

15 February 2019

# Army Public Health Weekly Update

Army Public Health Center



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## NOTE:

If you are viewing the Army Public Health Weekly Update using Internet Explorer on a government computer with Windows 10, the external hyperlinks will be disabled per the [Security Technical Implementation Guide](#) (V-64927).

As a workaround, opening the Update using **Chrome** will enable the links.

We're sorry for the inconvenience.

## Subscription or Comments

If you wish to be added to the APH Weekly Update mailing list, removed from the mailing list, or if you have comments or questions about the update, please [contact us](#). We welcome your comments. Please feel free to share this update with others who may be interested.



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## As sexual assault cases rise, service academy superintendents struggle for solutions

13 February- Lawmakers on Wednesday angrily chastised military officials for not doing enough to address the “crisis” of sexual assault at the three service academies, noting that their promises for change have not resulted in better results so far. “After a decade-plus of concerted efforts to address sexual harassment and assault, the problem has only gotten worse,” said Rep. Jackie Speier, D-Calif., during a House Armed Services Committee hearing on the issue. “This isn’t a blip, a ‘me too’ bump, or some accident. It’s a clear illustration of a destructive trend and systemic problem.” The event — the second of the day by a congressional committee on the issue — came about two weeks after the release of the latest report from the Defense Department’s Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office. The document found that the number of cadets reporting unwanted sexual encounters has increased almost 50 percent since 2016, to 747 incidents last year. [Military Times](#)

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## Black mold, rodents, lead paint in privatized housing: No rent until it’s fixed, military spouses say

14 February- Military spouses suggested to lawmakers one immediate way, for starters, to fix problems like mold, lead paint, termites, mice and other issues in privatized military housing: allow families to withhold rent payments until the issues are resolved. Spouses testified before senators Wednesday, then watched as senators grilled company officials, and DoD and service officials, about the problems. All the officials admitted there have been breakdowns in the system, and assured senators they are making a commitment to address the systemic problems. Robert McMahon, assistant secretary of defense for sustainment, told the senators that what he heard from the spouses “reinforced what we already know, that we collectively have to do significantly better.” [Military Times](#)

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## Breathing easier: After years of T-6 hypoxia scares, the Air Force thinks it has the fix

11 February- For instructor pilot Maj. Kinsley “Trigger” Jordan, the first clue that something had gone seriously wrong was when he suddenly tasted something metallic. Jordan was in a T-6 Texan II, on the back half of a routine training sortie with a student pilot near Vance Air Force Base in Oklahoma in early November 2017. The student was practicing basic touch-and-go landings at a nearby airport when Jordan became cognizant of the metallic taste. He first wondered if he hadn’t eaten enough for lunch, or if he had unknowingly bit his lip and drawn blood. But then, Jordan looked at the T-6’s instrumentation. He could see the

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**It's complicated:  
Our relationship  
with social media**

For many, the post-holiday season is a challenging, emotional time. Scrolling through social media posts about the perfect gift or holiday celebration may intensify negative feelings, especially for those struggling with depression, loss, or loneliness. It's true that social media can help connect and reconnect people; however, it may increase feelings of isolation or remind people of what they don't have.

numbers clearly, but the experienced pilot suddenly could not comprehend what the basic altitude and airspeed readings meant — and whether they were good or bad. “That’s when the severity of what it was made me realize, ‘I’m not exactly sure what’s happening right now,’” Jordan, who teaches flying at Vance’s 33rd Flying Training Squadron, said in a Jan. 23 interview. Jordan had suffered either hypoxia, a lack of oxygen in his blood, or a similar “unexplained physiological event,” as the Air Force calls it. It was one of the first in a series of incidents that led Vance’s 71st Flying Training Wing to temporarily ground its T-6s. A month-long, fleet-wide grounding of T-6s followed early in 2018, and an alarmed Air Force scrambled to solve the mystery of why its most basic training aircraft was putting dozens of student and instructor pilots at risk of passing out in mid-air — and possibly dying. But now, the Air Force is rolling out a series of fixes that it thinks will solve the problem once and for all — and may have already started cutting down on hypoxia and hypoxia-like incidents. [Air Force Times](#)

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## **Marines have been personally downloading this software that helps coordinate air support- How that error and big cyber flaws are putting lives at risk**

