

17 May 2013

Army Public Health Weekly Update

The Army Public Health Update is a collection of articles taken verbatim from public sources to offer awareness of current health issues and the media coverage given to them. The articles do not necessarily represent US Army Medical Department opinions, views, policy, or guidance, and should not be construed or interpreted as being endorsed by the US Army Medical Department.

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Contents

U.S. MILITARY

- Agent Orange: Still taking a toll on vets
- Ambulatory visits among members of the active component, U.S. Armed Forces, 2012
- Hagel orders retraining of sex-assault prevention officers; Army sergeant investigated
- Pentagon grapples with sex crimes by military recruiters
- Social media increasingly important for military families

GLOBAL

- An iPhone jury-rigged as a microscope
- Bacterial infection in mosquitoes renders them immune to malaria parasites
- Clusters of new coronavirus add to concern
- How austerity kills
- Inoculating against vaccine fears?
- New rotavirus vaccine developed in India billed as effective, cheap
- Scientists clone human embryos to make stem cells
- The latest buzz - eating insects can help tackle food insecurity, says FAO
- UN: Billions still will lack sanitation by 2015
- Victorian man brought back from the dead by Australian-first resuscitation technique
- WHO data shows narrowing health gap

INFLUENZA

- CDC: Weekly Influenza Surveillance Report
- DoD Global Laboratory-Based Influenza Surveillance Program
- Google.org: Flu Trends
- Naval Health Research Center: Febrile Respiratory Illness Surveillance Update
- PANDEMIC AND AVIAN INFLUENZA
- H5N1 bird flu could be controlled by disinfection
- Death toll rises to 36 in H7N9 outbreak

VETERINARY/FOOD SAFETY

- FDA releases food defense planning software tool
- Illnesses in U.S. on the rise as a result of decline in foreign food inspections
- Kazakhstan: OIE - new FMD outbreak results in quarantine measures
- Study finds an increase in arsenic levels in chicken

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**Mental Health
Services and
Support for
National Guard and
Reserves**

There are resources to help Guardsmen, Reservists and their families with whatever challenges they may face:

**National Guard
Psychological Health
Program**

Real Warriors

**Defense Centers of
Excellence for
Psychological Health and
Traumatic Brain Injury**

DCoE Outreach Center

Military OneSource

**National Resource
Directory**

Courage to Care

Joint Services Support

**Yellow Ribbon
Reintegration Program**

Afterdeployment.org

- U.S. report quantifies risk of listeria in deli foods

WELLNESS

- Actress's move shines light on preventive mastectomy
- Bed rest no help for women at risk of early delivery
- Biological clue to why women live longer than men
- Kidney problems linked to traffic fumes
- Number of abused U.S. children unchanged since 2008
- Teen drivers: TXTing tops risky behaviors
- Ultra-low salt intake may not boost health: U.S. panel

USAFRICOM

- Niger offers cash reward to help eradicate Guinea worm
- Slim in Sudan: Female fleshiness loses its allure
- Somalia: Wild poliovirus
- South Africa: Over 20 boys die in circumcision rituals
- Uganda grapples with paediatric vaccine shortages

USCENTCOM

- Afghanistan: Taliban pledge support for polio campaign
- Jordan: Recording about 151 TB infection among Syrian refugees in the camp of Zaatari
- Saudi Arabia: Novel coronavirus infection – WHO update

USEUCOM

- Hospital probes East German 'human guinea pig' drug tests
- Northern Greece: Re-emergence of animal rabies and subsequent human exposure, October 2012 – March 2013

USNORTHCOM

- U.S.: At least 6 confirmed dead in Texas tornado outbreak
- U.S.: Chemical depots fall under a patchwork of rules
- U.S.: FDA approves labels with lower doses for sleep drugs like Ambien
- U.S.: Final 2012 West Nile virus update:
- U.S.: Judge denies FDA bid to stay 'morning-after' pill ruling
- U.S.: Ovarian cancer fall sped up as hormone use dropped
- U.S.: Tick-borne disease threat is growing
- U.S.: Spinal and paraspinal infections associated with contaminated methylprednisolone acetate injections — Michigan, 2012–2013

USPACOM

- Bangladesh: Non-communicable diseases account for half of all adult female mortality
- China's prostitutes routinely extorted, abused by police, report says

USSOUTHCOM

- Chile: PDI investigates alleged medical negligence death of hantavirus infected woman
- Cuba: Cholera and dengue totaling 800 cases on the island

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Links

[A-Z Index](#)

[About USAPHC](#)

[Army Public Health and Health Information Weekly Update Archives](#)

[Medical Surveillance Monthly Report](#)

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

[Request USAPHC Services](#)

[USAPHC Library](#)

[USAPHC Homepage](#)

[USAPHC Training](#)

[Contact USAPHC](#)

U.S. MILITARY

Agent Orange: Still taking a toll on vets

13 May - U.S. veterans exposed to the powerful herbicide Agent Orange had a significantly increased risk of high-grade prostate cancer, researchers found. In a cohort of men who served in Vietnam, Agent Orange exposure was associated with high-grade disease... compared with low-grade disease... The authors also found an adjusted 52% overall increased risk for prostate cancer detection... Prior research has shown exposure to the defoliant has been associated with soft tissue sarcoma, Hodgkin disease, and non-Hodgkin lymphoma. Other, but limited, research has also found ties between exposure and respiratory cancers, prostate cancer, and multiple myeloma, Garzotto and co-authors wrote.

