

8 July 2016

Army Public Health Weekly Update

Army Public Health Center

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Development of Exposure Guidelines for Chronic Health Effects Following Acute Exposures to Toxic Industrial Chemicals – A Toxidrome-Based Approach

A new APHC public health information paper describes a toxidrome-based approach to developing exposure guidelines for assessing the risk of chronic health effects following acute exposures to toxic industrial chemicals.

The approach relies on subject matter expert input to bridge the key data gaps. A working example with notional data is provided to illustrate how the approach could be applied.



U.S. MILITARY

Army metes out punishment in anthrax scandal

5 July - The Army has disciplined 10 of 12 civilian and military personnel deemed responsible for the poor laboratory practices and the “culture of complacency” that led to the bungled shipments of deadly anthrax samples to 50 states and nine foreign countries. The Army took action against nine of 10 civilians and one of two Army officers found responsible last year for the lapses at the Dugway Proving Grounds lab in Utah. The discipline ranged from the loss of supervisory responsibilities to suspensions and demotions. ... The Army’s report on its investigation was unsparing in its criticism, although it did not attribute the errant shipments over a decade to an individual or group. Instead it found that leadership at Dugway “created conditions allowing a culture of complacency to flourish,” according to the report. “As a result, laboratory personnel did not always follow rules, regulations and procedures. [USA Today](#)

Improving LGBT healthcare for military veterans

5 July - The U.S. Veterans Health Administration (VHA), which is likely the largest provider of LGBT healthcare in the world, is implementing various system-wide changes aimed at improving LGBT care, including transgender e-consultations to aid interdisciplinary providers and the addition of a self-identified gender identity field to all veteran record systems. ... Interdisciplinary teams of providers that have undergone intensive training respond to clinical questions submitted by a VHA clinician through a patient’s electronic health record. The authors also describe the upcoming placement of LGBT Veteran Care Coordinators at VHA facilities and a new national directive on LGB veteran healthcare that is in development. [EurekAlert!](#)

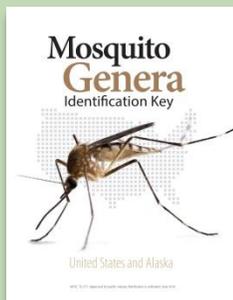
Incidence and recent trends in functional gastrointestinal disorders, active component, U.S. Armed Forces

June 2016 - Functional gastrointestinal disorders (FGIDs) are common chronic conditions with an unknown pathophysiology and etiology. FGIDs elevate healthcare costs and cause substantial burden to public health and the military, including diminished readiness, productivity, and quality of life. This retrospective cohort study of active component U.S. military personnel covered a 10-year surveillance period, 2005–2014. ... Incidence rates among deployed personnel were compared to rates in non-deployed personnel, stratified by age and sex. An increasing trend in functional constipation was observed during 2005–2012. Being female, black, in the Army or Air Force, and younger than 20 years of age or 40 years of age or older was associated with higher incidence rates. Deployment-exposed personnel had incidence rates that were 53% higher than those of non-deployed personnel. Elevated rates in personnel younger than 20 years of age and deployed personnel evoke interest concerning readiness and cost implications for the Military Health System.

[Medical Surveillance Monthly Report](#)

Mosquito Genera Identification Key: United States and Alaska

Identifying local mosquito genera is essential when establishing and carrying out control measures. [APHC Technical Guide 371](#) uses characteristics, or characters, to differentiate between the mosquito genera found in the United States and Alaska and insects that are not mosquitoes.



Military freezing mosquitoes to guard against Zika virus

4 July - Mosquitoes are being trapped and frozen at Fort Benning and other posts as part of the military's effort to combat the Zika virus that has infected at least 11 service members among more than 1,000 Americans. ... [Troops are] on mosquito trapping duty to detect the presence of the *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes whose bites can spread the virus. ... Once the mosquitoes are trapped at Benning, they are frozen and shipped to the Environmental Health Department of Preventative Medicine on the Georgia post, and then sent to the Army's Public Health Command-Atlantic at Fort Meade in Maryland for testing. "We haven't found any, at least not yet," of the *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes at Benning, although they are known to be present in the southeast, said Maj. Scott Robinson, chief of preventive medicine at Benning's Martin Army Community Hospital. Dr. Robinson said that Benning and other Army posts have also been screening troops who have recently returned from South America and the Caribbean, where the Zika virus has hit hardest. [Military.com](#)

