands age indication for Prevnar 13 use in younger adults
- U.S.: GOP backs new fund for public health
- U.S.: Immigration detention center in Arizona failed to contain measles outbreak
- U.S.: MCR-1 gene found in human sample in U.S. for 2nd time
- U.S.: Scientists agree: Fla. lake discharges, not septic systems, cause algae blooms
- U.S.: Stool softener tied to 47 *Burkholderia cepacia* infections in 5 states
- U.S.: Superbug *E. coli* found for just second time in U.S.
- U.S.: Survey - Many willing to skip doctor to get antibiotics

USPACOM

- Australia declares AIDS no longer public health issue
- Health care costs forcing China's patients into crippling debt

USSOUTHCOM

- Dominican Republic: Infection outbreak tied to nip/tuck on Caribbean isle
- PAHO notes 903 new chikungunya cases
- Uruguay: Phillip Morris loses tough-on-tobacco lawsuit

**Standing Operating
Procedure
No. EHE37-001:
Ebola Virus Disease
Waste Management
in the Medical
Treatment Facility**

The purpose of this SOP is to assure safe collection, removal, transport, and disposal of Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) waste from all medical treatment facilities (MTFs) generation areas in a manner that is safe to personnel and the environment and in compliance with all applicable regulations.

U.S. MILITARY

Hopeful sign for combat veterans with nightmares, insomnia

11 July - ... [The] treatment of insomnia and nightmares has historically required multiple treatments, often from multiple providers. The treatments effective for insomnia were not necessarily effective for nightmares. And the treatments effective for nightmares were not necessarily effective for insomnia. ... A relatively new therapy called Exposure, Relaxation, and Rescription Therapy is proving to be effective for these sleep problems. ... Recognizing the need for effective treatments in veterans, researchers modified the treatment specifically for this group. Results from this modified version of ERRT with veterans are promising. For four weeks, 19 veterans were provided once weekly sessions. The sessions included a mix of education about insomnia and nightmares, techniques for learning to sleep better, intentional exposure to content of the nightmare, and "rewriting" and rehearsing the new dream. After only one week, some veterans saw a reduction in the number of nightmares they experienced as well as the intensity of their dreams. They also saw an increase in overall sleep quality and a drop in the severity of their insomnia. Surprisingly, those who were depressed saw improvement in mood. ... Improvements continued up to two months after treatment ended. [Military Times](#)

Incoming DHA Research and Development director brings new perspective



7 July - 35-year career as a Naval medical officer has led Rear Adm. Colin Chinn to his newest position as the director of Research, Development & Acquisition (RDA), for the Defense Health Agency (DHA) in Falls Church, Virginia. This new job has him overseeing the agency's efforts to develop innovations to help save warfighters' lives and new ways to provide better health care for retirees and family members. [Health.mil](#)

Is traumatic brain injury associated with late-life neurodegenerative conditions?

11 July - Traumatic brain injury (TBI) with loss of consciousness was not associated with late-life mild cognitive impairment, Alzheimer disease or dementia but it appeared to be associated with increased risk for other neurodegenerative and neuropathologic findings, according to a new article published online by *JAMA Neurology*. Most TBIs are mild and most people return to their prior level of functioning. Still, concern over late-life effects of TBIs has grown with increased awareness of repetitive head trauma in athletes and head injuries suffered by service members in military conflicts. But most TBIs are not sports related or caused by combat injuries so understanding late-life effects in nonathlete civilians

**Technical
Information Paper:
Terminal Cleaning
for Ebola Virus
Disease**

This technical information paper provides guidance for terminal disinfection and cleaning of patient-care areas used to treat Ebola Virus Disease patients. This document does not change any existing Department of Defense directives, policies, or procedures related to normal waste management in DOD medical treatment facilities.

is important. [Medical Xpress](#)

Predicting contagiousness to limit the spread of disease

12 July - ... If healthcare professionals had the ability to test in advance whether a person is likely to spread a disease following infection, they could recommend specific measures to treat the person or limit exposure and perhaps keep an outbreak from growing into an epidemic or pandemic. DARPA's new Prometheus program is setting out to develop that predictive capability. Prometheus seeks to discover a minimal set of molecular biomarkers that would indicate, less than 24 hours after exposure to a pathogen, whether an individual will become contagious. That window is narrow enough to allow for early treatment or the initiation of other mitigating steps before a person begins infecting others. Prometheus will focus on acute respiratory infections. As part of that effort, researchers on the program will set out to develop a fundamental understanding of the biological responses occurring in a recently infected person. [Health.mil](#)

[top of page...](#)

GLOBAL

Blood donor age, sex matters for transfusion success

13 July - Transfusion recipients getting red blood cell (RBC) units from younger and/or female donors had increased mortality, results of a large, prospective cohort study in Canada found. When donors were in their late teens or 20s, the hazard ratios for recipient mortality per unit of blood transfused were 1.08 (95% CI 1.06-1.10) and 1.06 (95% CI 1.04-1.09), respectively, as compared with transfusions from donors in their 40s. ... Similarly, when donors were female, the hazard ratio for death per RBC unit was 1.08 (95% CI 1.06-1.09), the researchers found. ... An accompanying editorial ... highlighted the differences in blood from female versus male donors. These include "lower hemoglobin levels and different protein concentrations to the frequency of HLA, platelet, and granulocyte alloantibodies."

[MedPage Today](#)

Five-nation study finds range of resistance to essential MDR-TB drugs

8 July - A new WHO study is shedding some light on the extent of resistance to drugs that are considered essential for the treatment of multidrug-resistant tuberculosis (MDR-TB). The study ... used population-based surveys from Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belarus, Pakistan, and South Africa to investigate the levels of resistance to pyrazinamide and fluoroquinolones among TB patients. Pyrazinamide and fluoroquinolones are "second line" drugs used mainly for the treatment of MDR-TB, and they are considered essential for treating TB that is

**Technical
Information Paper:
Waste
Characterization of
Used Silver Nitrate
Applicator Sticks**

Silver nitrate applicators cauterize skin, stop superficial bleeding, remove warts, and remove excessive granulation and tissue around wounds.