11 February- A Navy inspector general report has concluded that a series of popular software used in Android tablets that aid Marines and Navy personnel in coordinating precision air power and battlefield situational awareness had significant cyber vulnerabilities. The software, known as Kilswitch and APASS, was developed by Naval Air Warfare Center Weapons Division, Digital Precision Strike Suite for use in small tactical handheld Android tablets. Those tablets and software are in the hands of thousands of Marines and other service members, some who have been using it in real-world operations. The vulnerable software potentially puts Marines and sailors at substantial risk by hackers and sophisticated near-peer rivals like Russia, who could hack the devices in an effort to glean sensitive battlefield information or location data. [Marine Times](#)

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## **The military’s lingering readiness problem: Lack of daycare**

9 February- Defense leaders told Congress Thursday that if they want to improve military readiness, they have to think about bettering military daycare...Improving service equipment and readiness continues to be a top priority among lawmakers looking ahead at military spending next year. But defense officials emphasized again that family support programs — and childcare in particular — are critical to keeping the force free of stress and focused on their missions. “Readiness is a three-legged stool,” said Ronald Green, Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps. “We have unit readiness ... I have family readiness, and I have personal readiness. And every warrior tries to balance that same stool. “If we can’t get the quality-of-life part right because we’re funding the war-fighting part, then we’re suffering on the

## The Surgeon General Weekly Read Book

The Surgeon General Weekly Read Book is available with articles classified up to the **SECRET** level on the APHC SIPRNet site:

<https://intelshare.intelink.sgov.gov/sites/medcom-g2/SitePages/Home.aspx>

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

battlefield because I can't focus." The Army alone will spend nearly \$500 million on childcare costs this year, the largest single expense in the service's family support programs. Defense officials testified that more than 8,000 children of sailors and 3,000 children of airmen are on Defense Department waiting lists for base daycare, which they acknowledged results in significant family stress. Army and Marine Corps leaders said they face less severe problems but still increasing demand for the services. [Military Times](#)

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## Three soldiers hospitalized after Golden Knights parachuting accident in Florida

12 February- Three members of the U.S. Army Parachute Team are hospitalized following an early morning jump accident, according to a Tuesday release from Army Recruiting Command. The Golden Knights were conducting night training at Homestead Air Reserve Base in Homestead, Florida, when the injuries occurred around 4 a.m., the release said. "The incident is under investigation at this time," according to the release. Two are in critical condition and the third is in serious condition as of Tuesday evening, according to a USAREC statement. All three soldiers arrived by medevac helicopter to Jackson Memorial Hospital in Miami, the Associated Press reported. [Army Times](#)

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## GLOBAL

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## A high-tech pill to end drug injections



7 February- Engineers have developed a tiny robotic capsule that injects insulin once it lands in the stomach. Once ingested, a tiny device called Soma positions itself against the stomach wall and injects insulin into the bloodstream. Here was the challenge for bioengineers: Find a way for patients to take drugs — like insulin or monoclonal antibodies used to treat cancers and other diseases — without injections. The medicines are made of molecules too big to be absorbed through the stomach or intestines; in any event, the drugs would be quickly degraded by the body's harsh digestive system. Now, a team of scientists may have found a solution that delivers these drugs in a capsule a person can swallow. Their inspiration? A tortoise that always rights itself after rolling over. The test device, called Soma, is shaped like the tortoise's shell. Inside is a miniature post made of insulin. After the tiny device positions itself against the stomach wall, the post pops out and injects insulin. The device then travels through the colon and eventually is eliminated by the patient. The device works in rats and pigs, the investigators reported on Thursday in the journal *Science*. The researchers — at M.I.T., Harvard and Novo Nordisk, the pharmaceutical company — hope to start testing Soma in humans in three years. Outside experts said the device may well be a viable solution to the injection problem. "It's a very new concept and a really cool

## 2018 Health of the Force

The health of the individual Soldier is the foundation of the Army's ability to deploy, fight, and win against any adversary. Health of the Force provides an evidence-based portrait of the health and well-being of the U.S. Army Active Component (AC) Soldier population. Leaders can use Health of the Force data to inform health promotion and prevention measures, as well as drive cultural and programmatic changes necessary to achieve Force dominance.