New VA study finds 20 veterans commit suicide each day

7 July - Roughly 20 veterans a day commit suicide nationwide, according to new data from the Department of Veterans Affairs — a figure that dispels the often quoted, but problematic, "22 a day" estimate yet solidifies the disturbing mental health crisis the number implied. In 2014, the latest year available, more than 7,400 veterans took their own lives, accounting for 18 percent of all suicides in America. Veterans make up less than 9 percent of the U.S. population. About 70 percent of veterans who took their own lives were not regular users of VA services. The new data, being released publicly today, is the most comprehensive suicide study ever conducted by the department. [Military Times](#)

Report: VA health care still has 'profound deficiencies'

6 July - Two years after a scandal over long wait times for veterans seeking health care, the Department of Veterans Affairs still has "profound deficiencies" in delivering health care to millions of veterans, a congressional commission says in a new report. The Commission on Care says ... that the VA delivers high-quality health care but is inconsistent from one site to the next, and problems with access remain. The panel says the VA needs to improve its service to veterans, adding that the VA's health care operations "require urgent reform. America's veterans deserve a better organized, high-performing health care system." [U.S. News and World Report](#)

USU students learn public health, zombie style

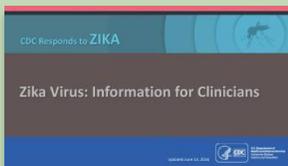
1 July - A course at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences is teaching students global health care delivery in a unique way. ... Students in USU's family nurse practitioner doctorate of nursing practice program must take a population health course as part of their degree requirements. This online class outlines key principles in responding to and understanding population health – the overall health of a group, be it a group of employees, a community, or entire nation. Students must apply what they learn about

theories and models of public health care through debate, small-group work and a series of creative scenarios --including a zombie pandemic. ... The students watch video clips of scenarios, including one of the nation's "president" delivering a brief "State of the Zombie Pandemic" address. They see the impact that a fictitious zombie virus has made on a population and the fear it has created – along with "anti-zombie" posters strewn all over cities. These scenarios reinforce teaching materials regarding various tools that shape population health planning and interventions, [Catherine] Ling said. [Health.mil](#)

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Zika Virus: Information for Clinicians

The CDC has created a slide set for clinicians on the Zika virus.



GLOBAL

Cheap blood test can discriminate between bacterial, viral infections, study finds

6 July - Researchers at the Stanford University School of Medicine have made an important breakthrough in their ongoing efforts to develop a diagnostic test that can tell health-care providers whether a patient has a bacterial infection and will benefit from antibiotics. ... The team used publicly available patient gene expression data to pinpoint just seven human genes whose activity changes during an infection; their pattern of activity can distinguish whether an infection is bacterial or viral. ... Because so few genes are involved, the new test will be cheaper and faster, while remaining accurate, they said. [EurekAlert!](#)

Fungal infection 'threat' to human health

5 July - Fungal infections kill more people than malaria or breast cancer but are not considered a priority, say scientists. Prof Neil Gow, from the University of Aberdeen, said more than one million people die from fungal infections around the world each year. Yet there are no vaccines and there is a "pressing need" for new treatments, he said. ... [Three] major groups cause the majority of deaths in people:

- Aspergillus - which affects the lungs
- Cryptococcus - which mainly attacks the brain
- Candida - which infects mucosal membranes including in the mouth and genitals ...

The infections are more deadly in people with weakened immune systems - such as patients with HIV - so the fungal problem is particularly acute in Africa. ... Meanwhile, health officials have warned of a new strain of *Candida auris* which has caused an outbreak affecting 40 patients in one hospital in south-east England. ... Public Health England said "*Candida auris* appears to be unlike other pathogenic yeast species in its propensity for transmission between hospital patients" and warned it was resistant to the first choice anti-fungal drug.

[BBC News](#)

Sleep apnea by the numbers

Sleep apnea is thought to affect at least 5 percent of men and 3-4 percent of women, but many estimates put that number higher because people with sleep apnea don't tend to realize they have it. Interactive graphics have more information.