The silver nitrate applicator stick composition consists of a rigid wooden stick tipped with a solid comprised of 75% Silver Nitrate and 25% Potassium Nitrate.

The silver/potassium nitrate solid is a strong irritant to skin and tissue and is an oxidizer. The EPA classifies oxidizers, defined by Title 49 Code of Federal Register (CFR) Part 173, as ignitable hazardous waste.

resistant to the "first line" drug rifampicin. ... In a retrospective analysis of samples from 4,972 TB patients, the researchers found that levels of pyrazinamide resistance varied substantially in the five countries—from 3.0% to 42.1%—but were significantly associated with rifampicin resistance. This is important, the authors said, because it means that treatments that include pyrazinamide may be no more effective than first-line treatments for patients with rifampicin-resistant TB, and therefore should be carefully evaluated.

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

How 3D printing can save lives

14 July - ... Those tasked with clearing [unexploded ordnance, or UXO] have a hard job, made harder by a serious dearth of training materials – often little more than textbooks and PowerPoint presentations. "It's crappy for me to learn from a PowerPoint, never mind people who aren't used to learning that way," said Tan. ... Tan, now the director of applied technology with the Golden West Humanitarian Foundation, is trying to change that. In a tiny factory above his office in Phnom Penh, several 3D printers produce replica munitions that he designed. ... The technique has the potential to revolutionise training for ordnance disposal technicians. The models, made from ABS plastic – the material used to make Lego – are built to resemble various munitions and fuses, the part of a bomb that goes through an arming sequence to set off the explosives. The replicas are so intricate that the whole anatomy of the firing mechanism can be explored and taught. Started in 2012 with \$100,000 in seed funding from the US State Department, the model munitions, known as Advanced Ordnance Training Materials, are selling rapidly. [IRIN](#)

New app lets public help map disasters, conflicts and outbreaks

14 July - ... [A] new app launched by a medical charity on Friday aims to use technology to help aid workers map areas at risk of conflict, disasters and disease. Using the latest in mobile gaming technology, MapSwipe lets users map remote, rural regions vulnerable to humanitarian crises. Hundreds of millions of people in crisis-prone communities are not mapped, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) said, and without this data, aid agencies are unable to effectively plan for emergencies. ... Users will swipe through a series satellite images on their phone, and tap the screen when they see buildings, houses or other signs of human activity. In essence, the public can help filter out uninhabited areas, such as deserts or bushland, so aid workers can concentrate on mapping places where people actually live. [Reuters](#)

Patient proximity key in Korean MERS super-spreader event

11 July - In findings that could help other hospitals prevent or contain MERS-CoV transmission, South Korean researchers who did an in-depth analysis of a super-spreader event at Samsung Medical Center's crowded emergency department—part of a large South Korean outbreak in 2015—found that the highest risk was to nearby patients. ... The South

**CDC
Recommendations
for Nonopioid
Treatments in the
Management of
Chronic Pain**

Between 1999-2014, nonopioid treatments for chronic pain were used less frequently while the amount of opioids prescribed in the U.S. quadrupled.

The CDC Guideline for Prescribing Opioids for Chronic Pain provides recommendations for safer and more effective prescribing of opioids for chronic pain inpatients 18 years of age and older in outpatient settings.

Date: July 27, 2016

Time: 2:00 - 3:00 pm ET

Join by Phone:

800-779-0686
(U.S. Callers)

312-470-0194
(International Callers)

Passcode: 3377346

[Join by Webinar](#)



Korean outbreak began in May 2015 [and] involved 186 people over 3 months. ... [Researchers] conducted a detailed analysis of the largest of South Korea's super-spreader clusters, one triggered by a 35-year-old man who has been referred to in epidemiologic reports as "patient 14," who had shared a hospital ward with the index patient at a different hospital. The report ... linked the younger man's illness to 82 people who were in the emergency department (ED) over a 3-day period from May 27 to May 29. They included patients, visitors, and healthcare workers. When they looked at risk relating to proximity to patient 14, patients who stayed in the same ED zone were at the greatest risk—20% of patients who shared the same area were infected. Of patients who had brief exposure to the patient in the registration area or radiology department, 5% were infected. [CIDRAP](#)

Use it or lose it: Visual activity regenerates neural connections between eye and brain

11 July - A study in mice funded by the National Institutes of Health shows for the first time that high-contrast visual stimulation can help damaged retinal neurons regrow optic nerve fibers, otherwise known as retinal ganglion cell axons. In combination with chemically induced neural stimulation, axons grew further than in strategies tried previously. Treated mice partially regained visual function. The study also demonstrates that adult regenerated central nervous system (CNS) axons are capable of navigating to correct targets in the brain. ... "Reconnecting neurons in the visual system is one of the biggest challenges to developing regenerative therapies for blinding eye diseases like glaucoma," said NEI Director Paul A. Sieving, M.D., Ph.D. "This research shows that mammals have a greater capacity for central nervous system regeneration than previously known." [NIH](#)

ZIKA VIRUS

Experts warn spraying may not be very effective against *Aedes*

12 July - On the heels of a federal recommendation to begin aerial spraying in Puerto Rico as a way to beat back *Aedes* mosquitoes, the hosts of the Zika virus, several vector control experts are voicing their concern over the plan. "I consulted the CDC [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention] on this topic, and I recommended against it," said infectious disease and mosquito control expert Duane Gubler, ScD, MS. "It's uncharted territory. It's expensive. And it's temporary." Gubler explained that while spraying is often used successfully against floodwater mosquitoes, the *Aedes* mosquito, which can spread Zika, yellow fever, dengue, and chikungunya, doesn't live in easy-to-reach places. "The mosquito lives in closets, inside garbage, indoors," said Gubler. Those conditions are less than ideal for mass spraying campaigns, he added. [CIDRAP](#)

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.