idea," said Edith Mathiowitz, a professor of medical science and engineering at Brown University. [New York Times](#)

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## American travelers seek cheaper prescription drugs in Mexico and beyond

11 February- When Michelle Fenner signed up to run this year's Los Angeles Marathon, it got her thinking: Tijuana, Mexico, is only a 2 1/2-hour drive from LA. Why not take a trip across the border and buy some insulin for her son? "It's so easy to just go across the border," Fenner mused. This idea had been in the back of Fenner's mind for a while. Her son was diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes nine years ago, meaning he needs daily injections of insulin to stay alive. The list price of the modern generation of insulin has skyrocketed since then. On one trip to the pharmacy last year, Fenner was told that a three-month supply of insulin would cost her \$3,700. That same supply would cost only about \$600 in Mexico. So when she booked her trip to Los Angeles, Fenner says, "I decided we need to update our passports and go and get more insulin." Fenner is not the only one thinking like this. The U.S. government estimates that close to 1 million people in California alone cross to Mexico annually for health care, including to buy prescription drugs. And between 150,000 and 320,000 Americans list health care as a reason for traveling abroad each year. Cost savings is the most commonly cited reason. [NPR](#)

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## Authorities confirm Mumps cases in Houston ICE facility

9 February- In a statement, the Houston Health Department (HHD) confirmed seven cases of mumps among detained individuals at the ICE in Houston, Texas. All the individuals were adult detainees at the facility who happened to be there at the time when they were infectious. According to authorities, because the said individuals were detained during their infectious period, there is so far no threat of the individuals passing the illness to others outside the facility. That said, the HHD is still working with the facility in regard to infection control methods and is expected to conduct an on-site visit in the coming days. Mumps outbreaks continue to occur even if vaccinations have drastically reduced mumps cases. These particularly occur in places where people can get prolonged exposure to people with mumps, such as taking the same classes, playing in a sports team together, or living together in a dormitory. In the state of Texas and in Houston region, mumps outbreaks are rare, but they have occurred in the past. [Tech Times](#)

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## 2018 Health of the ARNG Force

Individual Soldier medical readiness is critical to building and maintaining the Army National Guard as an operational force that is warfighting-capable and governor-responsive. As part of the U.S. Army Public Health Center's ongoing Health of the Force series, the 2018 Health of the ARNG Force report highlights key ARNG health metrics about our Soldiers. Understanding these statistics allows us to know what we're doing well and where we need to focus to achieve Total Health, Total Readiness.



## Bat showing up at Indiana Pacers game triggers rabies scare

11 February- A bat disrupted the game between the Indiana Pacers and Los Angeles Clippers on Thursday, Feb. 7, and health officials are urging anyone who had contact with the animal to contact a health care provider. The Indiana State Department of Health said that people who attended the game might have been exposed to rabies, a viral disease that affects the central nervous system. Those who touched the bat without gloves or any protection should look into receiving a rabies vaccination. While no harm was reported during the game, public health officials could not say whether the bat has rabies or not. Unfortunately, before any tests have been carried out, the bat had left the Bankers Life Fieldhouse where the game was held. The Indiana State Department of Health clarified that only those who have touched the bat with bare hands are at risks of rabies. To reach the department, phone 317-234-4704. [Tech Times](#)

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## 'Church of safe injection' offers needles, naloxone to prevent opioid overdoses

12 February- On a bitter cold afternoon in front of the central bus stop in Bangor, Maine, about a half-dozen people recently surrounded a folding table covered with handmade signs offering free clean syringes, coffee and naloxone, the drug also known as Narcan that can reverse an opioid overdose. They're with a group called the Church of Safe Injection that is handing out clean drug-using supplies in cities around the U.S. Even though they could be arrested for doing so, volunteers say they have to step up because of the staggering number of opioid overdose deaths and because the public health system has failed. "There are all these barriers to people getting well — like insurance and treatment rules," said one of the Bangor volunteers who goes by the name Dave Carvagio, though it's not his real name. "It's to the point where, for some people, the only treatment options are in institutions like prison." Carvagio doesn't want to be identified because it's illegal in Maine to have more than 10 hypodermic syringes unless you're a certified needle exchange. Police cars sometimes circle the park, but no one has been arrested — yet. [NPR](#)