Hepatitis 'kills more than AIDS and TB'

7 July - Viral hepatitis has become a leading cause of death and disability in the world, killing more people in a year than Aids, tuberculosis or malaria, a report has said. Deaths from infection, liver disease and cancer caused by viral hepatitis increased by 63 percent from 890,000 in 1990 to 1.45 million in 2013, according to a review of data collected in 183 countries. By comparison, in 2013 there were 1.3 million deaths from Aids, 1.4 million from tuberculosis, and 855,000 from malaria, said the report, published in *The Lancet* medical journal on Thursday. "Whereas deaths from many infectious diseases - such as TB and malaria - have dropped since 1990, viral hepatitis deaths have risen," said study leader Graham Cooke. ... According to the World Health Organization, types A and E are typically transmitted via contaminated food or water, while B, C and D usually occur from contact with body fluids of an infected person. [Al Jazeera](#)

Ibuprofen 'disables' Ebola virus

30 June - The painkiller ibuprofen and the cancer drug toremifene can disable the Ebola virus, say researchers. Scientists used the UK's national synchrotron facility - Diamond Light Source - to analyse the virus in incredible detail. They revealed the two drugs could bind to the crucial part of Ebola that the virus needs to infect cells. However, the team warns this is just a starting point and more effective drugs need to be researched. The synchrotron accelerates electrons until they produce very intense light. This can be used to analyse the atomic make-up of objects at a much greater resolution than traditional microscopes. The focus of the researchers was a protein on the surface of the Ebola virus that allows it to infect a cell. [BBC News](#)

Researchers in Belgium identify novel colistin-resistance gene

7 July - A team of researchers in Belgium is reporting the discovery of a new gene distinct from MCR-1 that can confer colistin resistance in *Escherichia coli* samples taken from cows and pigs. The authors of the report, published today in the journal *Eurosurveillance*, said the gene—which they are calling MCR-2—was detected on plasmids from 3 of 10 colistin-resistant *E coli* isolates taken from calves and piglets in Belgium. ... [It] appears that there is another gene capable of conferring colistin resistance. The authors of the study said a phylogenetic analysis of MCR-2 provided strong evidence that the gene is distinct from MCR-1. [CIDRAP](#)

'The Next Pandemic': New threats, but new defenses, too

3 July - Dr Ali S. Khan's book, *The Next Pandemic*, takes us from doctor's offices in the Midwest to the "hot zones" of Africa. In the process, he explains how to think about the risk of migrating diseases. ... "From the disease standpoint, a novel influenza strain worries me. Things like SARS and MERS that rapidly spread by the respiratory route, especially within hospitals, and spillover into communities worry me. I worry about another West Nile-like

Classified Version of the Weekly Update

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To access this version, you will need a **SECRET** clearance and a SIPRNet account.

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virus that finds the right vectors here in the United States. And I never want to forget to talk about the continued risk of bioterrorism and how that gets easier and easier with advances in synthetic biology and how nowadays you could essentially use a gene synthesizer to recreate smallpox virus if you wanted to." [NPR](#)

ZIKA VIRUS

Feds call for aerial spraying to blunt Puerto Rico's Zika rise

7 July - Based on several reports that Zika virus is spreading rapidly in Puerto Rico, federal officials yesterday recommended that the territory consider aerial spraying as part of a program to curb the mosquito populations that spread the disease. Puerto Rico has reported spikes in Zika infections, and an update today from the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) shows that 506 more cases have been reported from affected territories since the previous week, most of them in Puerto Rico. [CIDRAP](#)

France's Sanofi partners U.S. Army to speed up Zika vaccine

6 July - French drugmaker Sanofi said on Wednesday it had struck a research and development deal with the U.S. Army to speed up the development of a vaccine against the mosquito-borne Zika virus. Sanofi is the only major drugmaker working on a vaccine against Zika, which has been linked to birth defects and neurological disorders, although more than a dozen smaller biotech firms and other groups are also active in the field. The tie-up with the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research (WRAIR) in the United States gives Sanofi access to a promising new vaccine, made from inactivated virus, that has already produced impressive results in mice. The vaccine is one of the furthest advanced in development and could be ready for testing on humans in October. [Reuters](#)

NIH funds Zika virus study involving U.S. Olympic team

5 July - Researchers supported by the National Institutes of Health will monitor potential Zika virus exposure among a subset of athletes, coaches and other U.S. Olympic Committee (USOC) staff attending the 2016 Summer Olympics and Paralympics in Brazil. The study, funded by NIH's *Eunice Kennedy Shriver* National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) and led by Carrie L. Byington, M.D., from the University of Utah, Salt Lake City, aims to improve understanding of how the virus persists in the body and to identify potential factors that influence the course of infection. [NIH](#)

