

5 August 2016

# Army Public Health Weekly Update

Army Public Health Center

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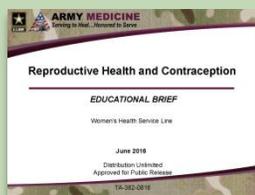
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- China: 'Mosquito factory' aims to wipe out Zika, other diseases
- China: Rift Valley fever
- India: Blood mica - deaths of child workers in India's mica 'ghost' mines covered up to keep industry alive
- India: Traffic deaths - researchers suggest India's stats are way too low

## Reproductive Health and Contraception

An educational brief by the Women's Health Service Line is now available on the [Women's Health Portal](#). The purpose is to ensure that all Servicewomen and their providers receive standardized education about contraception (birth control) including long-acting, reversible contraceptive (LARC) methods.



## USSOUTHCOM

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- [Haiti: An American physician laments Haiti's sick healthcare system, as a grinding doctors' strike drags on](#)
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## U.S. MILITARY

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### Combat exposure may jeopardize the behavioral health of women in the military

2 August - In a recent study, combat exposure among Army enlisted women was associated with an increased likelihood of developing behavioral health problems post-deployment, including post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, and at-risk drinking. In the study ... 42,397 Army enlisted women who returned from Afghanistan or Iraq were assigned combat exposure scores of 0, 1, 2, or 3+ based on their self-reported experiences. Importantly, any report of combat exposure among Army women was associated with an increased likelihood of each post-deployment behavioral health problem (PTSD, depression, and at-risk drinking), suggesting that the impact of even one exposure event should not be overlooked. [Medical Xpress](#)

### Loss of VA health-care providers grows as demand for care increases. Will service suffer?

2 August - Two trend lines in veterans' health care are not encouraging. Demand for Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) services is going up, but so are losses among the agency's health-care providers. Annual VA outpatient medical appointments rose by 20 percent, or 17.1 million visits from fiscal 2011 through 2015, according to a new Government Accountability Office report. But also increasing during that period was the number of staffers in five critical occupations who left the agency. In 2011, 5,897 physicians, registered nurses, physician assistants, psychologists and physical therapists said goodbye. By 2015, that number had grown to 7,734. [The Washington Post](#)

### Sickle cell trait, rhabdomyolysis, and mortality among U.S. army soldiers

4 August - ... There was no significant difference in the risk of death among soldiers with sickle cell trait, as compared with those without the trait ... but the trait was associated with a significantly higher adjusted risk of exertional rhabdomyolysis. ... This effect was similar in magnitude to that associated with tobacco use, as compared with no use, and to that associated with having a body-mass index ... of 30.0 or more, as compared with a BMI of less than 25.0. ... The effect was less than that associated with recent use of a statin, as compared with no use ... or an antipsychotic agent. [New England Journal of Medicine](#)

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## GLOBAL

### Army Industrial Hygiene News and Regulatory Summary

The July 2016 issue includes articles on isoflurane, hearing loss, green mobility, Pokémon Go, and the combat shirt



## Amish lifestyle brings unexpected benefit: less asthma

3 August – ... [New] research suggests the Amish people have at least one distinct advantage over the rest of the population -- much lower rates of asthma. ... That was particularly true when they were compared to the children of another dairy farming population, the Hutterites. Hutterites are similar to the Amish in many ways, except that the Hutterites use mechanical farming equipment. The Amish asthma rate is 5 percent; for Hutterite children, it's 21 percent, the study authors said. Overall, the childhood asthma rate in the United States is about 9. [MedlinePlus](#)

## BARDA awards \$120 million for anthrax vaccine development

2 August - The US Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA) awarded Altimune, of Gaithersburg, Md., \$120.2 million to clinically develop NasoShield, the company's anthrax vaccine candidate. ... The anthrax vaccine candidate is meant to provide complete protection after one intranasal dose. According to Altimune, NasoShield was as effective as the gold-standard multidose anthrax vaccine in animal models.

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

## Contrary dengue vaccine response hints at possible problems with Zika

28 July - "It's happened. We have a vaccine that enhances dengue," said Scott B. Halstead, MD, talking about a phenomenon whereby the dengue vaccine sets up dengue-naive recipients for severe disease. Halstead, the leading figure in dengue research in the past 50 years, is referring to CYD-TDV (Dengvaxia, Sanofi Pasteur), the first dengue vaccine approved by the World Health Organization in April, and now licensed for use in five countries. When Halstead ... first saw the 3-year results of the vaccine published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* last summer, he immediately saw a problem in the data. ... "Vaccine recipients less than 5 years old had five to seven times more rates of hospitalizations for severe dengue virus than placebo controls." ... Researchers are now racing to develop a Zika vaccine and trying to tease out how and if ADE influences severe cases of Zika virus and if cross-infection with dengue or other flavivirus enhance the disease.

[CIDRAP](#)

## Ebola took a toll on maternal health: study

2 August - ... In a new report published Tuesday in the journal *PLOS Medicine*, researchers looked at the results of a survey conducted ... in Rivercess County, Liberia, a rural area where Ebola transmission was limited and where the health facilities stayed open during the outbreak. Because Ebola sparked a widespread fear of health centers—due to worries that

**Updated Interim  
Zika Clinical  
Guidance for  
Pregnant Women  
and Data on  
Contraceptive Use  
to Decrease  
Zika-affected  
Pregnancies**

During this COCA Call, clinicians will learn about the updated CDC interim guidance for caring for pregnant women with possible Zika virus exposure, and strategies for increasing access to contraceptive methods and services to minimize the number of pregnancies affected by Zika.