[MedPage Today](#)

Ambulatory visits among members of the active component, U.S. Armed Forces, 2012

April 2013 - ...In 2012, there were 11,108,119 documented ambulatory visits for illnesses and injuries (ICD-9-CM: 001-999 (including relevant pregnancy V-codes). The crude annual rate of illness- and injury-related visits was 7.7 visits per person per year (p-yr). The rate of ambulatory visits for illnesses and injuries in 2012 was 8.8 percent higher than in 2010 and 24.5 percent higher than in 2008. In 2012, three major diagnostic categories accounted for the majority (56.8%) of all illness- and injury-related ambulatory visits among active component service members: musculoskeletal system/connective tissue disorders (27.8%), mental disorders (18.9%), and "signs, symptoms and ill-defined conditions" (10.2%)... The largest percentage increases from 2008 to 2012 were for mental disorders (change in ambulatory visits, 2008-12: +872,772; +71.2%), and musculoskeletal system/connective tissue disorders (change in ambulatory visits, 2008-12: +972,307; +46.0%). [Medical Surveillance Monthly Report](#)

Hagel orders retraining of sex-assault prevention officers; Army sergeant investigated

15 May - Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel on Tuesday evening ordered the armed services to immediately "re-train, re-credential and re-screen" tens of thousands of military recruiters and sexual-assault prevention officers as the revelation of another sex-crime scandal rocked the Pentagon. Hagel's order came in response to the Army's disclosure Tuesday that a sergeant first class responsible for handling sexual-assault cases at Fort Hood, Tex., had been placed under criminal investigation over allegations of abusive sexual contact and other related matters. [Washington Post](#)

Pentagon grapples with sex crimes by military recruiters

13 May - Military recruiters across the country have been caught in a string of sex-crime scandals over the past year, exposing another long-standing problem for the Defense

Department as it grapples with a crisis of sexual assault in the ranks... The extent of the problem is hard to ascertain because the Defense Department does not keep figures on recruiters accused of sex crimes. The Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps track incidents separately, but there is no uniform standard, which makes statistical comparisons difficult.

[Stars and Stripes](#)

Social media increasingly important for military families

12 May - ...Social media networks and fast Internet connections across the world are revolutionizing what it means to be deployed to a war zone or other post. Online support communities such as blogs, video chat rooms, specialized Facebook pages and the Twitter hashtag for military significant others – #MilSO – are on the rise... With smartphones becoming a more popular medium to access the Internet, researchers are only beginning to realize the effects on the military and the home front. Although some see the access to family as a positive, there is some concern that it can also be a distraction... Karney said the Pentagon, for program and policy purposes, wants to know whether such a connection strengthens family bonds and eases the post-deployment transition, or whether it might distract service members from their mission and expose fractures in their personal relationships. The truth might be a little of both, he said. [Stars and Stripes](#)

[top of page...](#)

GLOBAL

An iPhone jury-rigged as a microscope

13 May - By sticking a little \$8 lens to an iPhone with a piece of double-sided tape, a Canadian doctor has produced a microscope that works reasonably well at diagnosing intestinal worms in children... A three-millimeter ball lens was taped over the camera lens of an iPhone 4. The camera's zoom was increased to maximum, and microscope slides were pressed right up to the lens, with another bit of tape atop the samples to keep the lens clean. A pen flashlight shone light through the slide. This inexpensive arrangement did not match the accuracy of a scan of the same slides with a conventional microscope, but it did about 70 percent as well... To be useful for field surveys — to decide whether to treat a whole village with deworming medicine, for example — the device would have to be about 80 percent accurate, Dr. Bogoch said. But since smartphone cameras are improving rapidly, that may soon be feasible. [New York Times](#)

Bacterial infection in mosquitoes renders them immune to malaria parasites

9 May – Scientists... have established an inheritable bacterial infection in malaria-transmitting Anopheles mosquitoes that renders them immune to malaria parasites. Specifically, the scientists infected the mosquitoes with Wolbachia, a bacterium common among insects that previously has been shown to prevent malaria-inducing Plasmodium

parasites from developing in Anopheles mosquitoes. Before now, researchers had been unable to create mosquitoes with a stable Wolbachia infection that passed consistently from mother to offspring... A stable Wolbachia infection was maintained for 34 generations of mosquitoes, at which time the study ended. [EurekAlert!](#)