Penn engineers develop \$2 portable Zika test

5 July - University of Pennsylvania engineers have developed a rapid, low-cost genetic test for the Zika virus. The \$2 testing device, about the size of a soda can, does not require

electricity or technical expertise to use. A patient would simply provide a saliva sample. Color-changing dye turns blue when the genetic assay detects the presence of the virus. Rapid, accurate diagnosis is especially important for pregnant women who may be infected. However, the only approved tests for the virus currently require highly sensitive laboratory equipment. Diagnostic tools that can be used in the field, while the patient waits, would be a critical tool for fighting the Zika epidemic. ... Once a patient's saliva sample is introduced into the cartridge, the test takes about 40 minutes to run. The researchers demonstrated its efficacy with their own saliva spiked with virus samples generated by the Cherry Lab, showing sensitivity equivalent to that of RT-PCR tests. Future work will demonstrate the test's selectivity and will also test a version that can quantify the viral load by means of a fluorescent dye and an integrated smartphone camera. [EurekAlert!](#)

Sex may spread Zika virus more often than researchers suspected

2 July - ... [Two] reports now suggest that women in Latin America are much more likely to be infected than men, although both are presumed to be equally exposed to mosquitoes. The gender difference appears at the age at which sexual activity begins, and then fades among older adults. ... A study in Rio de Janeiro found that women were much more likely to become infected with the Zika virus than men, possibly through sexual contact with infected men. ... The most disputed piece in this medical puzzle is a relatively obscure study released in May by Brazilian and European biostatisticians. In Rio de Janeiro, a city of 6.4 million, they found "a massive increase of Zika in women compared to men." The authors ... adjusted their figures for two confounding factors: Pregnant women are tested for Zika more frequently than anyone else, and women generally visit doctors more often than men do. Even after removing pregnant women from the data, the researchers found women were 90 percent more likely than men their age to be infected. [The New York Times](#)

WHO urges use of polio detection systems to screen for Zika-linked disorder

5 July - A neurological condition linked to the mosquito-borne Zika virus could be targeted globally with existing national programs for detecting polio, a paper co-authored by World Health Organization researchers said on Tuesday. ... "With increasing evidence of linkages between Guillain-Barré syndrome and Zika virus infection, it is imperative to enhance Guillain-Barré syndrome surveillance," WHO researchers [said]. "This can be done using existing surveillance systems like the one for acute flaccid paralysis (AFP) used by polio eradication programs. Further investigation of AFP cases classified as being due to Guillain-Barre syndrome can be a starting point to test for Zika virus." Polio surveillance systems in countries present a platform for global disease detection, monitoring and response, the researchers said, noting that reporting systems and laboratory facilities are in place. [Reuters](#)

Zika virus disease in the United States, 2015–2016

6 July - This update from the CDC Arboviral Disease Branch includes provisional data

reported to ArboNET for January 01, 2015 – July 6, 2016. [CDC](#)

US States

Locally acquired mosquito-borne cases reported: 0

Travel-associated cases reported: 1,132

Laboratory acquired cases reported: 1

Total: 1,133

Sexually transmitted: 14

Guillain-Barré syndrome: 5

US Territories

Locally acquired cases reported: 2,526

Travel-associated cases reported: 8

Total: 2,534*

Guillain-Barré syndrome: 12

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INFLUENZA

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

For 2015-2016 Influenza Season Week 25 ending June 25, 2016:

- **Novel Influenza A Viruses:** Two human infections with novel influenza A viruses were reported to CDC during week 25. One human infection with a novel influenza A virus was reported by the state of Wisconsin. The person was infected with an influenza A (H1N2) variant (H1N2)v virus. The patient was hospitalized as a result of their illness, and continues to recover. Direct contact with swine in the week preceding illness onset was reported. No ongoing community transmission has been detected. One human infection with a novel influenza A virus was reported by the state of Minnesota.
- **Pneumonia and Influenza (P&I) Mortality Surveillance:**
 - **NCHS Mortality Surveillance Data:** Based on NCHS mortality surveillance data available on June 30, 2016, 5.7% of the deaths occurring during the week ending June 11, 2016 (week 23) were due to P&I. This percentage is below the epidemic threshold of 6.6% for week 23.
 - **122 Cities Mortality Reporting System:** During week 25, 5.8% of all deaths reported through the 122 Cities Mortality Reporting System were due to P&I. This percentage was below the epidemic threshold of 6.1% for week 25. [CDC](#)

ECDC: Flu News Europe

Weeks 21–25/2016 (23 May–26 June 2016):

Influenza activity in the WHO European Region has returned to low levels, with all countries reporting low intensity since week 23/2016.