**Date:** August 9, 2016

**Time:** 2:00 - 3:00 pm (ET)

**Dial in:**  
888-942-9686  
(U.S. Callers)

517-308-9076  
(International Callers)

**Passcode:** 4687942

**Webinar**



the virus could be contracted at hospitals where infected people were being treated—the researchers decided to study whether that fear continued to cause people to stay away from health care centers for their medical needs, like childbirth. The implication of this kind of fear is especially important for pregnant women, because hospital births are considered far safer in this region than home births. The researchers looked at the odds that women gave birth in a health care facility before the outbreak compared to during, and found a 30% drop in health facility births. [Time](#)

## Google Glass is revived in the ER

July 2016 - ... [A] team of doctors at the University of Massachusetts Medical School (UMMS) may have discovered a killer app for [Google Glass]: performing emergency-medicine consultations. It turns out that Glass enables off-site specialists to reliably and accurately observe and diagnose patients in real time. It may even help first responders triage victims in disaster scenarios. ... [Medical] medical toxicologists and emergency-medicine physicians at UMMS, hypothesized that it might be better to use Glass to send data out rather than for pulling it in. "As an emergency physician, you're really busy, and you end up making decisions with your specialists very quickly," says Chai. "A lot of those times you're talking to your specialist over the phone, and they're just hearing verbal descriptions. Everybody wants to be there to see the patient." [IEEE Xplore](#)

## 'Hacking nerves can control disease'

1 August - Controlling human nerve cells with electricity could treat a range of diseases including arthritis, asthma and diabetes, a new company says. Galvani Bioelectronics hopes to bring a new treatment based on the technique before regulators within seven years. ... Animal experiments have attached tiny silicone cuffs, containing electrodes, around a nerve and then used a power supply to control the nerve's messages. One set of tests suggested the approach could help treat type-2 diabetes, in which the body ignores the hormone insulin. [BBC News](#)

## It came from beneath: detecting and mitigating vapor intrusion

1 August – [A] form of indoor pollution is gaining attention: ... vapor intrusion, the migration of volatile chemicals from groundwater and soil into buildings above them. There are four main sources of vapor intrusion: industrial sites, military sites, dry cleaners, and gas stations—all locations that produced or heavily used solvents, degreasers, and other volatile chemicals, or that still do. ... The chemicals of greatest concern with respect to vapor intrusion are chlorinated solvents such as trichloroethylene (TCE), commonly used as a metal degreaser, and tetrachloroethylene (also known as perchloroethylene, or "perc"), another degreasing agent widely used in dry cleaning. Petroleum-derived compounds—for instance, what you would see with gasoline and motor oil contamination—are considered somewhat less of a threat than TCE and perc. [Environmental Health Perspectives](#)

## 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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## Patient sharing among hospitals might foster spread of CRE

3 August - A new study indicates that hospitals that are more likely to share patients with other hospitals have higher rates of carbapenem-resistant Enterobacteriaceae (CRE). ... [Researchers found] ...that each additional hospital connection increased that burden. In rural counties, for example, each hospital connection was associated with a 6% increase in the CRE rate. In Chicago and other urban parts of the state, the associated increase was 3%. In addition, sharing four or more patients with a long-term acute care hospital, where CRE infections are particularly problematic, was also linked to higher CRE rates.

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

## Pokémon GO!—pandemic or prescription?



2 August - Niantic's new smartphone game has unleashed a Pokémon fever that is spreading around the globe faster than swine flu. Now, researchers at Johns Hopkins are scrambling to study how Zubats and Pichachus might be affecting populations—possibly helping to combat another ongoing public

health crisis: the global obesity epidemic. From med students to middle-school kids, tens of millions have suddenly taken to the streets, phone in hand, in search of elusive virtual beasts. The more you walk, the more likely you are to find these pixel critters, gain expertise and "level up." [Global Health Now](#)

## Potential superbug killer found in human nose

28 July – Scientists searching for ways to combat antibiotic-resistant bacterial infections say they have found a new potential weapon in an unexpected place: the human nose. The promising compound is produced by a nose-dwelling bacterium, and is able to kill a disease-causing, antibiotic-resistant superbug. ... The scientists found *Staphylococcus aureus* bacteria in the noses of about 30 percent of people, raising the question why the other 70 percent were not beset by this staph bacterium. ... The researchers said that another in-nose bacterium - called *Staphylococcus lugdunensis* - appeared to be keeping the rival staph at bay in some people by producing its own antibiotic. Peschel and his colleagues isolated the new antibiotic, which they called lugdunin, and tested it on mice whose skin had been infected with *Staphylococcus aureus*. They found it was effective in clearing the bacteria in most cases. [Al Jazeera](#)

## Risk factors identified for patient-to-patient spread of dangerous superbug

29 July - A new study has determined that there are three key factors that increase the risk for patient-to-patient transmission of carbapenemase-producing carbapenem-resistant *Enterobacteriaceae* (CP-CRE), dangerous drug-resistant bacteria that tends to strike patients

in hospitals and nursing homes who are on ventilators, require catheters, or are taking long courses of antibiotics. The study ... found that 96% of patient-to-patient CP-CRE transmissions had at least one of the following risk factors:

- Contact for more than 3 days with an infected individual
- Mechanical ventilation
- Infection with another multidrug-resistant organism

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

## ZIKA VIRUS

### 41 US military members have now contracted Zika

3 August - CNN has learned there are now 41 members of the military who have been diagnosed with the Zika virus since testing began earlier this year. Eight new cases have been recorded in the last week, a Pentagon official told CNN. One of the military service members is a pregnant female. ... In addition, a senior State Department official told CNN there have been two confirmed Zika cases among US diplomats serving overseas. ... In addition, seven military dependents have been diagnosed with Zika, an increase of one case since the previous week. ... Even before the update, number of confirmed Zika cases in the US military nearly doubled in the last month. [CNN](#)

