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U.S. MILITARY

More than half of Army spouses in survey say they are stressed, overwhelmed and tired, report shows

7 October- A majority of Army spouses reported feeling stressed, overwhelmed or tired in the past year. Such were the results of a new Rand Corp. study evaluating challenges Army spouses encounter, attitudes they have toward the Army and how spouses use resources available to them. "When asked to indicate the issues they faced in the past year, Army spouses' most frequently chosen issues were their own feelings of being stressed, overwhelmed, or tired, followed by their soldier's feelings of being stressed, overwhelmed, or tired," the report said. The report was based on a survey completed by more than 8,500 Army spouses. The survey broke down a total of nine categories that Army spouses could identify as problem domains: military practices and culture; work-life balance; household management; financial or legal problems; health care system problems; relationship problems; child well-being; their own well-being and their soldier's well-being. Within those problem domains, respondents were faced with a total of 96 targeted issues and could select between 8 to 14 specific issues they had experienced in the past year. According to the report, nearly 56 percent of spouses reported feeling stressed, overwhelmed or tired — an issue that fell into the personal well-being problem area. That number dropped slightly to 49.5 percent when taking into account their soldier's stress levels. The report also shed insight on which problem areas Army spouses identify as impacting them the most. If spouses' specific issues spanned across a series of problem domains, they were subsequently asked to identify their top two problem domains that they believed were "most significant" for them. [Army Times](#)

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U.S. Army is treating two soldiers for vaping-related lung illness

9 October- The U.S. Army is treating two active-duty soldiers in its medical facilities for vaping-related lung illness, officials said days after most of the military banned e-cigarette sales at base exchanges. The Army is the first branch of the U.S. military to report cases of an ailment that has been linked to at least 23 deaths in the U.S., according to federal and state officials. The illness has affected more than 1,000 people nationwide and in most cases has been linked to vaping products containing THC, the psychoactive compound in marijuana. Marijuana use is prohibited among service members. Army officials said they are still investigating the cases of the two soldiers and haven't determined the substances they used. They declined to discuss further details, citing privacy concerns. Exchanges on Army, Air Force, and Navy and Coast Guard bases removed all e-cigarettes from their stores under a ban that went into effect Oct. 1. The e-cigarette ban at military shops is broader than those enacted in several states, which have barred the sale only of certain flavors to curb a rise in underage vaping. The Marine Corps Exchange is awaiting legal guidance from the

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Scrub Typhus

Scrub typhus, also known as brush typhus, is a disease caused by *Orientia tsutsugamushi* bacteria. The disease is transmitted by the bite of infected, immature mites (chiggers) primarily of the genus *Leptotrombidium*. The mites are typically found in grassy or scrubby vegetation and in areas that have undergone clearing, reforested areas, overgrown terrain, oil palm estates, and new settlements. Habitats may include sandy beaches, mountain deserts, cultivated rice fields, and rain forests. Scrub typhus is a severe bacterial disease that can cause debilitating symptoms and even result in death within 2 weeks if left untreated.



Secretary of the Navy and the Pentagon on the matter and is still selling the products, a spokesman said. Major retailers including Walmart Inc., Walgreens Boots Alliance Inc. and Kroger Co. , have stopped selling all e-cigarettes, citing the lung illness and regulatory uncertainty. E-cigarette companies have targeted troops in recent years, pitching their products as an alternative to cigarettes. A large number of troops begin smoking during their service, according to the Food and Drug Administration, and veterans show higher rates of tobacco use than the general population. [The Wall Street Journal](#)

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GLOBAL

3 Keys to outbreak preparedness in the climate change era

27 September- At the start of the UN General Assembly this week in New York, UN Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed and the WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus stepped into an “air pollution pod” and visibly struggled to breathe. This is often our first thought of climate change—the impact we can feel. However, it is also driving changes that are harder to notice, including small drifts in wildlife population and habitats that are altering infectious disease transmission. As temperatures change, many species are on the move. I worry about the impact of vectors, such as mosquitoes and ticks that are extending their reach into new areas. While the links between climate change and infectious diseases are complex and not yet fully understood, we have already begun to record an increased transmission of zoonotic diseases. We have seen this with Lassa fever and monkeypox in West Africa, Ebola virus disease in the Democratic Republic of Congo and others. I was heartened to see my President, Muhammadu Buhari, speak at an UNGA event where he announced initiatives to reverse the negative effects of climate change in Nigeria. Until now, many have appeared to be paralyzed by the enormity of the challenge. To wake up from our paralysis and prepare for the impact of climate change on infectious disease outbreak preparedness and response, there are 3 critical steps I believe we must all take. [Global Health Now](#)