- Influenza viruses were detected sporadically both in sentinel and non-sentinel specimens, with influenza B viruses dominating.
- Data from the 18 countries or regions reporting to the European monitoring of excess mortality for public health action (EuroMOMO) project indicate that all-cause mortality has been within the normal range in the reporting countries during the past weeks.

[European Center for Disease Prevention and Control/WHO](#)

NHRC: Febrile Respiratory Illness Surveillance Update

For 2016 Week 26 (through 2 July 2016):

- Influenza: Five cases of NHRC laboratory-confirmed influenza (A/H3) among US military basic trainees at MRCB Parris Island. All were unvaccinated
- FRI surveillance at all eight U.S. military basic training centers indicated FRI rates were at or below expected values. [Naval Health Research Center](#)

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VETERINARY/FOOD SAFETY

The fuzzy fluffy super-cute health threat in your backyard



5 July - An epidemic is moving across the United States. It has invaded 35 states and sickened 324 people, including 88 children. It has put 66 people into hospitals, and one of the sick people has died. And the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ... is struggling with how to stop its advance—because the things causing the epidemic are

widely distributed across the country, come from many places, and are hard to trace back to their source. And also, are super-cute. The cause is backyard chickens. Since January, and continuing into June, there have been seven separate outbreaks of Salmonella—each caused by a different strain of the bacterium and each stretching over multiple states, from 16 down to seven—that have been proved to originate in live chicks and ducklings bought by mail or in feed stores and kept at home or at a school. [National Geographic](#)

United Kingdom: E. coli outbreak - salad may be to blame

5 July - An outbreak of E. Coli affecting more than 100 UK people could be linked to eating contaminated mixed salad leaves, public health officials say. To date, 109 people are known to have caught the bug - 102 in England, six in Wales and one in Scotland. ... Although the cause of the infection is not absolutely certain, preliminary investigations show many of the people affected ate salad, including rocket leaves, prior to getting sick. Dr Isabel Oliver, director of PHE's field epidemiology service, said: "At this stage, we are not ruling out other food items as a potential source." [BBC News](#)

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WELLNESS

A call for action on toxic chemicals

1 July - Every day, children and adults are exposed to a variety of chemicals found in common household items. Now a growing body of research suggests that many of these chemicals ... may also pose a threat to the developing brain. While the link between early chemical exposure and neurodevelopment disorders in children remains a matter of scientific debate, a unique coalition of top doctors, scientists and health advocates is calling for more aggressive regulation. The goal is to protect expectant mothers, infants and children from neurotoxic chemicals by stepping up efforts to curb air pollution, remediate old lead pipes, phase out certain pesticides, ban endocrine-disrupting chemicals used in food packaging and plastics and come up with a plan for getting rid of furniture laden with fire retardants. ... [Most] chemicals in use today were not adequately tested for safety before being allowed on the market, said Dr. Jeanne Conry, an obstetrician-gynecologist and a past president of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, which is part of the coalition. [The New York Times](#)

Enjoying meals prepared at home: AQ short-cut to avoiding diabetes?

5 July - ... [Researchers] employed large prospective datasets in which US health professionals -- both men and women--were followed-up for long periods, with rigorous collection of data on health indicators, including self-reported information on eating habits and occurrence of diabetes. The results were corrected for various known factors that could affect dining habits, including marital status. All in all, the study analyzed 2.1 million years of follow-up data. The findings indicate that people who reported consuming 5-7 evening meals prepared at home during a week had a 15% lower risk of type 2 diabetes than those who consumed 2 such meals or fewer in a week. A smaller, but still statistically significant,

reduction was apparent for those who reported consuming more midday meals prepared at home. Other analyses suggest that less weight gain could partially explain the reported reduction in occurrence of type 2 diabetes in those often eating meals prepared at home.

[EurekaAlert!](#)

Human papillomavirus–associated cancers — United States, 2008–2012

8 July - ... An average of 38,793 HPV-associated cancers (11.7 per 100,000 persons) were diagnosed annually in the United States during 2008–2012, including 23,000 (13.5) among females and 15,793 (9.7) among males. Among these cancers, CDC estimates that 30,700 (79%) can be attributed to HPV, and 28,500 of these are attributable to HPV types that are preventable with the 9-valent HPV vaccine. Full vaccination coverage of the U.S. population could prevent future HPV-attributable cancers and potentially reduce racial and ethnic disparities in HPV-associated cancer incidence. Ongoing surveillance for HPV-associated cancers using high-quality population-based registries is needed to monitor trends in cancer incidence that might result from increasing use of HPV vaccines and changes in cervical cancer screening practices. [Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Update](#)