### Advice to blood collection establishments on non-travel related cases of Zika virus in Florida

27 July - ... [The] FDA is requesting that all blood establishments in Miami-Dade County and Broward County cease collecting blood immediately until the blood establishments implement testing of each individual unit of blood collected in the two counties ... for Zika virus RNA or until the blood establishments implement the use of an approved or investigational pathogen inactivation technology. Additionally, FDA recommends that adjacent and nearby counties implement the precautions above to help maintain the safety of the blood supply as soon as possible. For blood collection establishments outside of this region, FDA suggests that donors who have traveled to Miami-Dade and Broward Counties during the previous 4 weeks be deferred. [FDA](#)

### Another case of local Zika infection confirmed in Miami

3 August - The Florida Department of Health (Florida Health) confirmed yesterday that there was another case of locally spread Zika in Miami, this time outside of the Wynwood neighborhood. This brings the total locally transmitted cases to 15. ... Florida Health said officials were testing people living in a 150-meter radius around known cases. *Aedes* mosquitoes are not known to travel more than 150 meters. [CIDRAP](#)

## Brazil now has doubts that Zika alone causes birth defects

2 August - ... Brazilian doctors are quietly acknowledging they may have been wrong theorizing that Zika itself causes birth defects. ... [As] Zika has spread across the Americas, it has so far not been followed by a corresponding rise in microcephaly. In Colombia, for example, thousands of pregnant women are known to have contracted Zika. Colombian health officials have confirmed 22 cases of microcephaly this year that they said are linked to the Zika virus. Even in Brazil, in the populous state of Minas Gerais, which borders the most affected region, Nature reported there have only been three confirmed cases. ... Oliver Brady, an epidemiologist with the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine ... [is] looking at how microcephaly data are collected across different countries and regions, and considering alternative theories about what caused microcephaly to rise in northeastern Brazil, but not elsewhere. ... Nature reported that the Brazilian doctor first thought to have established a link between Zika and microcephaly is now investigating whether another disease called bovine viral diarrhea virus combined with Zika to cause birth defects. [PRI](#)

## CDC guidance for travel and testing of pregnant women and women of reproductive age for Zika virus infection ... in Miami-Dade and Broward Counties, Florida

1 August - The Florida Department of Health (FL DOH) has identified an area with local mosquito-borne Zika virus transmission (active Zika virus transmission) in Miami. Based on the earliest time of symptom onset and a maximal two-week incubation period for Zika virus, this guidance applies to women of reproductive age and their partners who live in or traveled to this area after June 15, 2016. ...

### Recommendations

1. Pregnant women should avoid non-essential travel to the area with active Zika virus transmission identified by the FL DOH. ...
3. Women and men who live in or who have traveled to the area with active Zika virus transmission identified by the FL DOH and who have a pregnant sex partner should consistently and correctly use condoms or other barriers to prevent infection during sex or not have sex for the duration of the pregnancy.
4. All pregnant women in the United States should be assessed for possible Zika virus exposure during each prenatal care visit. ...
8. Women with Zika virus disease should wait at least eight weeks and men with Zika virus disease should wait at least six months after symptom onset to attempt conception. [CDC](#)

## Contraceptive use among nonpregnant and postpartum women at risk for unintended pregnancy, and female high school students, in the context of Zika preparedness

2 August - ... Nearly half of all pregnancies in the United States are unintended. Among

nonpermanent contraceptive methods, long-acting reversible contraception (LARC) is the most effective contraceptive option for preventing unintended pregnancy. ...

State-based estimates of contraception use are provided for nonpregnant and postpartum women at risk for unintended pregnancy and sexually active female high school students. Among these populations, use of moderate and less effective contraception was most common; use of no contraceptive method and use of LARC varied by state, age group, and race/ethnicity. ...

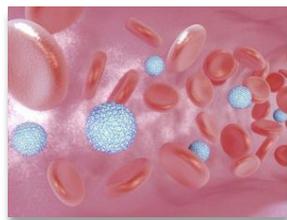
State and local strategies are needed to increase access to contraceptive methods and related services, reduce the risk for unintended pregnancy, and minimize the number of pregnancies affected by Zika infection. [Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report](#)

## Florida to begin aerial spraying of insecticides to control Zika

3 August - Florida will conduct an aerial insecticide spraying campaign at dawn on Wednesday in an effort to kill mosquitoes carrying the Zika virus, officials in Miami-Dade County said. The campaign will cover a 10-mile area that includes the one-mile-square area just north of downtown Miami that health officials have identified as the hub of Zika transmission in the state, the officials said on Tuesday. ... The aerial spraying campaign was recommended by the CDC in conjunction with the Florida Health Department to reduce adult mosquito populations that might be capable of carrying the Zika virus. In a conference call on Tuesday, CDC Director Dr. Thomas Frieden expressed concern that vector control efforts so far have not been as effective as hoped. A CDC expert is currently conducting tests in Miami to see if mosquitoes in the area have developed insecticide resistance.