Clusters of new coronavirus add to concern

13 May - Close contact can spread the novel coronavirus hCoV-EMC, but there's still no evidence of sustained human-to-human transmission, [the World Health Organization says](#). The agency said Sunday that the French health ministry has confirmed its second case of the infection, which has caused 34 laboratory confirmed infections and 18 since September 2012. France's second case was a 50-year-old man who had shared a hospital room in northern France with a 65-year-old who fell ill after returning from Dubai. They shared the room for 3 days in late April, before the first patient's infection was confirmed on May 7. French investigators traced 120 contacts of the first patient and tested five for the virus, the WHO reported, and only the 50-year-old was infected. [MedPage Today](#)

How austerity kills

12 May - ...The correlation between unemployment and suicide has been observed since the 19th century. People looking for work are about twice as likely to end their lives as those who have jobs. In the United States, the suicide rate, which had slowly risen since 2000, jumped during and after the 2007-9 recession...

[P]eople do not inevitably get sick or die because the economy has faltered... At one extreme is Greece, which is in the middle of a public health disaster. The national health budget has been cut by 40 percent since 2008... Some 35,000 doctors, nurses and other health workers have lost their jobs. Hospital admissions have soared after Greeks avoided getting routine and preventive treatment because of long wait times and rising drug costs. Infant mortality rose by 40 percent. New H.I.V. infections more than doubled... malaria cases were reported in significant numbers for the first time since the early 1970s.

In contrast, Iceland avoided a public health disaster even though it experienced, in 2008, the largest banking crisis in history, relative to the size of its economy. [I]nstead of bailing out the banks and slashing budgets, as the I.M.F. demanded... Icelanders voted overwhelmingly to pay off foreign creditors gradually, rather than all at once through austerity. Iceland's economy has largely recovered, while Greece's teeters on collapse. No one lost health care coverage or access to medication, even as the price of imported drugs rose. There was no significant increase in suicide. [New York Times](#)

Inoculating against vaccine fears?

12 May - A new surveillance tool might help immunize communities against vaccine scares, researchers reported. An international pilot project has demonstrated that it's possible to trawl through the Internet and quickly identify places where public fear about vaccines is on the rise, according to Heidi Larson, PhD, of the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine in England, and colleagues. Larson and colleagues adapted the HealthMap automated data collection system -- usually used to track disease outbreaks -- so that it could monitor online reports about vaccines... Over a year, from May 1, 2011, to April 30,

2012, the system found 10,380 such reports from 144 countries. Of those, 31% were negative -- fears of adverse events, for instance, or distrust of the vaccine industry's motives -- and the rest were either positive or neutral. Of the 3,209 negative reports, 24% were associated with impacts on vaccine programs and disease outbreaks, 21% concerned beliefs, awareness, and perceptions, 16% discussed vaccine safety, and 16% were associated with vaccine delivery programs. [MedPage Today](#)

New rotavirus vaccine developed in India billed as effective, cheap

14 May - A new rotavirus vaccine that was developed in India with US support has been proved safe and effective in clinical trials and promises to offer a cheaper option for developing countries trying to protect children from the virus, according to press reports and US officials. The Indian government announced today that in a phase 3 trial, the vaccine, called Rotavac, reduced severe cases of diarrhea by 56% in the first year of life.

[CIDRAP News Scan](#)

Scientists clone human embryos to make stem cells

15 May - Scientists say they have, for the first time, cloned human embryos capable of producing embryonic stem cells. The accomplishment is a long-sought step toward harnessing the potential power of embryonic stem cells to treat many human diseases. But the work also raises a host of ethical concerns... The controversy arises from several factors. The experiments involve creating and then destroying human embryos for research purposes, which some find morally repugnant. The scientists also used cloning techniques, which raise concerns that the research could lead to the cloning of people. [NPR](#)

The latest buzz - eating insects can help tackle food insecurity, says FAO

13 May - While insects can be slimy, cringe-inducing creatures, often squashed on sight by humans, a new book released today by the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) says beetles, wasps and caterpillars are also an unexplored nutrition source that can help address global food insecurity... While the idea of eating a worm, grasshopper or cicada at every meal may seem strange, FAO says this has many health benefits. Insects are high in protein, fat and mineral contents. They can be eaten whole or ground into a powder or paste, and incorporated into other foods. [UN News Centre](#)

UN: Billions still will lack sanitation by 2015



13 May - By 2015, almost one-third of the global population will remain without access to improved sanitation - which is U.N.-speak for hygienic toilet facilities. That would fall well short of a key global Millennium Development Goal [MDG], which is [detailed in a new report](#)

published jointly by the World Health Organization and the U.N. Children's Fund. Bruce

Gordon, the acting coordinator for water, sanitation and health at the World Health Organization, said Monday's report was published as a wake-up call. "Now, with the period of the MDGs coming to a close - I think it is in about 1,000 days or so - we are seeing very clearly that unless we do something very differently, the sanitation goal is going to be missed." [VOA](#)

Victorian man brought back from the dead by Australian-first resuscitation technique