Links

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[Medical Surveillance Monthly Report](#)

[Medical Threat Briefings \(AKO\)](#)

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[APHC Training](#)

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First Zika-related death in continental U.S. reported in Utah

8 July - U.S. health officials confirmed Friday that a Utah resident's death late last month was the first Zika-related death in the continental United States. The Salt Lake County health department said the elderly person had an underlying health condition. The individual, who had traveled to a Zika-affected region this year, tested positive for the virus, the department said in a statement. The exact cause of death has not been determined, however. "We know [Zika] contributed to the death, but we don't know if it was the sole cause," medical officer Dagmar Vitek said in a news conference. [The Washington Post](#)

Four countries most at Zika risk due to Olympics travel: CDC

13 July - Four countries are most at risk from a Zika outbreak as a result of travel related to the Rio Olympics and Paralympic Games, a U.S. health agency said on Wednesday. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention identified Chad, Djibouti, Eritrea and Yemen as most susceptible to mosquito-borne transmission of the virus among 19 countries that have conditions that could result in an outbreak. These four nations are more susceptible as they do not have substantial non-Games travel to any Zika-affected countries, the CDC said on Wednesday. The 19 countries, identified by the CDC, have not reported an outbreak so far. Excluding these countries, attendance at the games does not pose a 'substantive risk' for mosquito-borne Zika transmission. [Reuters](#)

New control strategies needed for Zika and other unexpected mosquito-borne outbreaks

14 July - ... "The rise of Zika after its long persistence as a disease of apparently little importance highlights how little we truly understand about the global spread of mosquito-borne viruses and other lesser known diseases," says Justin Lessler, an associate professor of epidemiology at the Bloomberg School who led the study along with Lelia Chaisson, a student in the department. "Over the past decades, dengue, chikungunya, West Nile virus and now Zika have emerged or re-emerged across the globe. Yet why these viruses have expanded their range and others have failed to invade areas potentially ripe for their spread remains a mystery." ... There are two main theories as to why Zika is currently posing such a threat: that the virus has mutated to become more infectious or pathogenic, or that it previously struck such small populations that it was hard to discern its health effects. ... Lessler says that a good portion of the millions of dollars expected to be earmarked for Zika by the U.S. Congress should focus on developing long-term strategies for sustainable mosquito control and vaccines. [Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health News](#)

Partisan split delays Zika bill

14 July - As partisan rancor around stalled Zika legislation continues, the chances of

reconciling the bill before the Senate's 7-week recess vanished. On Thursday, the House version of the Zika bill failed a test vote in the Senate with a 52-44 tally. The vote signaled that the bill would not come to an up-or-down vote. ... Physician and health policy groups were disappointed with Congress's inaction. ... [CDC Director Tom] Frieden said delaying funding meant delaying long-term research into understanding how to effectively protect pregnant women from the virus. He noted that the CDC had already borrowed emergency funding from states and that those monies needed to be repaid. [MedPage Today](#)

Researchers find Zika persists in female genital tract

12 July - A French research team yesterday reported the first known detection of Zika virus in the genital tract of an infected woman, along with signs that it persists there after it clears from blood and urine. ... The 27-year-old woman was sick in May, and a rapid blood test was positive for Zika virus. ... Her genital swab, endocervical swab, and cervical mucus sample were all positive for Zika virus RNA on day 3 of her illness. However, on day 11 when blood and urine tests were negative, her cervical mucus sample was still positive for Zika RNA. The researchers said though it's not known if infectious virus was present, the findings have implications for sexual transmission from women to men and vertical transmission from a mother to her fetus. [CIDRAP News Scan](#) (first item)

Zika epidemic may have peaked but will threaten U.S. for years

14 July ... [Justin] Lessler and his colleagues report evidence Thursday that the [Zika] epidemic has peaked and started to subside. The virus has spread so quickly and infected so many people that it's actually burning itself out, the team writes in the journal *Science*. By graphing the number of Zika cases over time, it easy to see cases have been declining rapidly over the past few months. But Lessler and his team couldn't tell if this decline was because the epidemic is waning or because the mosquito season in South America has finished for the year. To figure that out, Lessler and his team built a simple computer model of Zika spreading across the Western Hemisphere. The model predicts the epidemic will probably last another 1.5 to 2 years and will likely peter out by spring 2018. Then Zika will lay low for years, the team predicts. ... "It could be five years or even a decade before we have another significant epidemic." The reason for this is pretty simple: A large portion of the population in Latin America will have been exposed to Zika and become immune to the virus. ... But what does it mean for the U.S.? ... The new study suggests Zika will be a threat in the U.S. for a few summers to come, Lewis says. But this summer will likely be the worst in terms of the number of imported Zika cases we get." Because the spike in Latin America is probably the highest it's going to be this current season," he says. "This summer is probably the big one." [NPR](#)

Zika virus disease in the United States, 2015–2016

13 July - This update from the CDC Arboviral Disease Branch includes provisional data reported to ArboNET for January 01, 2015 – July 13, 2016. [CDC](#)

US States

- Locally acquired mosquito-borne cases reported: 0
- Travel-associated cases reported: 1,305
- Laboratory acquired cases reported: 1
- Total: 1,306
- Sexually transmitted: 14
- Guillain-Barré syndrome: 5

US Territories

- Locally acquired cases reported: 2,905
- Travel-associated cases reported: 11
- Total: 2,916*
- Guillain-Barré syndrome: 12

[top of page...](#)

INFLUENZA

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

Pneumonia and Influenza (P&I) Mortality Surveillance for 2015-2016 Influenza Season Week 26 ending July 2, 2016:

- NCHS Mortality Surveillance Data: Based on NCHS mortality surveillance data available on July 7, 2016, 5.1% of the deaths occurring during the week ending June 18, 2016 (week 24) were due to P&I. This percentage is below the epidemic threshold of 6.5% for week 24.
- 122 Cities Mortality Reporting System: During week 26, 5.3% of all deaths reported through the 122 Cities Mortality Reporting System were due to P&I. This percentage was below the epidemic threshold of 6.0% for week 26. [CDC](#)