[Reuters](#)

## NIAID: Zika is caused by 1 serotype



3 August - A new study ... said Zika virus infection is caused by only one serotype, and vaccinating against that one strain could offer protection from diverse strains of the arbovirus. This promising news comes as human Zika vaccine trials begin. To determine Zika's serotype, researchers with the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) investigated

serum samples from eight people who'd recently been infected with the virus in South America. They mixed the samples with multiple strains of the virus to see if serum antibodies neutralized the virus. "Antibodies elicited after infection with Zika virus strains of the Asian lineage were able to potently inhibit both Asian lineage and African lineage strains," the researchers said in an NIAID news release. [CIDRAP](#)

## NIH begins testing investigational Zika vaccine in humans

3 August - The National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), part of the

National Institutes of Health, has launched a clinical trial of a vaccine candidate intended to prevent Zika virus infection. The early-stage study will evaluate the experimental vaccine's safety and ability to generate an immune system response in participants. At least 80 healthy volunteers ages 18-35 years at three study sites in the United States, including the NIH Clinical Center in Bethesda, Maryland, are expected to participate in the trial. [NIH](#)

## Update: Ongoing Zika virus transmission — Puerto Rico, November 1, 2015–July 7, 2016

29 July – Zika virus transmission in Puerto Rico has been increasing since it was first detected in November 2015. ... During November 1, 2015–July 7, 2016, specimens from 16,522 patients with suspected Zika virus disease in Puerto Rico were evaluated and 5,351 (32%) had laboratory evidence of current or recent Zika virus infection. The percentage of persons with confirmed or presumptive Zika virus infection among symptomatic pregnant females increased from 8% in February 2016 to 41% in June 2016; during the same time, the percentage of persons with confirmed or presumptive Zika virus infection among symptomatic males and nonpregnant females increased from 14% to 64%. ... The Zika virus outbreak in Puerto Rico continues to expand in geographic extent and number of infected persons. [Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report](#)

## Zika case counts in the U.S.

As of August 3, 2016 (5 am EST) - This update from the CDC Arboviral Disease Branch includes provisional data reported to ArboNET for January 01, 2015 – August 3, 2016. [CDC](#)

<b>U.S. States</b>	<b>U.S. Territories</b>
Locally acquired mosquito-borne cases reported: 6	Locally acquired cases reported: 5,525
Travel-associated cases reported: 1,818	Travel-associated cases reported: 23
Laboratory acquired cases reported: 1	Total: 5,548*
Total: 1,825	Guillain-Barré syndrome: 18
Sexually transmitted: 16	
Guillain-Barré syndrome: 5	

\*Sexually transmitted cases are not reported for areas with local mosquito-borne transmission of Zika virus because it is not possible to determine whether infection occurred due to mosquito-borne or sexual transmission.

## Zika RNA detectable in pregnant women after 2 weeks

2 August - Zika virus RNA was detected in the blood of five pregnant women who had been exposed to the virus at least 2 weeks prior to PCR testing, case reports from the CDC's U.S. Zika Pregnancy Registry showed. ... [The] authors examined five pregnant women who had traveled to or lived in countries with active Zika virus transmission -- four of whom were symptomatic, while one was asymptomatic. Zika virus RNA was detected via real-time RT-PCR in the serum of the four symptomatic pregnant women from a range of 17 to 46 days following exposure, and in the asymptomatic woman 53 days after exposure.

[MedPage Today](#)

## INFLUENZA

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

Pneumonia and Influenza (P&I) Mortality Surveillance for 2015-2016 Influenza Season Week 29 ending July 23, 2016

- NCHS Mortality Surveillance Data: Based on NCHS mortality surveillance data available on July 28, 2016, 5.3% of the deaths occurring during the week ending July 9, 2016 (week 27) were due to P&I. This percentage is below the epidemic threshold of 6.3% for week 27.
- 122 Cities Mortality Reporting System: During week 29, 5.4% of all deaths reported through the 122 Cities Mortality Reporting System were due to P&I. This percentage was below the epidemic threshold of 5.8% for week 29. [CDC](#)

### Obese mice not protected from adjuvanted flu vaccine, researchers note

2 August - Obese mice not only had a weaker immune response to adjuvanted flu vaccines, they also were not protected from an influenza challenge, according to an mBio study today. ... The team of scientists used an inactivated vaccine with both the H1N1 strain and H7N9 avian flu, which may have pandemic potential. They varied the dose and used different adjuvants, which are substances that boost the immune response, in both lean and obese mice. While adjuvants improved the immune response in both lean and obese mice, the overall immune response was reduced in the obese rodents compared with the lean ones. The obese mice had lower antibody levels, including lower levels of neutralizing antibodies, and higher virus levels, in their blood. What's more, lean mice who received vaccines with adjuvants were protected from severe flu infections, whereas obese mice were not. [CIDRAP Flu Scan](#) (second item)

### Statins might lower vaccine effectiveness against H3N2 flu

29 July - Use of the cholesterol-lowering drugs class of drugs known as statins might make the flu vaccine less effective against the H3N2 strain, which has been linked to more severe flu seasons. ... Investigators ... analyzed data from patients at the clinic from the 2004-05 through 2014-15 flu seasons who were 45 and older. Of 3,285 adults, 37% (1,217) received the flu vaccine but did not take statins, 27% (903) received neither statins nor the flu vaccine, 26% (847) received both statins and the flu vaccine, and 10% used statins but did not get vaccinated. The team found that vaccine effectiveness (VE) against the H3N2 strain was 45% ..., 27% to 59% among those who didn't take statin and -21% among those taking statins. In contrast, vaccinated statin users had substantial protection against 2009 H1N1 (VE = 68%) and type B (VE = 48%). The researchers found that statin use was not

significantly associated with changed VE when stratified by previous-season vaccination. [CIDRAP News Scan](#) (fourth item)

## Study says vaccine slashes older people's risk of flu hospitalization

4 August - In a multi-site case-control study conducted during the 2010-11 influenza season, flu vaccination lowered the risk of influenza-related hospitalization in people older than 50 by about 57%, an effect that held up even in those older than 74. ... Cases ... were defined as lab-confirmed flu in people at least 50 years old who were hospitalized in the 2010-11 season. The researchers identified at least two community controls for each case-patient, matching them by age, county, and month of patient hospitalization. ... The team found that 55% of case-patients (205 of 368) had been vaccinated, versus 63% of controls (489 of 773). The case-patients were significantly more likely to be non-white and to have at least two chronic health conditions and an income less than \$35,000, among other differences. [CIDRAP](#)