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Chemical burns from vaping? Lung damage resembles mustard gas exposure, Mayo Clinic doctors say

5 October- Doctors from the Mayo Clinic analyzed lung tissue samples from patients who became ill after vaping and determined the damage to their lungs resembles chemical burns, such as those from mustard gas, a chemical agent used during World War I. Samples from 17 patients – 13 men and four women – were studied. All had a history of vaping nicotine or marijuana products; about 70 percent had a history of the latter. The findings were published Wednesday in *The New England Journal of Medicine*. “These injuries most closely resemble toxic chemical fume injuries, which are thankfully pretty uncommon, but

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we have certainly seen a similar pattern before in those situations. An industrial accident with a toxic chemical spill, for example, or exposure to poisonous gas," Dr. Brandon T. Larsen, a surgical pathologist at the Mayo Clinic in Scottsdale, Ariz., told Fox News. Larsen emphasized he's never seen anything like this with cigarette smoking or traditional marijuana cigarette smoking. [Fox News](#)

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CWD confirmed in Wyoming deer near elk feeding area

7 October- The Wyoming Game and Fish Department (WGFD) last week confirmed chronic wasting disease (CWD), a fatal neurodegenerative prion disease that affects cervids, in a mule deer west of the Continental Divide near Bondurant, Wyoming. "Seeing a deer test positive for CWD west of the continental divide again is concerning," said Scott Edberg, deputy chief of wildlife for the WGFD in a press release. "Game and Fish is always concerned about the spread of CWD." A hunter harvested the deer—part of the Sublette mule deer herd—in an area near elk feeding grounds and not far from the National Elk Refuge. To date, CWD has not been detected in the National Elk Refuge. Though CWD is more common in Wyoming's deer population than in its elk population, the Game and Fish Department said it was taking several steps to prevent CWD transmission in elk feeding grounds, including increasing surveillance and delaying supplementary feeding into the winter to discourage transmission between large groups of animals. "When CWD is found on elk feedgrounds, we will all be faced with some difficult discussions regarding elk management in western Wyoming," said Brad Hovinga, the Jackson regional wildlife supervisor. "Game and Fish has been working to lay the groundwork to minimize impacts and be prepared, but we realize this is a serious wildlife dilemma where solutions will require broad public support and a collaborative approach that includes help from partner agencies, elected officials, and sportspersons, the general public, and local communities." The WGFD said any animal exhibiting potential symptoms of CWD will be lethally removed.

[CIDRAP](#)

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FDA warns consumers to stop using THC vaping products

4 October- The US Food and Drug Administration is warning consumers to stop using THC vaping products as investigations into vaping-related lung injuries and deaths continue. In a statement released Friday, FDA Acting Commissioner Dr. Ned Sharpless said that the ongoing outbreak of vaping-related lung injuries continues to underscore the need "to gather critical information and provide consumers with actionable information to help best protect themselves and their loved ones." "We're strengthening our message to the public in an updated consumer alert stating that they should not use vaping products containing tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), the primary psychoactive component of the cannabis plant," Sharpless said in the statement. "Additionally, consumers who choose to use any vaping products should not modify or add any substances such as THC or other oils to products

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purchased in stores and should not purchase any vaping products, including those containing THC, off the street or from other illicit channels," he said, adding that "according to recent findings, most of the patients impacted by these illnesses reported using THC-containing products, suggesting THC products are playing a role in the these illnesses."