China notes new H7N9 avian flu case, 3 new deaths; outbreak hits 800

12 July - China's National Health and Family Planning Commission (HFPC) today reported a new H7N9 avian flu case in June, bringing the country's total for that month to seven cases. Officials added that three previously reported patients have died, according to an HFPC report translated by FluTrackers, an infectious disease message board. The newly reported infection expands the outbreak to 800 cases since the first case was confirmed in China in 2013, according to a list maintained by FluTrackers. [CIDRAP News Scan](#) (third item)

NHRC: Febrile Respiratory Illness Surveillance Update

For 2016 Week 27 (through 9 July 2016):

- Influenza: No new cases of NHRC laboratory-confirmed influenza among US military basic trainees.
- FRI surveillance at all eight U.S. military basic training centers indicated FRI rates were at or below expected values. [Naval Health Research Center](#)

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

During 5 June - 2 July 2016, a total of 68 specimens were collected and received from 27 locations. Results were finalized for 61 specimens from 26 locations. During Week 23, two influenza B viruses were identified. One influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 was identified in Week 24. One influenza A(H3N2) and one influenza B virus was identified during Week 26. Approximately 7% of specimens tested positive for influenza during Weeks 23 and 24. The percent positive for Week 26 increased to approximately 17% as fewer specimens were received. The influenza percent positive for the season is currently 26%.

[US Air Force School of Aerospace Medicine](#)

WHO: Influenza Update

11 July - In temperate countries in the southern hemisphere, influenza activity increased steadily in the last few weeks in South America and South Africa, but remained low overall in most of Oceania. Influenza activity in the temperate zone of the northern hemisphere was at inter-seasonal levels. [WHO](#)

[top of page...](#)

VETERINARY/FOOD SAFETY

General Mills adds two Betty Crocker cake mixes to recall

12 July - General Mills Inc said it was recalling two flavors of Betty Crocker cake mix in the United States and one in Canada as part of a recall of some flour products following an *E. coli* outbreak. The Party Rainbow Chip Cake Mix and Carrot Cake Mix were added to the recall after a General Mills supplier used Wondra flour, which was recalled on July 1, to manufacture flavored chips that are used in these mixes. In June, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that flour produced at a General Mills plant in Kansas City, Missouri, was probably the source of an *E. coli* outbreak that had sickened 38 people in 20 U.S. states. [Reuters](#)

Promising findings for a Rift Valley fever outbreak prediction tool

13 July - An analysis of Rift Valley fever epidemics in South African livestock identified a weather pattern that seems to trigger outbreaks, and researchers incorporated the data into a model that can help predict the events, which may be useful to farmers to protect their herds with vaccines. ... Livestock vaccination is the best way to prevent the mosquito-borne disease, which takes a toll on livestock and can result in infections in humans. Researchers said, however, that between Rift Valley fever epidemics, farmers sometimes discontinue vaccination, and when another outbreak strikes, it's usually too late to immunize the animals. Hence, an early warning strategy would be useful to support vaccination, they wrote.

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

USDA to share food safety data regularly on data.gov

12 July - The US Department of Agriculture's (USDA's) Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) announced yesterday plans to share huge amounts of food safety information on the government Web site, Data.gov. The information will be updated quarterly and is meant to increase both agency transparency and consumer information. ... FSIS said it has worked on developing a web platform for sharing the data points for more than 6,000 meat, poultry, and egg facilities for 7 years in response to President Obama's "Open Government Plan." This is the first time the agency will be routinely sharing establishment-specific data with the public. The data sets will show results from chemical residue testing, advocated meat recovery testing, results from *Salmonella* and *Campylobacter* testing in poultry, and results for Shiga toxin-producing *Escherichia coli* and *Salmonella* in meat. FSIS will also release test results for *Listeria* and *Salmonella* in ready-to-eat products and processed egg products.

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

[top of page...](#)

WELLNESS

Can running make you smarter?

13 July - To strengthen your mind, you may first want to exert your leg muscles, according to a sophisticated new experiment involving people, mice and monkeys. ... [For] the new study, ... N.I.H. researchers ... zeroed in on one substance in particular, a protein called cathepsin B [that can cross the blood-brain barrier]. The protein is known to help sore muscles recover, in part by helping to clear away cellular debris, but it had not previously been considered part of the chain linking exercise to brain health. To determine whether cathepsin B might, in fact, be involved in brain health, the researchers added a little of the

protein to living neurons in other petri dishes. They found that those brain cells started making more proteins related to neurogenesis. Cathepsin B also proved to be abundant in the bloodstreams of mice, monkeys and people who took up running, the scientists found. [The New York Times](#)

Congress approves bill to address addiction as a health problem

13 July - The Senate on Wednesday overwhelmingly approved a bill intended to change the way police and health care workers treat people struggling with opioid addictions. The bill, which had previously passed the House, will now be sent to President Obama. He has indicated that he will sign it, despite concerns that it doesn't provide enough funding. The bill is an amalgam of more than a dozen proposals passed through the year in the House and Senate. And while it has lots of new policies and provisions — from creating a task force to study how best to treat pain, to encouraging states to create prescription drug monitoring programs — it doesn't have much money to put them in place. President Obama had requested \$1.1 billion to help pay for more addiction treatment programs and other initiatives. But the version agreed to by House and Senate Republicans last week didn't include all that money. It provides about half that much. [NPR](#)

Could artificial sweeteners make people more hungry?