## NHRC: Febrile Respiratory Illness Surveillance Update

For 2016 Week 30 (through 30 July 2016):

- Influenza: Three cases of NHRC laboratory-confirmed influenza (type B) among US military basic trainees at MRCD San Diego. New cases presented 21-22 July and had not been vaccinated
- FRI surveillance at all eight U.S. military basic training centers indicated FRI rates were elevated at CGTC Cape May and MCRD San Diego. [Naval Health Research Center](#)

## WHO: Influenza Update

25 July - Influenza activity varied in countries of temperate South America and increased steadily in the last few weeks in 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](#)

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### **VETERINARY/FOOD SAFETY**

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## Hawaii hepatitis A outbreak now stands at 135

4 August - The hepatitis A outbreak in Hawaii has now sickened 135 people, according to the latest update from the Hawaii Department of Health. Forty-two new cases have been identified since July 26, 2016. All of the ill persons have been adults. Thirty-nine people have been hospitalized because their illnesses are so severe. The latest findings of the

investigation suggest that the source of the outbreak is on the island of Oahu. Seven of those sickened live on the islands of Hawaii, Kauai, and Maui. The dates of illness onset range from July 12, 2016 to July 24, 2016. [Food Poisoning Bulletin](#)

## Latest MCR-1 findings include highly resistant isolate



2 August - Two new studies ... provide more evidence of the spread of MCR-1, the gene that confers resistance to the last-resort antibiotic colistin, in both animals and humans, including an isolate that was resistant to multiple antibiotics. In the first study, an international group of researchers reported that, out of 150 strains of *Escherichia coli* cultured

from the fecal samples of European cattle from 2004 through 2010, 45 were classified as multidrug-resistant. Three of those multidrug-resistant strains showed elevated levels of resistance to colistin. Further analysis identified one isolate—an *E coli* 29957 strain—as MCR-1 positive. In addition, that isolate was found to be resistant to all other classes of antibiotics tested against it, including beta-lactams, fluoroquinolone compounds, and florfenicol. The authors of the study said this finding is particularly concerning. [CIDRAP](#)

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### WELLNESS

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## Drink developed for military boosts cycling performance

3 August - A drink that provides energy for the body in the form of ketones, rather than sugar or fat, helped competitive cyclists ride farther during a half-hour ride, according to a new study. Usually, energy for muscle cells comes from carbohydrates or fat, but when those fuels aren't available and the body is in "starvation mode" the liver will break down fat stores into ketones to use as fuel. ... [Researchers] found that when ketones are provided in a drink, the body will use them for muscle fuel. Ketone-powered workouts resulted in less lactate, a byproduct of breaking down sugar that causes muscle cramps and soreness. The researchers studied 39 high-level athletes, including former Olympic cyclists, to see how their metabolism changed after consuming the ketone drink and exercising. ... After the ketone drink, the cyclists traveled an average of 411 meters further in the half-hour time trial than after the carbohydrate drink. [Reuters](#)

## Feeling guilty about not flossing? Maybe there's no need

2 August - ... The latest dietary guidelines for Americans, issued by the Departments of Agriculture and Health and Human Services, quietly dropped any mention of flossing without notice. This week, The Associated Press reported that officials had never researched the effectiveness of regular flossing, as required, before cajoling Americans to do it. ... A

review of 12 randomized controlled trials ... in 2011 found only "very unreliable" evidence that flossing might reduce plaque after one and three months. Researchers could not find any studies on the effectiveness of flossing combined with brushing for cavity prevention. ... [There] is some mediocre evidence that flossing does reduce bloody gums and inflammation known as gingivitis. That Cochrane review found that regular brushers and flossers had less gum bleeding than people who only brushed, although the authors cautioned that the quality of the evidence was "very low." [The New York Times](#)

## McDonald's tweaks its recipes: now, real butter in the McMuffin

1 August - McDonald's long shied away from talking about how it makes the food on its menu and what is in that food. The company is now being open and loud about it. At an event Monday at its headquarters here, McDonald's announced several changes to its ingredients, including eliminating artificial preservatives from some breakfast foods and Chicken McNuggets, its most popular food item, and removing high-fructose corn syrup from its buns. Such changes, together with its decision in 2015 to buy only chicken raised without antibiotics used to treat humans, affect almost half of the food on McDonald's menu, the company said. [The New York Times](#)

## Melanoma less common but more deadly for black patients

4 August - Even though Caucasians are much more likely to develop skin cancer than other ethnic groups, people of color who do get the disease are less likely to survive, a U.S. study suggests. Among nearly 97,000 patients with melanoma - the rarest and deadliest type of skin malignancy - white patients had the highest likelihood of survival, followed by Hispanics, and then Asian American, Native American and Pacific Islanders. African-American patients had the worse survival odds of all. "In general, white patients have higher overall survival than black patients because the public and many physicians are not aware that black patients can get melanoma," said senior study author. ... Part of the problem may be that non-white patients get diagnosed when the cancer is more advanced. But that doesn't entirely explain the racial disparities in outcomes, Bordeaux said by email. [Reuters](#)

## Plant protein may help offset unhealthy habits

1 August - People who eat more protein from plants and less from animals may live longer even when they have unhealthy habits like heavy drinking or smoking, a large U.S. study suggests. ... Song and colleagues followed more than 130,000 nurses and other health professionals over several decades. Half of the participants were getting at least 14 percent of their calories from animal protein and at least 4 percent from plant protein. ... After accounting for lifestyle factors such as smoking, drinking, obesity and physical inactivity, each 3 percent increase in calories from plant protein was associated with a 10 percent lower risk of death during the study period. In contrast to the benefits seen with plants, each 10 percent increase in the proportion of calories from animal protein was associated

with a 2 percent higher risk of death from any cause and an 8 percent increased risk of death from cardiovascular disease during the study period. [Reuters](#)

## Red wine's health benefits, soon available in a pill

2 August - Scientists are working on concentrated forms of resveratrol, which they hope will confer red wine's health benefits without its drawbacks. ... [Resveratrol] has been linked to a lower risk of diabetes and heart disease, and has even been suggested to slow the progression of Alzheimers by a recent Georgetown University Medical Center study. ... According to The Wall Street Journal, though resveratrol's health benefits have been proven in subjects like worms, fruit flies, mice and other laboratory specimens, testing the benefit to humans has been complex due to resveratrol's extremely low concentration in wine. ...