[CNN](#)

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Kroger, Walgreens to stop sales of e-cigarettes amid U.S. vaping crackdown

7 October- Kroger Co and Walgreens Boots Alliance Inc. said on Monday they would stop selling e-cigarettes at their stores, amid heightened regulatory scrutiny of the product and reports of lung disease and some deaths linked to vaping. Their move comes weeks after Walmart Inc. said it was pulling the plug on e-cigarette sales, citing growing federal, state and local regulatory complexity and uncertainty. E-cigarettes and other vaping products have been linked to a mysterious lung illness that is reported to have led to 18 deaths as of last week, with the number of confirmed and probable cases of the condition exceeding 1,000, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Kroger said it would discontinue sales of e-cigarettes at its stores and fuel centers after selling through its current inventory. Walgreens said it had decided to stop selling e-cigarette products at its U.S. stores as the CDC, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and other health officials continue to examine the issue. The drugstore chain, which earlier this year set a minimum age to sell tobacco products at 21 years, said the decision was also reflective of developing regulations in a growing number of states and municipalities. New York and Michigan have already banned the sales of flavored vaping products, while the Trump administration has announced plans to remove all flavored e-cigarettes from store shelves as officials warned that sweet flavors had drawn millions of children into nicotine addiction. Kroger operates more than 2,700 stores, including over 1,500 fuel stations, while Walgreens runs nearly 10,000 drugstores in the United States. [Reuters](#)

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Pet turtles linked to latest Salmonella outbreak

10 October- Federal health officials report investigating a Salmonella Oranienburg outbreak linked to contact with pet turtles. To date, 21 people have been infected with the outbreak strain from 13 states, including seven requiring hospitalization. No deaths have been reported. Interviews with ill people indicate that contact with pet turtles is the likely source of this outbreak. The investigation is ongoing. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) says any turtle can carry Salmonella bacteria even if they look healthy and clean. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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Polio 2019: A disappointing step backwards

6 October- In this video, I look at a public health situation the World Health Organization Emergency Committee says they are “gravely concerned” about and that’s the wild poliovirus increase reported in 2019. The situation in Afghanistan is not good and in Pakistan it’s particularly concerning. Will Nigeria and the African Region be certified WPV free next year? All depends. I also talk about the spread of circulating Vaccine-derived polioviruses (cVDPVs) across Africa and parts of Asia, which is also very concerning. The issue of low vaccination rates is addressed with a spotlight on the Philippines. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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Vaping illnesses top 1,000, C.D.C. says

3 October- Illnesses and deaths linked to vaping continue to increase around the country, now totaling 1,080 cases and 19 deaths, health officials said on Thursday. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said that cases had occurred in 48 states and the United States Virgin Islands. This week, Nebraska, Alabama, Delaware, Connecticut, Virginia and New Jersey reported deaths, which brought the total to 19 in 16 states. The new case count reflects an increase of 275 in just the past week. About half of the 275 were hospitalized in the past two weeks, and the rest were older cases whose link to vaping was just recognized, Dr. Anne Schuchat, principal deputy director of the C.D.C., said during a news briefing. She described the outbreak as “continuing at a brisk pace,” emphasized that the illnesses were serious and life-threatening and called the proportion of patients hospitalized and in intensive care “just terrible.” “We know that additional deaths are under investigation,” Dr. Schuchat said. About 70 percent of the patients were male, 80 percent under 35 years old and 16 percent younger than 18, she said. Among the patients who died, the median age was about 50, and the proportion of women was higher than in the overall group of patients. [The New York Times](#)

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Vaping illness update: FDA warns public to stop using tetrahydrocannabinol (THC)-containing vaping products and any vaping products obtained off the street

4 October- In its continued efforts to protect the public, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is strengthening its warning to consumers to stop using vaping products containing THC amid more than 1,000 reports of lung injuries—including some resulting in deaths—following the use of vaping products. The FDA is working closely with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), as well as state and local public health partners to investigate these illnesses as quickly as possible. While the work by federal and state health officials to identify more information about the products used, where they were obtained, and what substances they contain is ongoing, the FDA is

providing members of the public with additional information to help protect themselves. Majority of the samples tested by the states or by the FDA related to this investigation have been identified as vaping products containing THC. Through this investigation, we have also found most of the patients impacted by these illnesses reported using THC-containing products, suggesting THC vaping products play a role in the outbreak. [U.S Food & Drug administration](#)

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Virtual reality PTSD treatment has 'big impact' for veterans