Poor sleep health could contribute to inflammatory disease

6 July - A new meta-analysis ... reports that sleep disturbances and long sleep duration are associated with increases in markers of inflammation. ... Substances that increase in response to inflammation and circulate in the blood stream, such as C-reactive protein (CRP) and interleukin-6 (IL-6), predict adverse health conditions including cardiovascular events, hypertension, and type 2 diabetes. ... [Researchers] systematically reviewed existing studies for associations between sleep and inflammatory markers. ... The analysis showed that sleep disturbance (poor sleep quality or complaints of insomnia) and long sleep duration (more than 8 hours) were associated with increased levels of CRP and IL-6. Shorter sleep duration was associated with increased levels of CRP. No associations were found with TNF α . [EurekaAlert!](#)

The surprising health benefits of an electric bike

6 July - ... [A] majority of us never exercise. When researchers ask why, most people offer the same two excuses — they don't have time to fit exercise into their lives or they aren't fit enough to undertake exercise. Potentially, electric bicycles could address those concerns. Their motors shore up your pedaling as needed—or, with some electric bikes, do the pedaling for you—making climbing hills or riding for long distances less taxing and daunting than the same ride on a standard bicycle. ... [Researchers] at the University of Colorado, Boulder, decided to see what would happen if they gave a group of out-of-shape men and women zippy electric bikes and suggested that they begin riding to work. ... A month later, the volunteers returned to the lab to repeat the original tests and turn over heart rate and GPS data. All of them had ridden at least the prescribed minimum of 40

minutes three times per week and in fact, according to their monitor data, most had ridden more than required, several about 50 percent more. The riders also had ridden with some intensity. Their heart rates averaged about 75 percent of each person's maximum, meaning that even with the motor assist, they were getting a moderate workout, comparable to brisk walking or an easy jog. [The New York Times](#)

Three-decade study confirms saturated fats are bad for health

5 July - Saturated fats in butter, lard and red meat raise the risk of early death, but replacing these with fats like olive oil can offer substantial health benefits, a three-decade study confirmed on Tuesday. The research involving more than 120,000 people was published in the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) Internal Medicine. ... Among the key findings of the study were that people who ate more saturated and trans fats had higher mortality rates than those who consumed the same number of calories from carbohydrates. It also found that replacing saturated fats like butter, lard, and fat in red meat with unsaturated fats from plant-based foods -- such as olive oil, canola oil, and soybean oil -- could offer "substantial health benefits and should continue to be a key message in dietary recommendations." ... Trans fats, including partially hydrogenated oil products like margarine, had the most severe impact on health. [Yahoo! News](#)

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USAFRICOM

Democratic Republic of Congo: Shortage of syringes hampers Congo's fight against yellow fever

5 July - A shortage of syringes is hampering plans to vaccinate people in Democratic Republic of Congo against a yellow fever epidemic despite the arrival of more than one million doses of vaccine, health officials said on Tuesday. Congo's government declared a yellow fever epidemic last month in the capital Kinshasa and two other provinces near the border with Angola. The World Health Organization (WHO) says some 1,400 suspected cases of the hemorrhagic virus in Congo have resulted so far in 82 deaths and is particularly concerned about conditions in Kinshasa, a city of 12 million with poor health services and a climate conducive to mosquitoes. [Reuters](#)

South Sudan unable to cope with mental trauma of civil war

6 July - South Sudan is unable to cope with high levels of mental trauma suffered by survivors of the country's civil war, Amnesty International said Wednesday. A new report by

the rights group said widespread rape, torture and killing of civilians by soldiers has led to many people showing symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder. South Sudan's mental health care system is "practically non-existent," with only two part-time psychiatrists and a single psychiatric ward in the whole East African country, Amnesty International said. [WTOP](#)

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USCENTCOM

Saudi Arabia: MERS infects another in Saudi Arabia; WHO hints at 2 more clusters

7 July - Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Health (MOH) reported a new MERS-CoV infection, involving an 80-year-old woman from Jeddah who is a household contact of an earlier confirmed patient, and the World Health Organization (WHO) yesterday filled in more details about 13 recently reported cases from the country, 5 linked to a Riyadh hospital outbreak and at least 3 that appear to be linked to small clusters in Jeddah and Najran. The woman who is Saudi Arabia's latest MERS-CoV (Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus) patient is in critical condition. Her illness lifts the country's MERS total to 1,424 cases, 601 of them fatal. Fifteen people are still being treated for their infections. ... [The] WHO's report covers cases reported by Saudi Arabia between Jun 21 and Jun 30. The five patients linked to the Riyadh hospital outbreak were asymptomatic and identified through contact tracing. They include three healthcare workers, a hospitalized patient, and a man who was exposed to the hospital patient. ... Hinting at another possible hospital cluster, this time in Najran, the WHO said one of the patients in its latest update is a 28-year-old male healthcare worker who had been exposed to an earlier confirmed case.