[Food & Wine](#)

## Scientists spot 15 regions of human DNA linked to depression

1 August - Researchers say they've identified 15 regions of human DNA associated with depression. These regions may contain genes that increase the risk of depression, said the researchers, although the study does not prove these genes cause depression. "Identifying genes that affect risk for a disease is a first step towards understanding the disease biology itself, which gives us targets to aim for in developing new treatments," said corresponding study author Dr. Roy Perlis. ... "More generally, finding genes associated with depression should help make clear that this is a brain disease, which we hope will decrease the stigma still associated with these kinds of illnesses." ... The researchers analyzed data from more than 300,000 people of European ancestry that was collected by the consumer genetic profiling company 23andMe. More than 75,000 of the people in the study had been diagnosed with or treated for depression. [MedlinePlus](#)

## 'Striking' link between sleep disturbances and stroke

4 August - Sleep-disordered breathing (SDB) and sleep-wake disturbances (SWD) may increase the risk for a first or secondary stroke and decrease stroke recovery, a large literature review shows. A meta-analysis of 29 studies and 2343 patients with an ischemic or hemorrhagic stroke or transient ischemic attack showed that more than 72% had an SDB condition, as defined by an apnea-hypopnea index of more than 5 episodes per hour. ... SDB was also found to be an independent risk factor for stroke in another large meta-analysis. As for SWDs, several studies showed a significant association between increased stroke risk and insomnia, hypersomnia, and restless legs syndrome. [Medscape](#)

## U.S. medical eligibility criteria for contraceptive use, 2016

29 July - The 2016 U.S. Medical Eligibility Criteria for Contraceptive Use (U.S. MEC) comprises recommendations for the use of specific contraceptive methods by women and

men who have certain characteristics or medical conditions. These recommendations for health care providers were updated by CDC after review of the scientific evidence and consultation with national experts. ... Notable updates include the addition of recommendations for women with cystic fibrosis, women with multiple sclerosis, and women receiving certain psychotropic drugs or St. John's wort; revisions to the recommendations for emergency contraception, including the addition of ulipristal acetate; and revisions to the recommendations for postpartum women; women who are breastfeeding; women with known dyslipidemias, migraine headaches, superficial venous disease, gestational trophoblastic disease, sexually transmitted diseases, and human immunodeficiency virus; and women who are receiving antiretroviral therapy.

[Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report](#)

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## **USAFRICOM**

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### **AP: UN bungled response to Africa's yellow fever outbreak**

4 August - The World Health Organization and its partners shipped more than 6 million yellow fever vaccines to Angola in February to quash an emerging epidemic, yet when they asked country officials the following month what happened to the vaccines, they discovered that about 1 million doses had mysteriously disappeared. Of the U.N. agency's shipments that did make it to Angola, some vaccines were sent to regions with no yellow fever cases, while others arrived at infected areas without syringes. In neighboring Congo, some vaccines weren't always kept cold enough to guarantee they would be effective. This lack of oversight and mismanagement has undermined control of the outbreak in Central Africa, the worst yellow fever epidemic in decades, an Associated Press investigation has found.

[CBS News](#)

### **The U.S. blew \$1.4 billion on abstinence education in Africa**

1 August - That is the amount of money the U.S. spent over a 10-year period from 2004 through 2013 promoting abstinence before marriage as a way of preventing HIV in 14 countries in sub-Saharan Africa. Unfortunately, according to the most comprehensive independent study conducted to date of the effort, the money was more or less wasted. A rigorous comparison of national data from countries that received abstinence funding under the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) with those that got none of the funding showed no difference in the age of first sexual experience or in the number of sexual partners or teenage pregnancies—all aspects of behaviors that have been linked to a higher risk of becoming infected with HIV. Instead the study showed that one of the

most important factors associated with lower levels of risky behavior was the number of years women remained in school. [Scientific American](#)

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## USCENTCOM

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### Saudi Arabia: MERS camel outbreak in Jordan, new cases in Saudi Arabia

2 August - After a slowdown in the past 2 weeks, the Saudi Arabia Ministry of Health (MOH) reported two new cases of MERS-CoV today. Both patients are expatriates, and neither was linked to a recent outbreak at the King Khalid University Hospital in Riyadh. [One] was a healthcare worker and contracted MERS in a healthcare setting. ... The second case involves a 49-year old man from Al Hofuf who is also in stable condition. The MOH listed him as having indirect contact with camels. ... The new cases bring Saudi Arabia's MERS-CoV total to 1,443, including 608 deaths, since 2012. In other MERS-CoV news, two camel herds were diagnosed as having the virus in Jordan. .... The outbreaks occurred on May 16 and had a morbidity rate of 51.4% (36 of 70 susceptible camels). [CIDRAP News Scan](#) (second item)