1 October- Virtual reality could be used to help military veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) who have struggled with mainstream treatment. It involves patients walking on a treadmill in front of a screen which projects images depicting the type of trauma experienced. A two-year trial found some patients could see almost a 40% improvement in their symptoms. One veteran said it had given him the "biggest impact" out of any treatment. Matt Neve, who is originally from Scotland but now lives in Gower, Swansea, joined the RAF in 2001 at the age of 16. Two years later, he was deployed to Iraq. His role in the war was as a driver, which left him responsible for helping to pick up wounded soldiers. He said: "When you're put into an environment like that when you're seeing guys that have been catastrophically injured, some have been killed, it's quite difficult to describe. "You have all these emotions flowing through you - fear, upset, anxiety - and it all hits you in one wave and it took its toll on me constantly seeing that on a daily basis. "It eats away at you so much that something's got to give in the end, and unfortunately for me it was my mental health. [BBC News](#)

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INFLUENZA

WHO: Influenza Update

30 September 2019 - Update number 351, based on data up to 15 September 2019:

- In the temperate zones of the southern hemisphere, influenza activity was low in most countries, except Chile where a second wave of influenza activity of predominately B viruses was reported.
- In the Caribbean, and tropical South American countries, influenza activity was low overall.
- In Central American countries, influenza activity continued to increase in El Salvador.
- In tropical Africa, influenza activity was low across reporting countries.
- In Southern Asia, influenza activity was low across reporting countries except in Bhutan where influenza activity continued to be reported above alert threshold.
- In South East Asia, influenza activity was low in most reporting countries and continued to

be reported at moderate level in Malaysia and Myanmar.

-In the temperate zone of the northern hemisphere, influenza activity remained at inter-seasonal levels overall.

-Worldwide, seasonal influenza A viruses accounted for the majority of detections. [WHO top of page...](#)

VETERINARY/FOOD SAFETY

Coconut product from The Philippines recalled for Salmonella

8 October- Hayward, CA-based Global Commodities Corporation, has recalled one lot of Buenas Brand frozen grated coconut, a product of The Philippines. California Department of Public Health testing found Salmonella may be contaminating the coconut product. Northern California retail locations received the coconut starting in February 2018. Global Commodities ordered the recall in cooperation with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Here's the identifying information for the recalled product:

PRODUCT NAME: GRATED COCONUT

BRAND NAME: BUENAS, DESCRIPTION: FROZEN GRATED COCONUT,

UPC: 4806514650443,

LOT NUMBER: 10BAAGA; 16 oz.

PACKAGING: PLASTIC BAG,

ORIGIN: PRODUCT OF THE PHILIPPINES. [Food Safety News](#)

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Infant formula recalled over rare Cronobacter spp. Contamination

7 October- Loblaw Companies Limited has recalled President's Choice brand Lower Iron milk-based powdered infant formula from store shelves due to possible Cronobacter spp. contamination. Cronobacter is a newly described bacterial genus that includes opportunistic pathogens formerly known as Enterobacter sakazakii...Anyone who becomes ill from consuming this product should call their doctor. Check to see if you have the recalled product in your home. Recalled products should be thrown out or returned to the store where they were purchased. Food contaminated with Cronobacter may not look or smell spoiled but can still make you sick. Although Cronobacter is not commonly linked to human illness, in rare cases, it can cause serious or fatal infections. Cronobacter can cause rare bloodstream and central nervous system infections and has been associated with severe intestinal infection (necrotizing enterocolitis) and blood poisoning (sepsis), especially in newborns. There have been no reported illnesses associated with the consumption of this product. [Food Safety News](#)

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String of recalls implicate unknown volume of beef, veal products