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## Crystal Meth is North Korea's trendiest lunar New Year's gift

12 February- Like many across East Asia, North Koreans have been exchanging presents this month to celebrate the Lunar New Year. But rather than tea, sweets or clothing, some in this impoverished, isolated country are giving the gift of crystal meth. The gifting and use of methamphetamine, a powerful stimulant that has been blamed in health and addiction crises around the world, is said to be a well-established custom in North Korea. Users are said to inject or snort the drug as casually as they might smoke a cigarette, with little

awareness of its addictive qualities or destructive effects. "Meth, until recently, has been largely seen inside North Korea as a kind of very powerful energy drug — something like Red Bull, amplified," said Andrei Lankov, an expert on the North at Kookmin University in Seoul, South Korea, who directs the news site NK News. That misconception, he said, highlighted a "significant underestimation" within the country of the general risks of drug abuse. [New York Times](#)

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## Hepatitis C antiviral lowers risks of premature deaths and liver cancer progression

12 February- Patients with chronic hepatitis C could benefit from direct-acting antiviral treatment, which has shown promise of lowering risk of premature death and liver cancer. A French observational study followed around 10,000 patients. About 75 percent of the patients received direct-acting antivirals for the treatment of chronic hepatitis C, while the rest were untreated...Results showed that the treatment is associated with lowered risk of mortality and hepatocellular cancer, the most common type of liver cancer. However, the same effect is not found in reducing the risk of decompensated cirrhosis. A 2017 Cochrane study showed no evidence that the use of direct-acting antivirals has long-term negative effect on the patient. The study authors are hopeful that this regimen will help doctors and patients with their treatment plans. "Taking a large cohort like this provides the opportunity to evaluate the effect of direct-acting antiviral therapy on the long-term outcomes of patients with hepatitis C," said Fabrice Carrat, a professor of public health, epidemiology, and biostatistics at Sorbonne Université in France. Carrat's team said that the treatment allowed the liver to regenerate; hence, the decreased cancer and mortality risks. "We saw a reduction of risk for complications related to the disease, and to mortality, and believe this treatment should be considered for all patients with chronic hepatitis C infection." [Tech Times](#)

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## In a Measles outbreak, demand for vaccine spikes

11 February- More than 50 people have now been infected by the measles in an outbreak across southwest Washington state and northwest Oregon, and doctors and nurses say it's spurring people to get vaccinated. At Sea Mar Community Health Center in Vancouver, Wash., administrator Shawn Brannan says that so many have been coming in for a measles shot recently that they had to order almost 10 times as much vaccine as usual. "Larger populations that typically don't vaccinate their children for their own reasons are now in a mad dash, if you will, to get vaccinated," says Brannan. He said many patients are from the former Soviet Union, where distrust of government runs deep. But he says the clinic is also getting lots of other patients with their own reasons not to vaccinate. [NPR](#)

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## Johnson & Johnson's nasal spray for depression wins FDA panel backing

12 February- An advisory panel to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration on Tuesday voted in favor of Johnson & Johnson's experimental nasal spray, which has a compound similar to often-abused ketamine, bringing the drug closer to approval. The panel voted 14-2 in favor of the drug esketamine, developed to treat major depression in patients who have not benefited from at least two different therapies, saying its benefits outweighed the risks. One panel member abstained from voting. Esketamine is a chemical mirror image of anesthetic ketamine, which is also abused as a recreational party drug and goes by the street nickname "Special K". "I think esketamine has the potential to be a game-changer in the treatment of depression ... I use the term potential because the issues of cost and patient accessibility need to be addressed," said Walter Dunn, who voted in favor of approval. However, the panel members echoed concerns raised by FDA staffers on Friday regarding the increased risk of sedation, dissociation and higher blood pressure observed in the study. The FDA recommended implementing a risk evaluation and mitigation strategy (REMS) program which included ensuring esketamine is only dispensed and administered under supervision... The FDA, although not mandated to follow the panel's recommendation, is expected to announce its decision on esketamine by March 4. [Reuters](#)

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## Youth smoking decline stalls, and vaping may be to blame