### Oman: Dozens of brucellosis cases reported in North Batinah

2 August - Officials with the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MoAF) are advising the public to abstain from consuming raw or unpasteurized milk or milk products in light of dozens of human cases reported in North Batinah in Al Batinah North Governorate. According to a Muscat Daily report, 48 cases of human brucellosis have been reported. The MoAF is taking the following actions due to the increase in cases: Tightening quarantine measures, increasing epidemiological investigations and strengthening the food security system in the sultanate. [Outbreak News Today](#)

### Yemen: U.N. Chief says Saudi air war taking heavy toll on Yemeni children

2 August - Nearly two months ago, United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon bowed to threats by Saudi Arabia to cut hundreds of millions of dollars in U.N. funding unless it removed Riyadh from a blacklist of armies, rebels, and terrorists that maim or kill children in conflict zones. On Tuesday, Ban pushed back, telling delegates at a special U.N. Security Council session on the plight of children in armed conflict that he has ongoing concerns about abuses of children in Yemen. The United Nations, he added, stands behind its claim that the Saudi-led military coalition in Yemen was responsible for some 60 percent of the 1,953 child deaths and injuries there during the past year. The Houthis, who have engaged

in the extensive recruitment of child soldiers, is responsible for most of the remaining casualties, according to the U.N. [Foreign Policy](#)

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## USEUCOM

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### Siberia: 90 now hospitalized for suspected anthrax in Siberia

3 August - Several news organizations reported yesterday that 90 people are now hospitalized in the Yamal-Nenets area of Siberia and a 12-year-old boy is dead from suspected anthrax infection. So far, 20 cases have been confirmed. *The New York Times* reports the boy's death is the first from anthrax in 75 years. A very warm summer has melted a layer of permafrost in Yamal-Nenets, revealing carcasses of reindeer that may be releasing *Bacillus anthracis*, the bacterium that causes anthrax, into soil. B anthracis can infect and kill humans and animals. Authorities in Siberia say 2,300 reindeer have died from suspected anthrax infection this summer, while more than 3,000 have been vaccinated against anthrax as of Tuesday. [CIDRAP News Scan](#) (third item)

### Sweden to investigate sex lives

29 July - Sweden is launching a three-year official study of its citizens' sex lives - the first for 20 years. Health Minister Gabriel Wikstrom said sexual health policy should be guided not just by the problems, but also by the pleasurable aspects of sex. Surveys done by tabloid newspapers suggest Swedes are having less sex, he wrote in the daily Dagens Nyheter. The new study should find out if that is true, and if so why, he said. Stress could be a problem, he said. The study will be conducted by Sweden's Public Health Agency, with the final report expected in June 2019. [BBC News](#)

### United Kingdom: Why your youth is nothing like it was for your parents

3 August - ... [If] you are under 25 you are smashing the stereotypes of rebellious teenagers with your healthy living, abstinence and hours spent in the gym.

- You're not having as much sex: Fifteen percent of people born in the 1990s say they have not had a sexual partner since they turned 18. ... In the 1970s and 1980s, 12% of the same age group reported no sexual partner and in the sixties the number was 6%. ...
- You're not doing drugs: ... A new report from The Home Office reveals that 18% of people aged 16 to 24 admit to having taken an illegal drug in the past year, compared with 19.5% between 2014 and 2015. This isn't a massive drop, but much lower than a decade ago, when the 2005-06 report showed the number to be 25.2%. ...

- You're not drinking alcohol so much: ... A report released in 2016 by the Office of National Statistics reveals that 48% of 16-24 year olds consumed alcohol in the previous week, while 66% of people aged 45 to 64 had been on the booze. ...
- You're body conscious: A 2016 report by the Association of Licensed Multiple Retailers revealed that young people are drinking less and exercising more. Also, gym membership across the UK rose by 44% in 2015. ... Young people are also becoming obsessed with exercise which is leading to new forms of body dysmorphia and steroid use. [BBC News](#)

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**USNORTHCOM**

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## U.S.: Average American 15 pounds heavier than 20 years ago

3 August -- There's no doubt about it: Americans are getting heavier and heavier. But new U.S. estimates may still come as a shock -- since the late 1980s and early 1990s, the average American has put on 15 or more additional pounds without getting any taller. Even 11-year-old kids aren't immune from this weight plague, the study found. Girls are more than seven pounds heavier even though their height is the same. Boys gained an inch in height, but also packed on an additional 13.5 pounds compared to two decades ago. When looked at by race, blacks gained the most on average. Black women added 22 pounds despite staying the same average height. Black men grew about one-fifth of an inch, but added 18 pounds, the study found. [MedlinePlus](#)

## U.S.: Disparities in adult cigarette smoking — United States, 2002–2005 and 2010–2013

5 August - Although cigarette smoking has substantially declined since 1964, disparities in tobacco use varies among racial/ethnic populations. Estimates of U.S. adult cigarette smoking prevalence and tobacco use are usually limited to aggregate racial/ethnic population categories. From the period 2002–2005 to the period 2010–2013, declines in cigarette smoking occurred among some racial/ethnic populations. Moreover, the relative change in smoking even among groups that did experience a decline varied across racial/ethnic populations. Substantial disparities in adult cigarette smoking prevalence exist among and within Asian and Hispanic subgroups, with Koreans and Puerto Ricans reporting the highest cigarette smoking prevalences within their respective racial/ethnic population. These findings indicate disproportionately higher smoking prevalence among men compared with women within most racial/ethnic groups.

[Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report](#)

## U.S.: Testimony - Health director covered up cancer-causing water in North Carolina

2 August - North Carolina's top public health official acted unethically and possibly illegally by telling residents living near Duke Energy coal ash pits that their well water is safe to drink when it's contaminated with a chemical known to cause cancer, a state toxicologist said in sworn testimony. The Associated Press obtained a full copy of the 220-page deposition given last month by toxicologist Ken Rudo as part of a lawsuit. The nation's largest electricity company has asked a federal judge to seal the record, claiming its public disclosure would potentially prejudice jurors. Rudo's boss, state public health director Dr. Randall Williams, in March reversed earlier warnings that had told the affected residents not to drink their water. The water is contaminated with cancer-causing hexavalent chromium at levels many times higher than Rudo had determined is safe. [PBS Newshour](#)

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### USPACOM

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## China: 'Mosquito factory' aims to wipe out Zika, other diseases

2 August - Every week, scientists in southern China release 3 million bacteria-infected mosquitoes on a 3 km (two-mile) long island in a bid to wipe out diseases such as dengue, yellow fever and Zika. The scientists inject mosquito eggs with *Wolbachia* bacteria in a laboratory, then release infected male mosquitoes on the island on the outskirts of the city of Guangzhou. The bacteria, which occurs naturally in about 28 percent of wild mosquitoes, causes infected males to sterilize the females they mate with. "The aim is trying to suppress the mosquito density below the threshold which can cause disease transmission," said Zhiyong Xi, who is director of the Sun Yat-sen University Centre of Vector Control for Tropical Diseases and pioneered the idea. "There are hot spots," Xi said. "This technology can be used at the beginning to target the hot spots ... it will dramatically reduce disease transmission." [Reuters](#)

## China: Rift Valley fever

2 August - On 23 July 2016, the National IHR Focal Point of China notified WHO of an imported case of Rift Valley fever (RVF). The case is a 45-year-old male from Henan province who had been working in Luanda, Angola. No history of travel outside Luanda has been reported. Investigation regarding potential source of infection is ongoing. The case had onset of symptoms (headache, fever, arthralgia and muscle pain) on 14 July 2016 in Angola. He sought medical treatment in a hospital in Angola, however his symptoms persisted, and he returned to China on 21 July 2016. By the time of arrival in Beijing he was already in a

serious condition and he was transferred to a specialised hospital for treatment and placed under quarantine. [WHO](#)

## India: Blood mica - deaths of child workers in India's mica 'ghost' mines covered up to keep industry alive

2 August - In the depths of India's illegal mica mines, where children as young as five work alongside adults, lurks a dark, hidden secret - the cover-up of child deaths with seven killed in the past two months. ... Investigations over three months in the major mica producing states of Bihar, Jharkhand, Rajasthan and Andhra Pradesh found child labor rife, with small hands ideal to pick and sort the valued mineral that puts the sparkle in cosmetics and car paint. ... Indian law forbids children below the age of 18 working in mines and other hazardous industries but many families living in extreme poverty rely on children to boost household income. [Reuters](#)

## India: Traffic deaths - researchers suggest India's stats are way too low

28 July - The actual statistics on the number of people hurt or killed in road accidents in India is higher than official statistics, according to researchers who say that the government is undercounting pedestrian and motorcycle deaths. According to a study published today in the medical journal BMJ, that pedestrian deaths could be more than twice as high as current estimates. ... According to the official reports, pedestrians make up 9 percent of traffic deaths. In other low- and middle-income countries that rate is closer to 40 percent. The study's authors looked at the district of Belagum to illustrate the disparity. The government data for the district show that pedestrians make up 9 percent of total traffic deaths. But researchers reviewed First Information Reports filed by the police, which put the figure at 21 percent. The results were similar for motorcycle death rates. [Humanosphere](#)

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### USSOUTHCOM

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## Haiti: An American physician laments Haiti's sick healthcare system, as a grinding doctors' strike drags on



31 July - According to news reports, at least four public hospitals are closed, and others hobbled by the strike are limping along without the mainly young doctors and interns who have walked off the job. The physicians, who earn the equivalent of about \$140 a month, according to international medical staff acquainted with Haitian doctors, are demanding better pay,

improvements in sanitary conditions and more medical supplies, including basics like surgical gloves and gauze. "The public healthcare system is just deplorable in Haiti," said Carroll, who founded Haitian Hearts ... "It was bad even before the hospitals went on strike. But it's the only thing the majority of poor people had to turn to." ... Some of his Haitian medical colleagues describe being overwhelmed by the number of patients, getting threatened by patients' relatives, working without running water and performing operations under the glow of handheld flashlights because of the lack of regular electricity.

[Los Angeles Times](#)

## PAHO: 1,708 new cases of chikungunya

2 August - The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) late last week reported 1,708 new suspected or confirmed chikungunya cases, bringing the total in the Americas this year to 214,547. The country with the highest increase in the Jul 29 report was Honduras, with 617 new cases, bringing that country's total for the year to 12,907. Bolivia reported 570 new cases, raising that country's total to 19,588. The previous PAHO report showed more than 15,000 new cases in Brazil, but no new cases were reported in that country this week.

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

## Tropical Storm Earl forms, causes Hurricane Center dilemma

3 August - By the time it became Tropical Storm Earl shortly before noon, the system was already blamed for six deaths in the Dominican Republic, and critics on social media were pressing the National Hurricane Center to make the cyclone official so alerts could be issued. ... "The NHC is doing a disservice to the people of the Caribbean who are losing their lives from lack of warning," wrote Andrew Diehl on a Twitter feed for the National Hurricane Center. Jamaica and the Cayman Islands chose not to wait for an official meteorological definition to be met before alerting residents. For the first time that 17-year hurricane center veteran James Franklin can remember, the two island nations issued tropical storm watches and warnings before the disturbance earned tropical storm status from the National Hurricane Center. ... Beginning as early as the 2017 hurricane season, the center hopes to have the ability to issue watches and warnings for disturbances prior to official cyclone genesis. [Emergency Management](#)

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