7 October- For the second time officials are expanding a recall of beef and veal products, adding more than a dozen products, in a massive undertaking related to a government investigation into E. coli contamination. Initially Metro Ontario Inc. recalled a variety of products including ground beef, steaks and veal. But, the updates name "industry" as the recalling entity. "Industry is recalling various raw beef and raw veal products from the marketplace due to possible E. coli O157:H7 contamination," according to the recall notice posted by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency. "Distributors, retailers and food service establishments such as hotels, restaurants, cafeterias, hospitals and nursing homes should not sell or use the recalled products described below. "This recall was triggered by the CFIA's inspection activities. The CFIA is conducting a food safety investigation, which may lead to the recall of other products. If other high-risk products are recalled, the CFIA will notify the public through updated food recall warnings." None of the recall notices specify what the inspection activities were that prompted the recalls. The CFIA also did not post any product photos or labels with the recalls. The agency did not report the volume of meat implicated in the recalls. There have been no reported illnesses associated with the consumption of these products. [Food Safety News](#)

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Three dead in Dutch Listeria outbreak

5 October- Dutch authorities have linked three deaths because of Listeria to meat products from one company. Of 20 patients with listeriosis, officials reported it was almost certain that they had been infected via meat products from a company called Offerman in the past two years. One woman also had a miscarriage. The source of infections was traced by the RIVM (National Institute for Public Health and the Environment) and NVWA (Dutch Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority). RIVM found a certain type of Listeria in several patients. The agency then contacted the NVWA to compare this with DNA data from food and company sampling. After a match was found for a sample, follow-up work was started by the NVWA. A total of 80 patients with Listeria infection are reported to RIVM every year.

[Food Safety News](#)

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WELLNESS

Does eating too much fiber cause mineral deficiencies?

4 October- ...The recommended daily allowance for fiber is around 30 grams per day. The average intake in the U.S. is somewhere in the neighborhood of 15 grams per day. So the typical American would need to double their fiber intake to meet the recommended amount. But is the recommended amount of fiber too low? The Recommended Daily Allowance for fiber was set decades ago and was based on research showing that fiber was beneficial for digestive health, weight management, and can also play a role in moderating cholesterol levels. Fiber from foods absorbs water and takes up a lot of space. This helps with weight management by filling up the stomach and making us feel fuller on fewer calories. Fiber also binds to certain food elements, such as cholesterol. That means that as the food moves through the small intestine, less of the cholesterol is absorbed into the bloodstream. As it continues through the digestive tract, fiber also helps move waste matter through the large intestine, which prevents constipation and reduces our risk of colon cancer. However, in recent years we've become aware of another important way that fiber supports our health: by supporting the health of our gut bacteria. The greater the amount and variety of plant fiber we include in our diet, the more varied and robust that population of beneficial bacteria becomes. Studies have shown that increasing fiber to 50 grams a day positively changed the composition of the gut microbiome in a surprisingly short period of time. [Scientific American](#)

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Drinking more soda and juice tied to increased diabetes risk

9 October- People who increase their consumption of sodas, juices and other sweet drinks over time are more likely than those who don't to develop diabetes, a U.S. study suggests. Researchers examined over two decades of data from more than 192,000 men and women who worked in nursing or other healthcare jobs. None of the participants had diabetes at the start of the study; by the end almost 12,000 people had developed the disease. After accounting for how much people weighed and their overall eating patterns, researchers found that those who increased their total consumption of sugary drinks by a half serving a day over four years were 16% more likely to develop diabetes over the next four-year period. With the same daily half-serving increase in artificially-sweetened drinks, the odds went up 18%. "Even though consumption of 100% fruit juices has been considered a healthy alternative to sugar-sweetened beverages because of the vitamins and minerals in fruit juices, they typically contain similar amounts of sugar and calories as sugar-sweetened beverages," said Jean-Philippe Drouin-Chartier, lead author of the study and a nutrition researcher at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health in Boston. The study results "raise concerns about the negative health effects of sugary beverages, regardless of whether the sugar is added or naturally occurring," Drouin-Chartier said by email. [Reuters](#)

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Hypertension in pregnancy may portend cardiovascular ills in mothers

7 October- High blood pressure during pregnancy increases a mother's risk for future cardiovascular disease and death, a new study has found. Hypertension in pregnancy, or pre-eclampsia, affects between 3 percent and 10 percent of pregnant women in the United States. Left untreated, it can lead to life-threatening complications in both mothers and infants. The British study, published in *Circulation*, found 149,712 cases of pre-eclampsia in 1.3 million pregnancies over a 20-year period. The researchers then followed all the women for an average of nine years after they gave birth. Over that time, there were 18,624 first-time cardiovascular events, 65 percent of them in women under 40. Compared with women who did not have pre-eclampsia, those who did were at higher risk for 12 cardiovascular disorders. They had a 90 percent increased risk for stroke, more than double the risk for heart failure, and two-and-a-half times the risk for heart attack. They were more than four times as likely to have chronic hypertension, and twice as likely as those without pre-eclampsia to die of cardiovascular disease. [The New York Times](#)