13 July - Artificial sweeteners can boost appetite by activating hunger pathways in the body, scientists have found in animals. In fruit flies and mice, the mismatch between sweet taste and fewer calories sends the body into "feed me" mode, the journal *Cell Metabolism* reports. But UK nutritionists say this does not mean the same is true in humans. They say low calorie sweetened foods can help people keep weight off and are better for our teeth than sugar. The researchers, however, say more work is needed to make sure that the billions of people who regularly consume sugar substitutes don't have the same reaction as they saw in their animal tests. [BBC News](#)

E-cigarettes could cut smoking-related deaths by 21 percent: study

14 July - E-cigarettes could lead to a 21 percent drop in deaths from smoking-related diseases in those born after 1997, according to a study published in *Nicotine & Tobacco Research*. The study, funded by the National Institute on Drug Abuse, the National Cancer Institute and the Cancer Intervention and Surveillance Modeling Network, found that under most plausible scenarios e-cigarettes and other vapor products have a generally positive public health impact. Multiple studies have sought to assess the impact of e-cigarettes on public health, with conflicting results. ... The study distinguishes between youths who vape who would not otherwise have taken up any nicotine product, and those who vape, who would otherwise have smoked cigarettes. When both those populations are taken into account, the benefit outweighs the harm, according to the study. [Reuters](#)

For coffee drinkers, the buzz may be in your genes



12 July - ... Why is there so much conflicting evidence about coffee? ... Dr. El-Soheemy suspected that the relationship between coffee and heart disease might ... vary from one individual to the next. And he zeroed in on one gene in particular, CYP1A2, which controls an enzyme – also called CYP1A2 – that determines how quickly our bodies break down caffeine. One variant of the gene causes the liver to metabolize caffeine very quickly. People who inherit two copies of the “fast” variant – one from each parent – are generally referred to as fast metabolizers. Their bodies metabolize caffeine about four times more quickly than people who inherit one or more copies of the slow variant of the gene. ... Heavy coffee consumption only seemed to be linked to a higher likelihood of heart attacks in the slow metabolizers. ... The trend among fast metabolizers was quite the opposite. Those who drank one to three cups of coffee daily had a significantly reduced risk of heart attacks – suggesting that for them coffee was protective. [The New York Times](#)

Hassle of being a patient can turn into a crisis without sick leave

11 July - ... [A new] poll by NPR, The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health ... found that 32 percent of people in the U.S. ... don't get any paid sick days. And 24 percent have no paid vacation time. So unless they work odd hours, people without either benefit lose income if they want to take care of their health. That's a real problem, but it's not the only consequence of what Dr. Victor Montori of the Mayo Clinic refers to as the “work” of being a patient. He says the health care system is designed for the convenience of doctors — and the result is that patients find themselves running to doctor's offices, labs, imaging centers and back, often carrying their records along with them. “That is not an organization of care that started by thinking, ‘How do we meet the needs of the patients?’ ” Montori says. [NPR](#)

Health problems have worsened for obese in U.S.

13 July - Obese adults in the U.S. have worse heart health and a higher risk of type 2 diabetes today than in the late 1980s, a new study suggests. ... [Researchers] used data collected from 18,626 obese adults between 1988 and 2014 through the annual National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey. Overall, the researchers saw decreases in blood pressure and cholesterol levels during that time. However, they found increases in hemoglobin A1c, which reflects blood sugar level over the past several months. Higher levels of A1c suggest worse blood sugar control and possibly diabetes. ... [By] the end of the study, the proportion of people living with only one or two risk factors for heart disease had dropped. In 1988, 70 percent had one or two risk factors, versus about 62 percent by 2014. Instead, the proportion of people with all three risk factors for heart disease had gone up - from about 16 percent in 1988 to about 22 percent in 2014. [Reuters](#)

No health benefit to replacing fat with carbs

11 July - Low-fat diets that are high in carbohydrates are unlikely to improve your health, a new study shows. Researchers [studied] the eating habits and health behaviors of 126,233 men and women who completed health questionnaires every two to four years for up to 32 years. Then they calculated the effect of replacing just 5 percent of saturated fat calories with another type of fat or carbohydrates. The study ... found that replacing 5 percent of daily calories from saturated fats (mainly animal fat) with foods high in monounsaturated fat, such as olive oil and avocados, was associated with a 27 percent reduction in total mortality and reduced death from cardiovascular disease, cancer and neurodegenerative disease. A similar switch from saturated fat to polyunsaturated fats, such as the omega-3 and omega-6 fatty acids in fish and walnuts, was associated with a 13 percent reduction in total mortality and a 29 percent reduction in death from neurodegenerative diseases. But replacing saturated fats with carbohydrates, such as sugars and refined grains, did not confer any health benefits. [The New York Times](#)

Pregnancy multivitamins 'are a waste of money'

12 July - Pregnancy multivitamins are a waste of money because most mothers-to-be do not need them, according to researchers. In Drug and Therapeutics Bulletin, researchers say they looked at all evidence and found supplements did not boost the health of mothers and babies. But pregnant women should make sure they take folic acid and vitamin D, as well as eating a well-balanced diet, as per NHS guidelines, they add. Supplements-makers said some women were not getting enough nutrients. The researchers said folic acid had the strongest evidence to support its use - taking 400 micrograms a day can protect against abnormalities called neural tube defects in the developing baby. Vitamin D - 10 micrograms a day - is recommended for healthy bones in the mother and baby. [BBC News](#)

Study finds fat kills, casting doubt on 'obesity paradox'

13 July - Being overweight or obese is linked to a higher risk of dying prematurely than being normal weight and the risk rises sharply as the extra pounds pile on, scientists said on Wednesday. In findings contradicting the "obesity paradox", which had suggested a possible survival advantage to being overweight, researchers said excess body weight now causes 1 in 5 of all premature deaths in America and 1 in 7 in Europe. ... The results showed that participants with a normal BMI had the lowest premature mortality risk - of dying before the age of 70 - during the time they were followed. The risk of mortality increased significantly throughout the overweight range, with every 5 units higher BMI above 25 kg/m² linked to a 31 percent higher risk of premature death. [Reuters](#)