12 May - A Victorian man who was clinically dead for 40 minutes has been brought back to life by an Australian-first resuscitation technique. Dandenong's Colin Fiedler, 39, was one of three cardiac arrest patients brought back to life after being dead for between 40 and 60 minutes at The Alfred hospital, using two new techniques in the emergency department. The Alfred is trialling a mechanical CPR machine, which performs constant chest compressions, and a portable heart-lung machine - normally used in theatre - to keep oxygen and blood flowing to the patient's brain and vital organs... It allows doctors to diagnose the cause of the cardiac arrest and treat it, but keep blood and oxygen flowing to the vital organs and brain, which reduces the risk of permanent disability. [News.com.au](#)

WHO data shows narrowing health gap

15 May - The World Health Organization's annual statistics show progress is being made around the world in cutting child mortality - but it will miss its target of a two-thirds reduction by 2015. The number of under-fives dying fell from 12 million in 1990 to less than seven million in 2011, the data shows... The WHO says the health gap between countries is narrowing, but there are continuing inequalities in health care. Many people in low- and middle-income countries have insufficient access to medicines in the public sector, meaning they rely on the private sector, where prices can be up to 16 times higher, says the WHO... [The World Health Statistics 2013](#) report compares progress made by countries with the best health status and the worst status over two decades, from 1990. [BBC News](#)

[top of page...](#)

INFLUENZA

CDC: Weekly Influenza Surveillance Report

During week 18 (April 28-May 4, 2013), influenza activity remained low in the United States.

- **Viral Surveillance:** Of 3,048 specimens tested and reported by collaborating laboratories, 125 (4.1%) were positive for influenza.
- **Pneumonia and Influenza Mortality:** The proportion of deaths attributed to pneumonia and influenza (P&I) was below the epidemic threshold.
- **Influenza-Associated Pediatric Deaths:** One pediatric death was reported.

- Influenza-Associated Hospitalizations: A cumulative rate for the season of 44.2 laboratory-confirmed influenza-associated hospitalizations per 100,000 population was reported. Of reported hospitalizations, 50% were among adults 65 years and older.
- Geographic Spread of Influenza: 5 states reported regional influenza activity; 3 states reported local influenza activity. [FluView](#)

DoD Global Laboratory-Based Influenza Surveillance Program

- During Week 18, 19 specimens were tested from 13 locations. There were three influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 and four influenza B viruses detected.
- To date this influenza season, 3,680 specimens have been tested from 81 locations of which 1,069 were positive for influenza A (947 A(H3N2), 111 A(H1N1)pdm09, five co-infections, and six A/not subtyped).
- To date this influenza season, 360 specimens were positive for influenza B. Of these, there were 14 B/Yamagata, two B/Victoria, and two B & enterovirus co-infections. The lineage is pending or unknown for 342 specimens.
- There have been 246 other respiratory viruses isolated (60 adenovirus, 91 RSV, 86 parainfluenza, and nine enterovirus) cumulatively this season. [USAF School of Aerospace Medicine](#)

Google.org: Flu Trends

16 May – Estimates of flu activity based on certain Internet search queries indicate that the level of flu activity ranges from minimal to low throughout the world with the exception of South Africa where activity is moderate. [Google.org Flu Trends](#)

Naval Health Research Center: Febrile Respiratory Illness Surveillance Update

For week 19 ending 11 May 2013:

- Influenza: there were no new cases of NHRC laboratory-confirmed influenza (A/H3) among US military basic trainees. Influenza activity at most basic training centers decreased in March-April
- Adenovirus: Sporadic adenovirus cases at basic training centers in 2013.
- FRI surveillance at all eight U.S. military basic training centers indicated FRI rates were at or below expected values. [NHRC Febrile Respiratory Illness Surveillance Update](#)

PANDEMIC AND AVIAN INFLUENZA

H5N1 bird flu could be controlled by disinfection

09 May - The implementation of thorough, daily disinfection of the market environment as well as of traders' vehicles and equipment in only a small number of hubs can disconnect the network dramatically, preventing the spread of influenza A(H5N1), according to a new study. This would allow live bird markets to re-open without risking viral spread. [Poultry Site](#)

Death toll rises to 36 in H7N9 outbreak

15 May – The first patient in China's Hunan province with confirmed H7N9 influenza has died, lifting the outbreak's fatality count to 36, according to official and media reports today. The patient is a 64-year-old woman who died yesterday morning at a hospital in Shaoyang, about 20 days after her illness was detected, according to a report from Xinhua, China's state news agency... The number of new H7N9 infections has tailed off in recent week, with the latest one reported May 7, which edged the number of cases to 131. However, the death toll continues to rise, because many of the previously confirmed patients are still hospitalized, battling the often serious complications of the disease, which can include acute respiratory distress syndrome and organ failure. [CIDRAP](#)

[top of page...](#)