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DRC measles outbreak: More than 200K cases, 4,000 deaths

9 October- The world's largest measles outbreak has hit a couple of grim milestones, according to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) has reported 203,179 cases of measles from all 26 provinces of the country, including 4,096 deaths. UNICEF says children under the age of five represent 74 percent of infections and nearly 90 per cent of deaths. The number of measles cases in DRC this year is more than triple the number recorded for all of 2018. The measles outbreak in DRC has become a far deadlier than Ebola, which to date, has taken 2,143 lives. "We're facing this alarming situation because millions of Congolese children miss out on routine immunization and lack access to health care when they fall sick," said UNICEF Representative in the DRC, Edouard Beigbeder. "On top of that, a weak health system, insecurity, community mistrust of vaccines and vaccinators and logistical challenges all contribute to a huge number of unvaccinated children at risk of contracting the disease." [Outbreak News Today](#)

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Plague cluster reported in northeast DRC

7 October- In a report published on ProMED Mail from Ituri Province in the northeastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), officials from EcoHealth Alliance note a cluster of bubonic plague cases in the village of Omeyi in the Ongoyi health area. A family of four cases, including one fatality was reported in late September. In addition, a rodent and guinea pig die-off was reported at the same time. Health officials arrived in the area to spray the houses with deltamethrin, take human and wildlife samples, and raise community awareness of the measures to be taken. Hundreds of villagers were given prophylaxis. Since late September, twelve suspected cases and three deaths have been reported from four villages in close proximity to the Uganda border. Plague is an infectious disease caused by the bacterium, *Yersinia pestis*. It is found in animals throughout the world, most commonly rats but other rodents like ground squirrels, prairie dogs, chipmunks, rabbits and voles. Fleas typically serve as the vector of plague. People can also get infected through direct contact with an infected animal, through inhalation and in the case of pneumonic plague, person to person. *Yersinia pestis* is treatable with antibiotics if started early enough. There are three forms of human plague; bubonic, septicemic and pneumonic. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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USCENTCOM

CDC issues travel alert for Pakistan due to XDR typhoid fever

5 October- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued a travel notice this week for Pakistan due to the ongoing outbreak of extensively drug-resistant (XDR) typhoid fever. Health officials in Pakistan have reported an ongoing outbreak of extensively drug-resistant (XDR) typhoid fever that began in Hyderabad in November 2016. The strain of Salmonella Typhi does not respond to most antibiotics used to treat typhoid fever. The outbreak has spread to provinces throughout the country, and several deaths have been reported. XDR typhoid associated with travel to Pakistan has been reported in the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, Denmark, and Australia. All travelers to Pakistan are at risk of getting XDR typhoid fever. Those visiting friends or relatives are at a greater risk than tourists or business travelers. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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USEUCOM

Sweden tularemia cases decrease significantly after recording most cases in decades

6 October- Swedish health authorities, Folkhalsomyndigheten, are reporting that in the past two weeks, the number of people who have fallen ill with tularemia, or harpest, has decreased significantly and during the last week no more reports were received than during an average year. This is welcome news after a high year for tularemia cases in the country. Through Sep. 30, Sweden reported 960 cases since the outbreak began in late July, the worst outbreak since the 1960s. According to Folkhalsomyndigheten, Tularemia is caused by a bacterium, Francisella tularensis. The reservoir among animals in Sweden has been considered to be small rodents. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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USINDOPACOM

Philippines dengue outbreak surpasses 300,000 case mark

4 October- In June, Philippines Health Secretary, Francisco Duque III predicted the 2019 dengue fever outbreak in the country would see 240,000 cases by the end of the year. Looking back, it appears Duque was being too conservative with his estimates. According to the most recent numbers from the Epidemiology Bureau of the Department of Health,