Tobacco product use among adults — United States, 2013–2014

15 July - Although significant declines in cigarette smoking have occurred among U.S. adults during the past 5 decades, the use of emerging tobacco products has increased in

recent years. During 2013–2014, 21.3% of U.S. adults used a tobacco product every day or some days, and 25.5% of U.S. adults used a tobacco product every day, some days, or rarely. Cigarettes remained the most commonly used tobacco product. Young adults aged 18–24 years reported the highest prevalence of use of emerging tobacco products, including water pipes/hookahs and e-cigarettes. Differences in the use of any tobacco product were observed, with higher use reported among males; persons aged <45 years; non-Hispanic whites, non-Hispanic blacks, or non-Hispanics of other races; persons in the Midwest or South; persons with a General Educational Development certificate; persons who were single/never married/not living with a partner or divorced/separated/widowed; persons with annual household income <\$20,000; and persons who were lesbian, gay, or bisexual. Continued implementation of proven population-based interventions focused on the diversity of tobacco product use could help reduce tobacco use and tobacco related disease and death. [Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Update](#)

Work can be a stressful and dangerous place for many

11 July - Employers' efforts to reduce stress get low grades in a new poll by NPR, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and Harvard's T.H. Chan School of Public Health. In particular, among those working adults who say they've experienced a great deal of stress at work in the past 12 months, the vast majority, 85 percent, rate the efforts of their workplace to reduce stress as fair or poor. Overall, 43 percent of working adults told us their job negatively affects their stress levels. Others said their job negatively affects their eating habits (28 percent), sleeping habits (27 percent) and weight (22 percent). ... About 1 in 5 working adults (22 percent) say something at their job may be harmful to their health, with chemicals and contaminants topping the list at 30 percent of those who have concerns about their workplace. We found 43 percent of construction or outdoor workers and 34 percent in medical jobs have health concerns in the workplace. [NPR](#)

[top of page...](#)

USAFRICOM

Male circumcision, HIV treatment can significantly reduce infections in African men

12 July - Increasing the number of men who undergo circumcision and increasing the rates at which women with HIV are given antiretroviral therapy (ART) were associated with significant declines in the number of new male HIV infections in rural Ugandan communities. ... The researchers found that in communities where more than 40 percent of men had been circumcised, the rate of new infections among men was reduced by 39 percent as compared to those communities where 10 percent or fewer men had been circumcised. They also found that in communities where more than 20 percent of HIV-infected women were taking ART, there was a 23 percent reduction in rates of new HIV infections in men, as compared to communities where 20 percent or fewer of the HIV-

infected women were taking the medications. No reduction was seen in HIV rates among women, but Kong says that may come going forward as male ART use increases.

[Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Health News](#)

South Sudan: Extreme hunger in South Sudan

8 July - Three-quarters of south Sudan's population are finding it hard to get enough to eat. New data released in July 2016 indicate a worsening situation. The numbers of people facing both moderate and severe food insecurity are at three-year highs, due mainly to conflict. The latest report from the IPC Global Partnership, stops short of classifying any part of the country at its worst categorisation. However, the report repeats a famine warning made in February: "the risk of famine is still looming in parts of Unity State (Leer, Mayendit and Koch) where conflict and other factors can quickly and dramatically escalate." [IRIN](#)

WHO: 88 more yellow fever cases in Angola bring total past 3,500

8 July - The World Health Organization (WHO) said today that, as of Jul 1, there were 88 new yellow fever cases in a worrisome outbreak in Angola, bringing the total number of suspected cases to 3,552. Lab tests have confirmed 875 of those cases, the WHO said in the weekly update. The number of reported deaths increased by 2 this week, bringing the total to 355 since the outbreak began in Luanda in January. ... Most cases are still in Luanda and Huambo, the major urban centers of Angola. The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), meanwhile reported no new epidemiologic information. As of Jun 24, the total number of suspected DRC cases was 1,307, with 68 confirmed cases and 75 reported deaths. Of the 68-lab confirmed cases, 59 were imported from Angola. ... The WHO also said that, as of Jul 5, 15 million people in Angola, 3 million people in the DRC, and 1.3 million people in Uganda had been vaccinated. An additional 10 million are projected to be vaccinated by Jul 31.

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

[top of page...](#)

USCENTCOM

Saudi Arabia: Two new Saudi MERS cases noted as experts air road map



8 July - Saudi Arabia today reported two more MERS-CoV infections, neither of them apparently linked to a hospital outbreak in Riyadh, and experts yesterday summarized their deliberations from a World Health Organization (WHO) meeting on MERS-CoV tests, treatments, and vaccines. One of the new MERS-CoV (Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus) cases from Saudi Arabia involves a 24-year-

old man from Al Duwadimi in the central part of the country who has symptoms and is in stable condition. ... The other patient is a 73-year-old woman from Najran in far southern Saudi Arabia who is hospitalized in critical condition. The MOH said she had indirect contact with camels. The new cases boost Saudi Arabia's MERS-CoV total to 1,436 cases, 603 of them fatal. Eight people are still being treated for their infections.

At the WHO, meanwhile, efforts are under way to speed up development of tests, treatments, and vaccines against pathogens that have pandemic potential, and the organization selected MERS-CoV as a case study to demonstrate how the process could be supported and coordinated. ... One priority was an easy-to-use diagnostic test to quickly distinguish MERS-CoV from other respiratory infections. ... The report said about a dozen vaccine candidates are at preclinical development stage, and seven of them were presented at the meeting. Most are targeted to humans, but two are targeted to camels. [CIDRAP](#)

UN, Jordan agree 30-day ration for hungry Syrians on border

11 July - The U.N. refugee agency says a United Nations team has reached a deal with Jordan's government to deliver a 30-day food ration to thousands of people caught along the border with war-ravaged Syria. UNHCR spokeswoman Ariane Rummery says a U.N. team met Monday with Jordanian border authorities and community leaders to discuss "distribution modalities" for the ration plan. ... Jordan sealed the border area, known as the berm because of an earthen mound marking the frontier, after a June 21 suicide attack claimed by the extremist Islamic State group killed seven Jordanian troops and wounded 13. Concerns have mounted that tens of thousands of Syrians could be facing starvation and dehydration after all aid deliveries, except occasional water shipments, stopped. [ABC News](#)

[top of page...](#)