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

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USEUCOM

Europe: West Nile virus - monitoring season 2016

2 July - During the past week, no new human cases of West Nile fever have been reported in EU Member States or neighbouring countries. As of 30 June 2016, no cases of West Nile fever in humans have been reported in the EU Member States and six cases in neighbouring countries, since the beginning of the 2016 transmission season.

[Communicable Disease Threats Report](#) (first item)

United Kingdom: E-cigarettes - a developing public health consensus

6 July - Joint statement on e-cigarettes by Public Health England and other UK public health organisations: Since 2000, smoking among adults in England has fallen by one third and among children by two thirds. Yet almost one in five adults continue to smoke, with higher rates in the more deprived communities meaning that they bear the majority of the harm caused. There is a strong public health consensus on tobacco control, embodied in the landmark report *Smoking Still Kills*. We all agree that e-cigarettes are significantly less harmful than smoking. One in two lifelong smokers dies from their addiction. All the evidence suggests that the health risks posed by e-cigarettes are relatively small by comparison but we must continue to study the long-term effects. And yet, millions of smokers have the impression that e-cigarettes are at least as harmful as tobacco. ... We have a responsibility to provide clear information on the evidence we have, to encourage complete smoking cessation and help prevent relapse to smoking. The public health opportunity is in helping smokers to quit, so we may encourage smokers to try vaping but we certainly encourage vapers to stop smoking tobacco completely. [Public Health England](#)

United Kingdom: UK warns about drug-resistant *Candida* infections

5 July - Health officials in the United Kingdom said late last week that an emerging drug-resistant fungus has been identified in England, just 7 days after US officials warned about the same pathogen. The pathogen, *Candida auris*, is a type of yeast that was first isolated from the ear of a Japanese patient in 2009, and since then has been reported in eight other countries, including Great Britain. The pathogen has most commonly caused healthcare-associated invasive infections such as bloodstream infections, wound infections, and ear infections. According to a report from Public Health England (PHE), sporadic cases of *C auris* have been identified throughout the country since 2013. But since April 2015, an adult critical care facility in England has been dealing with a *C auris* outbreak involving more than 40 patients. [CIDRAP](#)

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USNORTHCOM

Mexico: Energy-dense food consumption declines after Mexico's tax

5 July - Purchases of taxed foods declined beyond pre-tax trends following Mexico's 2014 tax on nonessential, energy-dense foods like salty snacks and frozen desserts, according to

a survey-based study published as part of *PLOS Medicine's* special issue on Preventing Diabetes. The study ... found this shift occurred in low and medium socioeconomic status (SES), but not high SES, households. [EurekAlert!](#)

U.S.: Schools around the country find lead in water, with no easy answers

4 July - ... The ongoing crisis in Flint, Mich., has shined a spotlight on the public-health hazards that lead continues to pose in U.S. drinking water. In particular, it has led to renewed pressure to test for the problem in the nation's schools, where millions of young children, the age group most vulnerable to lead poisoning, spend their days. ... School systems throughout the country have long grappled with lead in water, due in part to aging buildings laden with lead-bearing pipes and fixtures. But even now, the vast majority of the nation's schools are not legally required by states or the federal government to test their water on a regular basis. Most public school districts, cash-starved and understaffed, don't make it a priority. Years can pass before a calamity such as the one in Flint compels school officials to undertake a new round of testing. [The Washington Post](#)

U.S.: Florida's toxic algae blooms are visible from space



7 July - The slimy, smelly toxic algae overtaking some waterways in southern Florida is so widespread it can now be seen from space. NASA's Landsat 8 satellite snapped a photo on July 2 showing a blue-green algae bloom in Lake Okeechobee.

While algae blooms are a common summer occurrence, they've been especially problematic this year in many southern Florida waterways. Health risks associated with blue-green algae occur when "people or animals are exposed to toxins that are sometimes produced by certain kinds of these organisms," according to the Florida Department of Health. ... "At high levels, these can affect the gastrointestinal tract, liver, nervous system, and skin."