307,704 dengue cases were reported nationwide, including 1,247 deaths through Sep. 14. This is 116 percent higher than the same period last year when 142,783 cases were reported on the archipelago. The regions reporting the most cases include Calabarzon, Western Visayas, Metro Manila and Central Luzon. Health officials say children 14 and younger account for about six out of 10 cases. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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USNORTHCOM

Canada: BC reports increase in syphilis, 1st congenital syphilis cases in years

7 October- Officials with the BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) are reporting an increase in syphilis cases prompting them to remind British Columbians to speak with their health care professional about testing for sexually transmitted infections (STIs), especially those with new sexual partners, or people who are pregnant. There were 919 new cases of infectious syphilis in B.C. in 2018, a rate of 18.4 per 100,000. This represents a 33 per cent increase from 2017. In B.C., the majority of infections occur in gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men. "After seeing syphilis infections decrease for several years, rates of syphilis began to climb again earlier this decade," said Dr. Bonnie Henry, Provincial Health Officer. "We've been working to address syphilis in B.C. and raise awareness about testing among men who have sex with men. We are currently working with our partners to see what more we can do to reduce the number of infections but we also need the public to be aware of the risk and to be proactive about testing and treatment." While syphilis continues to disproportionately affect gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men in B.C., infections are also increasing among women. There has been a nearly 40 per cent increase of infectious syphilis among women 15 to 49 years old from 2017 to 2018. After many years of no cases of congenital syphilis in the province, B.C. identified two cases in 2019. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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Canada: E.coli outbreak reported in Newfoundland and Labrador

5 October- Health officials in Newfoundland and Labrador are reporting an E. coli outbreak in the province. The Department of Health and Community Services advises that there have been 22 confirmed cases of E.coli in the province this week, and Public Health officials within the department, as well as the regional health authorities are working with Service NL to investigate. A provincial medical officer of health says most cases are within the province's eastern health authority, including the capital city of St. John's, but others are in the central and western authorities. Dr. Janice Fitzgerald said some of the cases are connected to an advisory issued by Memorial University earlier this week, saying Eastern Health was investigating reports of students experiencing gastrointestinal illness. E.coli is

spread primarily through the ingestion of contaminated food or water. Person-to-person transmission can also occur. Careful food preparation techniques and hand washing are important in the prevention of E.coli. Anyone with severe diarrhea, bloody diarrhea and abdominal pain should seek medical attention. Food handlers, health care workers, daycare workers, and children attending daycares with these symptoms, should remain at home until the symptoms are resolved and they are cleared by a health care professional.

[Outbreak News Today](#)

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U.S.: Maine- Tickborne diseases: ‘Steep increases’ reported with anaplasmosis, babesiosis

5 October- The Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) report significant increases in two tickborne diseases—anaplasmosis and babesiosis—so far in 2019. As of October 1, the CDC recorded 556 cases of anaplasmosis and 124 cases of babesiosis. That is an all-time annual high for babesiosis, and Maine is on track to surpass the record high of 663 cases of anaplasmosis set in 2017. Concerning Lyme disease, the state’s most common tickborne illness, officials have recorded 684 cases since the beginning of the year. Public health officials in Maine expect total Lyme cases to exceed 1,000 when annual reporting for 2019 is complete. Maine CDC urges the state’s residents and visitors to continue taking precautions against tickborne diseases during the year’s second peak season for tick activity, which takes place from October through November. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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USSOUTHCOM

Brazil police investigate mysterious oil slicks polluting Northeast beaches

2 October- Brazilian police on Wednesday opened an investigation into possible criminal activity surrounding an apparent oil spill off beaches along the country’s Northeast coast, federal prosecutors said. The probe aims to establish the origin of the oil slicks, which could represent “possible major environmental damage in the region,” the police said in a statement. Brazil’s Northeast coast is famed for its sandy beaches and is popular with tourists. Environmental agency Ibama said last week that the mysterious spill had contaminated beaches and coastline across eight states, and that some oil-coated birds and sea turtles had been washed up and were being treated. The Brazilian Navy and state-run oil company Petrobras SA also said last week that analysis showed the oil was produced abroad, but they could not say where. [Reuters](#)

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