11 February- Cigarette smoking rates have stopped falling among U.S. kids, and health officials believe youth vaping is responsible. For decades, the percentage of high school and middle school students who smoked cigarettes had been declining fairly steadily. For the past three years, it has flattened, according to new numbers released Monday. There may be several reasons, but a recent boom in vaping is the most likely explanation, said Brian King of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. [Fox News](#)

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## INFLUENZA

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### AFHSB: DoD Seasonal Influenza Surveillance Summary

For Week 5:

- NORTHCOM: Influenza activity increased in several states during week 05. Utah, Texas, Georgia, Virginia, and Massachusetts all had high activity.
- EUCOM: Influenza activity remained minimal to low across EUCOM.
- PACOM: Influenza activity remained low in Japan and was minimal in the Republic of Korea, Guam, and Hawaii.
- CENTCOM: Influenza activity remained high in Afghanistan and increased to moderate in Jordan and low in Kuwait and Qatar.
- AFRICOM: In Djibouti, influenza activity remained minimal.
- SOUTHCOM: Influenza activity remained minimal in Honduras and Cuba during week 05.

[DHA -Armed Forces Health Surveillance Branch](#)

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### APHC: U.S. Army Influenza Activity Report

For the week ending 2 February 2019 (Week 5): There was a sharp increase (40%) in the number of positive respiratory specimens from surveillance week 4 to surveillance week 5; there were 610 positive specimens in week 4 and 856 in week 5. In week 5, the number of positive influenza A specimens increased by 66%, with 751 positive specimen's reported during week 5 compared to the 451 reported during week 4. Influenza A continues to be the most frequently resulted respiratory pathogen, accounting for 88% of all positive specimens. Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) activity decreased by 41%, accounting for 71 (8%) of the positive specimens in week 5. Nine influenza-associated hospitalizations with an onset date in week 5 were reported in the Disease Reporting System internet. Of those nine cases, two were Active Duty (AD) Service Members, bringing the total number of AD hospitalizations to 11 for the season. [APHC](#)

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

2018- 2019 Influenza Season Week 5 ending February 2, 2019

-Viral Surveillance: The percentage of respiratory specimens testing positive for influenza viruses in clinical laboratories increased. Influenza A viruses have predominated in the United States since the beginning of October. Influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 viruses have predominated in most areas of the country, however influenza A(H3) viruses have

predominated in the southeastern United States (HHS Region 4).

-Pneumonia and Influenza Mortality: The proportion of deaths attributed to pneumonia and influenza (P&I) was below the system-specific epidemic threshold in the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) Mortality Surveillance System.

-Influenza-associated Pediatric Deaths: Four influenza-associated pediatric deaths were reported to CDC during week 5. [CDC](#)

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## **ECDC: Flu News Europe**

Week 5/2019 (28 January-3 February 2019)

-Influenza activity is widespread in the European Region and continues to increase. Samples collected from individuals presenting with ILI or ARI to sentinel primary health care sites yielded an influenza positivity rate of 54.7%.

-Over 50% of specimens from patients hospitalized with severe acute respiratory infection (SARI) collected in week 5/2019 were positive for influenza, and >99% were type A.

-Pooled data from 22 Member States and areas reporting to the Euro MOMO project indicated excess mortality in an elderly populations overall. However, this result was driven by data from only a few countries. [European Center for Disease Prevention and Control/WHO](#)

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## **NHRC: Operational Infectious Diseases - Weekly Surveillance Report**

7 February - For Epi Week 4, 2019, febrile respiratory illness surveillance data among military recruit, DoD beneficiary, and U.S.-Mexico border (CDC-BIDS) populations indicated 96 positive samples out of 148 received.

Military Recruits – 17 received

DoD Beneficiaries – 58 received

CDC Border Infectious Disease Surveillance – 73 received [Naval Health Research Center](#)

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## WHO: Influenza Update

4 February - In the temperate zone of the northern hemisphere influenza activity continued to increase.

-In North America, influenza activity appeared to decrease slightly with influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 predominating.

-In Europe, influenza activity continued to increase, with both A viruses circulating.

-In North Africa, influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 detections sharply increased in Morocco.

-In Western Asia, influenza activity continued to increase in some countries and appeared to decrease across countries of the Arabian Peninsula.

-In East Asia, influenza activity continued to increase, with influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 virus predominating.