[ABC News](#)

U.S.: U.S. has highest death rate for car crashes in the world

7 July - While the car crash-related death rates in the United States fell almost a third in the last 14 years, the nation's figures are still highest in the world. When compared to other high-income countries, the U.S. still tops the world's list of car crash fatalities, a new report finds. ... Every day, about 90 Americans die in car accidents. Among the 20 countries involved in the latest study, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) said the nation's roadway death rates are still the highest. ... From 2000 to 2013, the rate of car crash deaths in the country dropped by 31 percent. Despite the huge reduction, other countries had an average decline rate of 56 percent during the same time. Of all the

countries examined, Spain had the highest reduction in car crash deaths at 75 percent.

[Tech Times](#)

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USPACOM

Malaysia: Some Malaysians' rejection of vaccines fans fears of disease surge

6 July - More children are falling victim to contagious diseases in Muslim-majority Malaysia, worrying health authorities as parents reject immunization programs for fear the vaccines used infringe strict religious rules. The deaths of five children in June from diphtheria, a disease that can be prevented by vaccines, provoked an outcry among doctors and spurred calls for an edict by religious authorities to compel Muslim families to immunize children. ... Although Muslim religious authorities have waived the stringent halal requirement if suitable vaccines are not available, concerns have redoubled recently that some may contain substances such as pig DNA, forbidden by Islam. Pediatrician Musa Mohamad Nordin said there was a lot of misinformation in Malaysia's Muslim community. ... Only a few families have rejected vaccinations, but the number has more than doubled in the past three years to reach 1,541 in 2015, Subramaniam said, which is reflected in a rise in vaccine-preventable diseases, from diphtheria to measles. [Reuters](#)

New Zealand: Students need better access to sexual health resources

5 July - A national youth health study indicates that youth are delaying sexual activity until they are older; however those who are sexually active are less prepared and less likely to access sexual health services. Data from over 27,000 New Zealand high school students in the Youth2000 survey series conducted in 2001, 2007 and 2012 investigated changes in the sexual health behaviours of New Zealand secondary school students. ... Study leader, Dr Terryann Clark, says students in 2012 were more likely to delay sexual activity, but those who were sexually active, were less likely to use condoms and contraception consistently, compared to students in 2001. "Declining contraceptive use over an 11-year period suggests that current strategies are inadequate, particularly for Māori, Pacific and socioeconomically deprived students," she says. [Medical Xpress](#)

Philippines: Only country in Asia where teen pregnancy rising

7 July - The Philippines is the only Asia-Pacific country where the rate of teen pregnancies rose over the last two decades and the slow decline of its overall fertility rate may deprive

the country of the faster economic growth expected in places that have more working-age people than younger and older dependents, the U.N. Population Fund said Thursday. Girls aged 15 to 19 make up 10 percent of the country's population of 100 million and one out of 10 of them have already given birth, UNFPA country representative Klaus Beck said. That fertility rate in that age group is 57 births for every 1,000 girls as of 2013 - higher than rates found by surveys every five years from 1998. [VOA](#)

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USSOUTHCOM

Brazil: 'Super bacteria' discovered in Rio's waters as Olympics near

5 July - A group of Brazilian scientists has detected a drug-resistant bacteria growing off some of Rio de Janeiro's most stunning beaches, in research being published a month before the city hosts the 2016 Olympic Games. According to lead researcher Renata Picao, the "super bacteria" entered the city's waterways when sewage coming from local hospitals got channeled into the bay. ... The samples were collected between 2013 and 2014. The superbug found was carbapenem-resistant Enterobacteriaceae, or CRE. Picao said there is no reason to believe the levels have changed because raw sewage continues to flow into many waterways. She said the next step is to test the impact these bacteria can have when humans come in contact with them in coastal waters. [CNN](#)

Update: More than 40,000 new cases of chikungunya, mostly in Brazil

6 July - The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) reported 43,842 new chikungunya cases as of Jul 1, bringing the 2016 total in the Americas to 193,245 infections. ... Brazil reported the vast majority of the week's new cases, 39,084, bringing its cases for the year to 122,762. Bolivia was next, with 2,510 new cases and 18,398 for the year. Also of note, Honduras had 1,720 new cases as of Jul 1 and 12,053 total. PAHO reported 1 new chikungunya-related death in Nicaragua, raising that number to 18 for the year, 16 of which have been in Brazil. [CIDRAP News Scan](#) (second item)

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