USEUCOM

United Kingdom: One in eight women experience infertility

8 July - One in eight women and one in 10 men in the U.K. have experienced infertility, struggling to get pregnant for at least a year, and almost half do not seek help for the problem, according to a new study. "Our finding of inequalities in help seeking between those who are better educated and in higher status jobs is (perhaps) not surprising given evidence of unequal distribution of wealth and power and the associated differential access to health care," said lead author Jessica Datta of the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. The researchers used data on about 15,000 adult men and women up to age 74 who participated in Britain's third National Survey of Sexual Attitudes and Lifestyles

between 2010 and 2012. [Reuters](#)

[top of page...](#)

USNORTHCOM

U.S.: Adolescent birth rate drops across all racial groups, annual report shows

13 July - The teen birth rate dropped for another consecutive year, continuing a long-term decline in teen pregnancy, according to the most recent yearly report on the status of America's children and youth. According to the 2016 edition of America's Children: Key National Indicators of Well-Being, in 2014, the adolescent birth rate was 11 births per 1,000 girls ages 15 to 17 years, down from 12 per 1,000 in 2013. Racial and ethnic disparities in adolescent birth rates also have declined, although substantial differences persist. ... In the behavior domain, the percentages of 10th- and 12th-graders in all racial and ethnic groups who binge drink — have five or more alcoholic beverages in a row on a single occasion — were the lowest in 2015 since the survey began tracking this statistic in 1980. ... In the education domain, overall math scores declined slightly for fourth and eighth graders. However, some progress has been made in narrowing the achievement gap or the differences in average scores for different racial and ethnic groups. ... As of 2014, 21 percent of children were living in food-insecure households, a rate that has not changed from the previous year. ... The percentage of children who did not have health insurance coverage declined, from 7 percent in 2013 to 5 percent in 2014. [NIH](#)

U.S.: FDA expands age indication for Prevnar 13 use in younger adults

13 July - The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has expanded the age indication for Pfizer's Prevnar 13, the pneumococcal 13-valent conjugate vaccine, allowing its use in adults ages 18 through 49 years old, the company said yesterday in a press release. The vaccine is already approved for use in children as young as 6 weeks old and adults age 50 and older, making Prevnar 13 the only pneumococcal vaccine approved across the lifespan, Pfizer said. FDA's decision was based on a phase 3 trial of Prevnar 13 in adults who had not been previously vaccinated with the 23-valent pneumococcal polysaccharide vaccine. The study, published in 2015, compared the immunogenicity, safety, and tolerability of Prevnar 13 in younger adults and those ages 60 to 64. [CIDRAP News Scan](#) (first item)

U.S.: GOP backs new fund for public health

10 July - ... House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy (R-Calif.), Appropriations Chairman Hal Rogers (R-Ky.) and others for weeks behind the scenes have been working on legislation to

create an emergency fund for public health crises. They call it "FEMA for public health," a reference to the Federal Emergency Management Agency that helps communities hurt by disasters. The creation of the reserve fund was unveiled this week in a GOP health spending bill. It would contain \$300 million to tackle crises like Zika and Ebola, and would give the administration's top disease control official "immediate access" to the money. Rogers said he's talked at length over the idea with Tom Frieden, the head of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. "I've talked to him again about this, along with the leader in the house, and we were all in agreement that we need to have this type of fund," Rogers said. ... It now heads to the full committee next week, where it is expected to win approval from the rest of its Republican members. Lawmakers and health experts have long praised the idea as a way to circumvent bitter partisan battles that will erupt over an increasing number of global health scares [The Hill](#)

U.S.: Immigration detention center in Arizona failed to contain measles outbreak

12 July - Health officials in Arizona are pressing federal officials for better cooperation after an outbreak of measles at an immigration detention center was prolonged because some employees were slow to be vaccinated. The outbreak started in late May in the detention center in Eloy, Ariz., and has grown to 22 cases, currently the largest episode in the country of the disease, which was once eradicated in the United States. The cases include nine employees of the facility, which is overseen by Immigration and Customs Enforcement, a federal agency. [The New York Times](#)

U.S.: MCR-1 gene found in human sample in U.S. for 2nd time

11 July - Researchers have identified a second sample of human bacteria containing the MCR-1 gene in the United States, according to a study released today. Italian researchers, meanwhile, said they detected a variant of the MCR-1 gene, which they called MCR-1.2, in *Klebsiella pneumoniae*. In the US study, ... the researchers reported that they had detected the MCR-1 gene in 19 *Escherichia coli* isolates from hospitals in 10 countries, including the United States. ... A total of 390—1.9%—of those isolates showed resistance to colistin. All of the *K pneumoniae* isolates tested negative for MCR-1. ... The isolates were associated with bloodstream infections, skin and skin structure infections, urinary tract infections, respiratory tract infections, and intra-abdominal infections. The US isolate came from a hospital in New York and was collected in May 2015. [CIDRAP](#)

U.S.: Scientists agree: Fla. lake discharges, not septic systems, cause algae blooms

11 July - ... NASA satellite photography has tracked a massive algae bloom in the lake since early May. ... [A] pre-eminent researcher who calls septic systems "one of the primary sources" of pollution in the St. Lucie River and Indian River Lagoon [says,] "There's no

challenging the fact that the algae is coming from Lake Okeechobee," said Brian Lapointe, a research professor at Florida Atlantic University's Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute in Fort Pierce. "The lake is the biggest single source of the blue-green algae bloom in the St. Lucie River estuary." He said there would be no algae bloom in the river without the discharges, which have poured more than 150 billion gallons of polluted lake water into the river since Jan. 30. ... Yes, septic systems pollute the river, but not nearly as much as lake discharges; and it's the combination of the two, plus other water entering the estuary from canals and creeks, that makes algae bloom. [USA TODAY](#)

U.S.: Stool softener tied to 47 *Burkholderia cepacia* infections in 5 states

11 July - The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is recommending clinicians and all patient populations stop using the liquid stool softener docusate after the medicine has been implicated in an ongoing, healthcare-related *Burkholderia cepacia* complex (*B cepacia*) outbreak. To date, 47 infections in five states have been linked to two strains of *B cepacia* found in liquid ducosate. *B cepacia* complex can cause severe lung infections, including pneumonia, and even death. Patients who are immunocompromised or have chronic lung illnesses are particularly at risk. "CDC has confirmed one product as having *B cepacia* complex growth; however, because of epidemiologic links, CDC is concerned about potential contamination of multiple liquid docusate products," the CDC said.