-In Southern Asia, influenza detections remained elevated overall. Influenza activity continued to increase in Iran (Islamic Republic of) with influenza A(H3N2) the predominant circulating virus.

-In the temperate zones of the southern hemisphere, influenza activity remained at inter-seasonal levels.

-Worldwide, seasonal influenza A viruses accounted for the majority of detections.

[WHO](#)

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### VETERINARY/FOOD SAFETY

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## 59 pounds of smoked pork sausage recalled because of processing mistake

13 February- Carthage, TX-based Panola County Processing LLC on Monday recalled about 59 pounds of smoked sausage products because of a processing deviation that may have led to under-processing of products, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS). The pork smoked sausage links and venison and pork sausage links items were produced on Jan. 29. FSIS is concerned that some product may be frozen and in consumers' freezers or refrigerators. Consumers who have purchased these products are urged not to consume them. These products should be thrown away or returned to the place of purchase. To view photos of product labels for the implicated products, please click here. The following products are subject to the recall:

-1.3-lb. vacuum-packed packages containing four pieces of "PANOLA COUNTY PROCESSING, LLC Pork Smoked Sausage PC" with packaging dates of Jan. 30, 2019 and Jan. 31, 2019.

-1.3-lb. vacuum-packed packages containing four pieces of "PANOLA COUNTY

PROCESSING, LLC Pork Hot Smoked Sausage PC" with packaging date of Jan. 31, 2019.

-1.3-lb. vacuum-packed packages containing four pieces of "PANOLA COUNTY PROCESSING, LLC Venison & Pork Smoked Sausage PC" with packaging date of Jan. 31, 2019.

-1.3-lb. vacuum-packed packages containing four pieces of "PANOLA COUNTY PROCESSING, LLC Venison & Pork Hot Smoked Sausage PC" with packaging date of Jan. 31, 2019.

The recalled products have the establishment number "EST. 48219" printed inside the USDA mark of inspection. These items were distributed to a Texas retailer. [Food Safety News](#)

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## **CEO says tahini spread has been recalled; FDA considers 'regulatory options'**

14 February- Owners of a Philadelphia company say they are complying with all requests from the FDA in relation to a Salmonella-contaminated tahini spread, but federal officials say they are considering regulatory options because Soom Foods did not recall the product when requested to do so. In a statement to Food Safety News last night, Soom Foods CEO Shelby Zitelman said the company is recalling its "Chocolate Sweet Tahini Halva Spread" in 1-ounce packets with lot number 67333D. However, as of 11:30 p.m. EST, neither the Soom Foods website nor the FDA website had any recall information about the implicated product. [Food Safety News](#)

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## **Cold pressed watermelon juice recall includes Walmart, Publix, Winn-Dixie**

12 February- World Waters LLC is recalling Cold Pressed Juice Watermelon (WTRMLN WTR Original 12 packs) because plastic pieces could be present in some of the finished products. Retailers quickly joining the recall included Publix, Winn-Dixie and Walmart. The flavored water was sent to customers nationwide for distribution via retail sales from Dec. 22, 2018, through Feb. 5, 2019. Retailers quickly joining the recall included Publix, Winn-Dixie and Walmart. World Waters described the problem as "the potential presence of soft plastic that may be loosely floating in some of the finished products." The company's recall notice did not say how it happened. The company urged consumers to check package codes prior to drinking the beverage because the plastic could potentially be a choking hazard. [Food Safety News](#)

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## More babies infected with Salmonella in outbreak linked to rice milk formula

12 February- French authorities are investigating more than a dozen cases of Salmonella infection in babies less than 19 months old. The illnesses are linked to a rice milk formula made in Spain. Of the 14 babies involved in the investigation, the French National Public Health Agency (Santé publique France) reports five have been confirmed and nine are under investigation. Seven of the babies were hospitalized for salmonellosis but have since recovered. Luxembourg and Belgium have reported one case each linked to the outbreak. The Salmonella National Reference Center (CNR) at the Institut Pasteur in France has found five infections of Salmonella Poona in infants whose strains belong to the same genomic cluster. CNR has identified nine other babies who had Salmonella Poona. The strains from these babies are being analyzed to see if they belong to the same cluster. Sodilac, the company that markets the items and is a subsidiary of Savencia SA, withdrew and recalled its range of infant nutrition products based on rice proteins and all infant formula made at the Spanish production site...Lactalis later recalled 16,300 boxes of Picot AR milk because it was made at the same Spanish site. No illnesses in this outbreak have been linked to any Lactalis products. Belgium officials reported a case of Salmonella infection in an infant linked to the outbreak in France despite implicated Modilac products not being distributed on the market in the country. [Food Safety News](#)