VETERINARY/FOOD SAFETY

FDA releases food defense planning software tool

13 May - The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) yesterday released a computer software program to help food companies and retailers with risk assessment and planning for protecting their products from intentional contamination. Called the Food Defense Plan Builder, the program walks owners and operators through crafting a customized plan that reflects the FDA's guidance documents and incorporates the agency's other related planning resources. Food defense plans are voluntary, and the FDA recommends them as a way to help protect the nation's food supply against biological, chemical, and radiological attacks. [CIDRAP News Scan](#)

Illnesses in U.S. on the rise as a result of decline in foreign food inspections

9 May - More Americans get sick every year as a result of food-borne pathogens. The reason: inspections at foreign food factories shipping food and food ingredients to the United States have declined in recent years, and border inspections of food coming into the country could be next to be reduced. Experts say this decline in inspections is especially worrisome since Americans consume more imported food – or food made with imported

ingredients – every year, and foreign food production and processing facilities often do not meet U.S. sanitation and hygiene standards. [Homeland Security News Wire](#)

Kazakhstan: OIE - new FMD outbreak results in quarantine measures

15 May - Quarantine measures have been imposed in the east of the country following the confirmation of a foot and mouth disease outbreak in the village of Akshoka. Notification was received from Dr Taitubayev, Chairman of the Veterinary Control and Supervision who confirmed a new outbreak of foot and mouth disease in the Akshokinsky region in Urdzarsky. The outbreak, on farms with cattle, sheep and goats, has resulted in 40 cases of FMD in cows which were destroyed. [Pig Site](#)

Study finds an increase in arsenic levels in chicken

11 May - Researchers at Johns Hopkins University said they found levels of arsenic in chicken that exceeded amounts that occur naturally, and warned that they could lead to a small increase in the risk of cancer for consumers over a lifetime. The levels were well below danger levels set in federal safety standards, though the researchers pointed out that those were first established in the 1940s. And the chicken samples tested were from 2010 and 2011, before sales of the drug that researchers say was a major driver of the elevated arsenic levels, roxarsone, were suspended. A spokeswoman for the chicken industry said the levels found by researchers were low, but the researchers contend that the elevated levels are important because the Food and Drug Administration has not banned the drug, and it is still being sold abroad. [New York Times](#)

U.S. report quantifies risk of listeria in deli foods

10 May - Some simple safety techniques for food handling and preparation could help delicatessens and other food stores cut the risk of customers developing the potentially deadly foodborne illness of listeriosis, according to a U.S. government report released on Friday. The report by the Department of Agriculture and the Food and Drug Administration, recommended strict control of temperature during refrigeration, better cleaning and sanitizing of food contact surfaces and wearing gloves while serving customers. [Reuters](#)

[top of page...](#)

WELLNESS

Actress's move shines light on preventive mastectomy

14 May - Cancer experts said Angelina Jolie's decision to have a preventive double mastectomy because of a heightened genetic risk for breast cancer should encourage women to look into their family history for the disease. But they cautioned against the need for all women to routinely order a genetic test for breast cancer and noted that there are

less-aggressive options to consider for those who do test positive for a genetic mutation tied to breast cancer. [Wall Street Journal](#)

Bed rest no help for women at risk of early delivery

14 May - Having a short cervix increases a pregnant woman's chance of delivering prematurely, and a new study suggests going on bed rest does nothing to allay that risk. Researchers found that women were more than twice as likely to give birth before 37 weeks when doctors told them to restrict some combination of their work, non-work and sexual activities... Although the findings don't support bed rest for women with a short cervix, it's unclear why restricting activity would increase the chance of premature birth, researchers said. [Reuters](#)

Biological clue to why women live longer than men

15 May - Women live longer than men partly because their immune systems age more slowly, a study suggests. As the body's defences weaken over time, men's increased susceptibility to disease shortens their lifespans, say Japanese scientists. Tests of immune function could give an indication of true biological age, they report in [Immunity & Ageing](#) journal. The immune system protects the body from infection and cancer, but causes disease when not properly regulated. [BBC News](#)

Kidney problems linked to traffic fumes



14 May - Living close to a busy road may increase your risk of developing kidney problems, research suggests. The US investigators who discovered a link in 1,100 patients believe traffic pollution could harm the arteries that supply the kidneys. Experts already know that long-term exposure to exhaust fumes increases the risk of vascular diseases such as heart attacks and stroke. [BBC News](#)

Number of abused U.S. children unchanged since 2008

The number of U.S. children who were exposed to violence, crime and abuse in 2011 was essentially unchanged from 2008, according to a new government survey. Researchers who interviewed 4,503 children and teenagers in 2011 found that two in five children reported being physically assaulted in the previous year, and one in every 10 kids was injured by that abuse. [Reuters](#)

Teen drivers: TXTing tops risky behaviors

13 May - In a national survey of high school students nearly half of the teen responders said they text while driving, a practice that appears to increase the likelihood of other risky behaviors, including drinking and driving. In a national survey of teens 16 or older almost half of the responders (44.5%) said they had texted while driving at least once in the previous month, according to Emily O'Malley Olsen, MSPH, of the Centers for Disease