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

U.S.: Superbug *E. coli* found for just second time in U.S.

11 July - For just the second time in the U.S., researchers have found evidence of *E. coli* bacteria that are genetically resistant to a last-resort antibiotic. ... The superbug has a gene that makes it resistant to treatment with colistin, an antibiotic often used by doctors as a last resort for antibiotic-resistant infections, the report states. In this case, the bacteria were genetically resistant to colistin but not to other forms of antibiotics that could be used to kill the *E. coli*. However, researchers are concerned that these bacteria could transfer genes to other *E. coli* and different bacteria that are already resistant to all forms of antibiotics except colistin, leading to the chance of a fully antibiotic-resistant strain of bacterium. [ABC News](#)

U.S.: Survey - Many willing to skip doctor to get antibiotics

12 July - A new study suggests that many American adults are willing to use antibiotics without a prescription or guidance from a medical professional, a finding that raises concerns about the extent of antibiotic self-prescribing and the role that it's playing in fostering drug-resistant bacteria. The study ... found that 5% of adults reported non-prescription use of antibiotics in the past 12 months, while 25% said they were willing to use antibiotics without contacting a doctor, nurse, or hospital. Just over 14% reported storing antibiotics at home for future use. The researchers said that the results, which come from a

survey of 400 racially and socioeconomically diverse adult patients at three public and private primary care clinics in Houston, indicate that significant numbers of people may be using, or intend to use, antibiotics without a doctor's prescription each year. ... Among the respondents who said they had used antibiotics without a prescription during the past year, respiratory symptoms were the most common reason given, despite the fact that antibiotics are by and large unnecessary for such symptoms. [CIDRAP](#)

[top of page...](#)

USPACOM

Australia declares AIDS no longer public health issue

11 July - Australia declared on Monday the AIDS epidemic is no longer a public health issue there, a month after the United Nations adopted an ambitious target to eliminate the threat globally by 2030. The government-backed Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations (AFAO) and top scientists said the number of people being diagnosed with AIDS in Australia was now so small it was no longer reported. AIDS cases in Australia peaked in 1994, at 953 cases. ... Since then, following the introduction of antiretroviral treatment, that prevent AIDS developing in people who are infected with the HIV virus, and awareness campaigns, AIDS diagnoses have declined sharply. [Fox News](#)

Health care costs forcing China's patients into crippling debt

9 July - As China's medical bills rise steeply, outpacing government insurance provision, patients and their families are increasingly turning to loans to pay for healthcare, adding to the country's growing burden of consumer debt. While public health insurance reaches nearly all of China's 1.4 billion people, its coverage is basic, leaving patients liable for about half of total healthcare spending, with the proportion rising further for serious or chronic diseases such as cancer and diabetes. That is likely to get significantly worse as the personal healthcare bill soars almost fourfold to 12.7 trillion yuan (\$1.9 trillion) by 2025, according to Boston Consulting Group estimates. ... China's government has moved to ramp up rural health insurance, boost coverage for major illnesses and put pressure on drug companies to slash prices, but it is an uphill battle. Official data show up to 44 percent of families pushed into poverty were impoverished by illness. [Reuters](#)

[top of page...](#)

Dominican Republic: Infection outbreak tied to nip/tuck on Caribbean isle

13 July - An outbreak of aggressive mycobacterial infections in U.S. residents has been linked to cosmetic surgery procedures done in the Dominican Republic, public health officials reported. David Schnabel, MD, of the Maryland Department of Public Health and Hygiene in Baltimore, and colleagues found that 21 patients (18 confirmed; three probable) from six different states had travelled to the Dominican Republic as medical tourists, and subsequently acquired a rapidly growing mycobacterial infection. Out of the 18 confirmed cases of rapidly growing mycobacterial infections, 16 (89%) were considered to be from the *Mycobacterium abscessus* complex. ... Rapidly growing mycobacteria "infection is not a nationally notifiable disease in the United States or Dominican Republic," they explained. "Therefore, cases described here might represent a limited proportion of those that actually occurred." [MedPage Today](#)

PAHO notes 903 new chikungunya cases

11 July - The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) reported only 903 new chikungunya cases late last week, a week after reporting more than 43,000 cases. The new cases bring the total in the Americas this year to 194,149 infections. The agency reported 950 and 43,842 new cases, respectively, in the previous two updates. Last week's update, dated Jul 8, includes 34,172 confirmed cases of locally transmitted disease and 147 imported cases, with the rest (159,830) being suspected locally transmitted infections. Colombia reported the most new cases, with 332, bringing its 2016 total to 17,267 cases. Guatemala was next with 108 new cases and 2,121 total. Mexico, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Argentina reported smaller increases. PAHO noted no new chikungunya-related deaths, leaving that number at 18 for the year, 16 of which have been in Brazil. [CIDRAP News Scan](#) (second item)

Uruguay: Phillip Morris loses tough-on-tobacco lawsuit

8 July - The World Bank's International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID) ruled in favor of Uruguay on Friday in a suit filed by Philip Morris International seeking compensation for economic damages caused by the nation's anti-tobacco measures. Uruguay imposed a ban on smoking in public spaces in 2006, as it raised taxes on tobacco products and forced firms to include large warnings and graphic images including diseased lungs and rotting teeth on cigarette packages. It also banned the use of the words "light" and "mild" from cigarette packs to try to dispel smokers' misguided beliefs that the products are safer. ... In a lengthy decision published on Friday, the ICSID said it had ruled to dismiss Philip Morris' demand that the regulations be withdrawn, or not applied to the company, or that it be paid \$22 million in damages instead. [Reuters](#)

[top of page...](#)

[U.S. Military](#) | [Global](#) | [Influenza](#) | [Veterinary/Food Safety](#) | [Wellness](#) | [Contact Us](#)

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