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## New FDA report blames on-farm water for latest romaine contamination

14 February- The new investigative report about romaine lettuce contamination drew comments Wednesday from both FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb and Deputy Commissioner Frank Yiannas. The report looks at the most recent romaine E. coli outbreak, which was declared over on Jan. 9 after confirmation of 62 illnesses in 16 states and the District of Columbia, resulting in 25 hospitalizations and two cases of hemolytic uremic syndrome (HUS). There were no deaths. [Food Safety News](#)

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### WELLNESS

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## Eating Processed Foods Tied to Shorter Life

12 February- Eating highly processed foods could shorten your life, a new study suggests. The study, in JAMA Internal Medicine, tracked diet and health over eight years in more than 44,000 French men and women. Their average age was 58 at the start. About 29 percent of their energy intake was ultra processed foods. Such foods include instant noodles and soups, breakfast cereals, energy bars and drinks, chicken nuggets and many other ready-made meals and packaged snacks containing numerous ingredients and manufactured



using industrial processes. There were 602 deaths over the course of the study, mostly from cancer and cardiovascular disease. Even after adjusting for many health, socioeconomic and behavioral characteristics, including scores on a scale of compliance with a healthy diet, the study found that for every 10 percent increase in ultra processed food consumption, there was a 14 percent increase in the risk of death. The authors suggest that high-temperature processing may form contaminants, that additives may be carcinogenic, and that the packaging of prepared foods can lead to contamination. "This is an association, and we cannot prove that it is causal," said a co-author, Mathilde Touvier, a research director at Inserm, the French public health research center. "People may be scared and think they're going to die if they eat these foods," she said, "but we need not be alarmist." [New York Times](#)

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## **Exercise can help with bad moods: Here's the best way to do it**

12 February- Are you usually in a better or worse mood after you work out? I start with this question whenever I give a talk about exercise and mental health. Like the trial attorney who asks only questions she already knows the answers to, I pose the query with certainty about the outcome. Research backs the near-universal observation that you almost always finish a workout in a better mood. Exercise leads to both types of good moods psychologists talk about: positive high activation (feeling alert, excited, happy) and positive low activation (feeling calm, content, relaxed). So, if you want to lift your spirits with exercise, the most important thing about your workout is that it exists. Anything is better than nothing. That said, how you structure your workout — how long, how hard, etc. — can supercharge the post-exercise mood boost. [Washington Post](#)

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## **The 'strange science' behind the big business of exercise recovery**

11 February- From sports drinks to protein powders, from compression therapy to cupping - there's a whole industry of products and services designed to help us adapt to and recover from exercise. But does any of it work? That's the question science writer Christie Aschwanden set out to answer in her new book, *Good to Go: What the Athlete in All of Us Can Learn from the Strange Science of Recovery*. A former high school and college athlete, Aschwanden is the lead science writer for the website *fivethirtyeight* and was previously a health columnist for *The Washington Post*. She notes that recovery wasn't given much consideration back when she was coming up. Now, however, times have changed and recovery is "something that you do — and almost with as much gusto as the workouts themselves," she says. Aschwanden's book examines the physiology behind different recovery methods and also offers an assessment of their effectiveness. Ultimately, she notes, the best form of recovery may be an old-fashioned one: listening to your own body. "The

most important skill that any athlete can develop is a sense of how their body is responding to exercise," she says. "How they're responding to their workouts; how they're feeling; what it feels like for them to be recovered or under recovered." [NPR](#)

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## **USAFRICOM**

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### **Democratic Republic of Congo: Ebola kills nearly 100 children in Congo as outbreak rages on**