Control and Prevention in Atlanta, and colleagues reported in Pediatrics. Compared with teens who did not text while behind the wheel, texting teen drivers were more likely to drink and drive (prevalence ratio: 5.33, 95% CI 4.32-6.59), accept a ride from a drinking driver (PR: 1.74, 95% CI 1.57-1.93), and fail to use seat belts (PR: 1.16, 95% CI 1.07-1.26). [MedPage Today](#)

Ultra-low salt intake may not boost health: U.S. panel

14 May - Americans at high risk for heart problems who have been told for years to sharply cut salt from their diet may not actually benefit from ultra-low sodium diets and could even face some harm, an independent panel of health experts said on Tuesday. The influential Institute of Medicine, in a report to U.S. health officials, reviewed the latest data on the link between salt intake and health. While blacks, diabetics and others more likely to have heart problems are urged to slash their salt intake, the IOM review showed there was limited evidence such a diet helped, and that too little salt might increase the risk of heart trouble.

[Reuters](#)

'Weight loss gut bacterium' found

14 May – Bacteria that live in the gut have been used to reverse obesity and Type-2 diabetes in animal studies. Research, published in Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, showed that a broth containing a single species of bacteria could dramatically alter the health of obese mice. It is thought to change the gut lining and the way food is absorbed. Similar tests now need to take place in people to see if the same bacteria can be used to shed the pounds. [BBC News](#)

[top of page...](#)

USAFRICOM

Niger offers cash reward to help eradicate Guinea worm

14 May - Niger is offering cash rewards to anyone reporting a case of Guinea worm as part of efforts to permanently eradicate the parasitic disease in the impoverished West African nation, the health ministry said. Though it once afflicted around 3.5 million people annually across Asia and Africa, according to the U.S.-based Carter Center, Guinea worm disease is now on the verge of being eradicated worldwide. Niger had been due to join the list of countries free from the disease last year before an influx of some 60,000 refugees fleeing fighting in neighboring Mali where the parasite is present. Anyone reporting a case of Guinea worm, confirmed as such by health authorities, would be offered a reward of 20,000 CFA francs (\$39.58). [Reuters](#)

Slim in Sudan: Female fleshiness loses its allure

13 May - For centuries, female fleshiness has been prized in Sudan, with women encouraged to be plump. But many Sudanese women now aspire to being slim - and gyms are taking off in a big way... Obesity is a big - and growing - problem in Sudan, and health concerns are one motivation for women to work out. [BBC News](#)

Somalia: Wild poliovirus

11 May - An investigation has been launched into a preliminary report of the detection of a wild poliovirus type 1 (WPV1) in the Banadir region of Somalia. This is the first WPV to be reported from Somalia since 25 March 2007. The virus was isolated from specimens collected on 21 April 2013 from a 32-month-old girl, who became ill due to acute flaccid paralysis on 18 April 2013, and from specimens collected from 3 of her close contacts. An investigation team is on site; genetic sequencing of the virus is on-going to determine its origin. The preliminary results of these investigations will be reported as soon as possible. Given that substantial areas of central and southern Somalia have not conducted vaccination activities since 2009, the confirmation of WPV circulation would constitute a serious national and international risk to public health. [WHO](#)

South Africa: Over 20 boys die in circumcision rituals

16 May - More than 20 South African boys have died over the past week during coming of age rituals, police said on Thursday, and they blamed botched circumcisions as the likely cause of death. Northern Mpumalanga province's police department has opened 22 murder cases but no arrests have been made so far, spokesman Colonel Leonard Hlathi said. Every year in South Africa, boys aged 10 to 15 years from several of the country's tribal groups are circumcised in traditional "initiation rituals." [Reuters](#)

Uganda grapples with paediatric vaccine shortages

14 May - Ugandan children are going unimmunized as the country grapples with persistent and widespread vaccine shortages, the result of insufficient funds and inefficient procurement and supply systems, officials say... Most of the health centres across the country are facing critical shortages of vaccines to protect against tuberculosis, polio, tetanus, diphtheria, rotavirus and pneumonia, putting children at risk of largely preventable diseases. [IRIN](#)

[top of page...](#)

USCENTCOM

Afghanistan: Taliban pledge support for polio campaign

15 May - The Taliban in Afghanistan say they will now support programs aimed at eradicating polio in the country. In a statement released earlier this week in Afghanistan, the Taliban said they asked members "not to create any kind of trouble" for health workers, but would not tolerate foreigners participating in the eradication program. [CBC News](#)

Jordan: Recording about 151 TB infection among Syrian refugees in the camp of Zaatari



15 May – The director of the national program to combat tuberculosis in Jordan, Khaled Abu Rumman, a higher incidence of tuberculosis in Syria, where the 40 injured per 100 thousand people, which is high when compared to the rate of infection in Jordan, amounting to about 5 cases per 100 thousand people. Revealing that the number of Syrian refugees suffering from tuberculosis in the Zaatari camp, amounted to about 151 injured until the first Monday. [Economic Forum](#)

Saudi Arabia: Novel coronavirus infection – WHO update

15 May - The Ministry of Health in Saudi Arabia has informed WHO of an additional two laboratory-confirmed cases with infection of the novel coronavirus (nCoV). The two patients are health care workers who were exposed to patients with confirmed nCoV. The first patient is a 45-year-old man who became ill on 2 May 2013 and is currently in a critical condition. The second patient is a 43-year-old woman with a coexisting health condition, who became ill on 8 May 2013 and is in a stable condition. Although health care associated transmission has been observed before with nCoV (in Jordan in April 2012), this is the first time health care workers have been diagnosed with nCoV infection after exposure to patients. Health care facilities that provide care for patients with suspected nCoV infection should take appropriate measures to decrease the risk of transmission of the virus to other patients and health care workers. Health care facilities are reminded of the importance of systematic implementation of infection prevention and control (IPC). Since the beginning of May 2013 to date, a total of 21 patients, including nine deaths, have been reported from the outbreak primarily linked to a health care facility in the Eastern part of Saudi Arabia. The government is conducting ongoing investigation into the outbreak. [WHO](#)

[top of page...](#)

USEUCOM

Hospital probes East German ‘human guinea pig’ drug tests



14 May - A top Berlin hospital plans to investigate the conduct of drug trials in the former East Germany amid allegations that some patients were used as human guinea pigs. Communist officials allowed Western firms to test new drugs on about 50,000 people, often without their knowledge, the news magazine Der Spiegel says. Now the Charite hospital says it will stop

shredding old patient records and investigate what happened. The tests took place in the 1980s. [BBC](#)

Northern Greece: Re-emergence of animal rabies and subsequent human exposure, October 2012 – March 2013

2 May - Greece has been rabies-free since 1987 with no human cases since 1970. During 2012 to 2013, rabies has re-emerged in wild and domestic animals in northern Greece. By end March 2013, rabies was diagnosed in 17 animals including 14 red foxes, two shepherd dogs and one cat; 104 subsequent human exposures required post-exposure prophylaxis according to the World Health Organization criteria. Human exposures occurred within 50 km radius of a confirmed rabies case in a wild or domestic animal, and most frequently stray dogs were involved. [Eurosurveillance](#)

[top of page...](#)

USNORTHCOM

U.S.: At least 6 confirmed dead in Texas tornado outbreak

16 May – A rash of tornados whirled through small communities in North Texas overnight, leaving at least six people dead, dozens more injured and hundreds homeless. The violent spring storm threw trailers onto cars, blew windows from houses and scattered bodies far from their homes. [Duluth News Tribune](#)

U.S.: Chemical depots fall under a patchwork of rules

9 May - ...Buckley Powder had as much as 90,000 pounds of ammonium nitrate in bins at this Central Texas plant — stored, according to Howard Wichter, Buckley's chief financial officer, under conditions in which "nothing can happen to it"... The facility is one of more than 110 across the state that report storing 10,000 pounds of ammonium nitrate or more at a time. Some companies hold it in powder form, like the depot in West, which in 2012 reported storing 540,000 pounds of the chemical. Others store it in a liquid solution, which is a much less volatile form, said Charles C. Mitchell, a professor of soil sciences at Auburn University. The responsibility for overseeing these facilities varies. Some, like Buckley, which supplies materials used for blasting at rock quarries and construction sites, are inspected by the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. Others, like Adair Grain, which owned the West storage site, are subject to inconsistent scrutiny by a long list of state and federal agencies. [New York Times](#)

U.S.: FDA approves labels with lower doses for sleep drugs like Ambien

14 May - The Food and Drug Administration approved label changes incorporating lower dosages for sleep medications containing zolpidem, a drug that can continue to affect patients' mental alertness even a day after its use... The agency said patients who take zolpidem extended-release drugs, such as Ambien CR, should not drive or take part in activities that require complete mental alertness the next day. The FDA in January asked zolpidem manufacturers... to reduce recommended dosages on the drugs' labels. The regulator also said that women were more susceptible to the risk as they eliminated the drug from the blood more slowly than men. [Fox News](#)

U.S.: Final 2012 West Nile virus update:

15 May - Last year ranked as the second worst outbreak of neuroinvasive, non-neuroinvasive, and total West Nile virus (WNV) disease cases reported since WNV was first detected in the United States in 1999. The largest number of WNV cases was reported during 2003. In 2012, all 48 contiguous states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico reported WNV infections in people, birds, or mosquitoes. A total of 5,674 cases of WNV disease in people, including 286 deaths, were reported to CDC. Of these, 2,873 (51%) were classified as neuroinvasive disease (such as meningitis or encephalitis) and 2,801 (49%) were classified as non-neuroinvasive disease. [CDC](#)

U.S.: Judge denies FDA bid to stay 'morning-after' pill ruling

10 May - A federal judge in New York on Friday declined to temporarily halt a court order directing the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to make emergency contraception available over the counter to girls of all ages. [Reuters](#)

U.S.: Ovarian cancer fall sped up as hormone use dropped

15 May - Ovarian cancer rates in the U.S. began to decline faster in 2002 around the time many older women went off hormone replacement therapy, according to a new study. That year, the Women's Health Initiative (WHI) found that estrogen or estrogen plus progestin hormone therapy, prescribed for the symptoms of menopause, was linked to an increased risk of breast cancer, stroke and heart attack. [Reuters](#)

U.S.: Tick-borne disease threat is growing

15 May - ... According to veterinary parasitologist Dr. Michael Dryden, the tick population in America has exploded in recent years... Is there truly more tick-related disease today than, say, a decade ago, or have veterinarians simply become better at discovery and diagnosis? "Now, there's a good question," says Dryden. "There's no doubt that the new testing for tick disease is helpful. But ticks are flourishing." So, why are there so many? "Look at this year's

weather," says Dryden. "Throughout most of the nation, it was wet. Much of the country experienced record rain. Now, it's warming up, and all after a relatively mild winter. We'll see ticks from about now to well into the fall and even into early winter." Weather isn't the only factor. Wildlife numbers are rising. Animals like deer and fox carry ticks from more wooded places right into our backyards. [Chicago Tribune](#)

U.S.: Spinal and paraspinal infections associated with contaminated methylprednisolone acetate injections — Michigan, 2012–2013

17 May - As of May 6, 2013, Michigan had reported 167 (52%) of the 320 paraspinal or spinal infections without meningitis associated with the 2012–2013 fungal meningitis outbreak nationally... Early experience with patients who received diagnoses of localized spinal or paraspinal infections despite minimal or no new symptoms and no prior diagnosis of meningitis prompted clinicians at St. Joseph Mercy Hospital to use an expanded diagnostic approach, offering spinal MRIs to patients who had received injections but had no symptoms of infection. Repeat MRIs were offered every 2–3 weeks to all persons who had received injections whether or not they had previously undergone care. Thus, increased case finding might partly explain the increased spinal or paraspinal infections in Michigan. Another possible explanation for the higher number of spinal or paraspinal infections could be that the vials of MPA shipped to Michigan had higher levels of contamination with fungus, predisposing patients to localized infection or tissue reaction. [Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report](#)

[top of page...](#)

USPACOM

Bangladesh: Non-communicable diseases account for half of all adult female mortality

14 May - While global attention has for decades been focused on reducing maternal mortality, population-based data on other causes of death among women of reproductive age has been virtually non-existent. A study conducted by researchers at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health found that non-communicable diseases accounted for 48 percent of 1,107 investigated female deaths in rural Bangladesh between 2002 and 2007. The findings lend urgency to review global health priorities to address neglected and potentially fatal non-communicable diseases affecting rural women in South Asia. [Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health News](#)

China's prostitutes routinely extorted, abused by police, report says



13 May - Police raids on brothels in China have a pattern, sex workers say, often occurring a few days ahead of politically sensitive events or whenever someone in government orders an anti-pornography campaign to please the leadership. It's during these times, the workers say, that their already miserable jobs grow more perilous with some police officers demanding steep bribes or sex, beating them, or locking them up for as long as two years without trial. This is the life of prostitutes in modern China — a result of the Communist Party's long discomfort with sex, widespread corruption among authorities and rigid policies that put an already fragile population at even greater risk, according to a report slated to be released Tuesday by Human Rights Watch... The report contends that the government's practices have worsened the danger and health risks prostitutes face, and that it has done little to reduce the growing sex trade — allegations echoed by experts and sex workers in recent interviews. [Washington Post](#)
[top of page...](#)

USSOUTHCOM

Chile: PDI investigates alleged medical negligence death of hantavirus infected woman

15 May - A 38 year old woman, identified as Maria Reyes Pinto, died of hantavirus in Linares Hospital, becoming the second case which ended fatally in the Maule region, as confirmed by the ISP. On this, the Homicide Linares PDI investigates a complaint of alleged medical negligence related to his death, which occurred by acute respiratory failure after consultation in the emergency room four times and where she was diagnosed different pathologies. [Cooperativa.cl](#)

Cuba: Cholera and dengue totaling 800 cases on the island

14 May - At least twenty people suffering from cholera in Cuba. Cases were reported from all provinces, except the Isle of Youth and Sancti Spiritus, said a doctor from the island, on condition of anonymity... At weekly meetings, [Public Health Minister] Morales Ojeda insists on calling these cases "digestive transmitted diseases", even though the doctors know that this is merely a euphemism for the spread of cholera and dengue, said the doctor, who also warned the occurrence of hepatitis. Independent journalist Ivan Garcia reported contact Marti News of the existence of more than 300 cases of hepatitis throughout the island, especially type B, according to reports from its sources in Public Health. [Marti Noticias](#)

[top of page...](#)

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The *Army Public Health Weekly Update* is published by the Health Information Operations Program, Deputy Chief of Staff for Communication, United States Army Public Health Command.