12 February- Nearly 100 children have died in an Ebola outbreak ravaging the Democratic Republic of Congo as health workers warn it could be far from over. According to a press release from Save the Children, 65 of the 97 children who have died since August were under age 5. Additionally, more than 180 have been orphaned by the disease... The outbreak is the second-largest in history, with the charity reporting at least 731 confirmed cases of Ebola within the last six months, and 484 deaths. The country suffered its worst outbreak between 2014 and 2016, which claimed over 11,000 lives and prompted calls for more preventative efforts and the development of an experimental vaccine. However, lack of Ebola knowledge continues to plague relief efforts. [Fox News](#)

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### **Liberia: 5 dead, 40 still trapped in collapsed Liberian gold mine**

13 February- Liberian officials say five bodies were recovered Wednesday and 40 are still trapped in a collapsed gold mine. Officials fear those still in the pit mine in northeastern Liberia, which collapsed on Saturday, may also be dead, although some survivors have been rescued. Nimba County superintendent Dorr Cooper said miners are searching for survivors with their bare hands. He said no excavating equipment is available and such heavy machinery could accidentally kill those trapped below. He said the Tappita area has more than 100,000 self-employed miners and is rife with "uncontrolled and illegal" mining. "The place is lawless and there is no control," Cooper said. Authorities have recently attempted to close the gold mine out of safety concerns, but with Liberia's faltering economy, miners risk death to feed their families. [Fox News](#)

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### **Madagascar: Measles outbreak a 'grave concern'**

12 February- ...In a follow-up on our coverage of the measles outbreak in Madagascar, the World Health Organization (WHO) reports from Sep. 3, 2018 to Feb. 5, 2019, a total of 53,459 measles cases were recorded (lab confirmed and epi-linked), including 312 deaths. The bulk of the fatalities (84%) of the deaths occurred in children aged less than 9 months. A total of 7,333 serious cases were hospitalized. A total of 56% of registered cases are

either not vaccinated or of unknown vaccination status. This has caused a loss of herd immunity across the country...To demonstrate the spread of the virus in Madagascar, three quarters of the health districts in the country are affected by the outbreak and six regions have 100% of districts in epidemic state. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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#### **USCENTCOM**

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### **Saudi Arabia: Oman reports 6th MERS case, Saudi Arabia cases continue to climb**

12 February- The Oman Ministry of Health has reported the 6th Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus (MERS-CoV) infection of the year, according to a MOH Twitter post today. MOH officials say the patient has been given the necessary medical treatment. Earlier this month that two patients died of MERS-CoV. Including this case, a total of 16 laboratory confirmed cases of MERS-CoV infection have been reported by Oman since 2013. The surge of MERS cases in Saudi Arabia continues as the Saudi Arabia Health Ministry reported an addition nine MERS cases. Seven of the cases reported are from Wadi Aldwasir of which two people had contact with camels before they became ill, two are classified as secondary healthcare cases, one is listed as primary exposure, and sources are still under investigation for two. The remaining two cases reported today were from Riyadh, bringing the total in the city to 12 this year and 57 total in the Kingdom. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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#### **USEUCOM**

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### **Ireland: Mumps in Dublin, Ireland: Trinity College and Blackrock College**

10 February- Officials in Dublin, Ireland have warned about a number of cases of mumps in the Dublin area recently, including some of the schools. Dr. David McGrath, Director of College Health Service at Trinity College wrote there had been some cases of mumps at the college over the past week or so. "I would encourage all of our College Community to check that they have had two MMR (Measles, Mumps and Rubella) Vaccines and to make an appointment for vaccination either at College Health or with their own GP if they are not protected, he said. I would recommend that all students check their childhood vaccination history with their family GP." Last month, the Ireland HSE issued a letter concerning a case of mumps in a student at Blackrock College. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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## Russia: Russia is considering an experiment to disconnect from the internet

11 February- Russia is considering a plan to temporarily disconnect from the Internet as a way to gauge how the country's cyber defenses would fare in the face of foreign aggression, according to Russian media. The experiment comes as lawmakers there assess the Digital Economy National Program, draft legislation that was submitted to Russia's parliament last year, according to the RBK news agency. The bill would require Internet providers to make sure they can operate if foreign countries attempt to isolate the Runet, or Russian Internet. It was introduced after the White House published its 2018 National Security Strategy, which attributed cyberattacks on the United States to Russia, China, Iran and North Korea. As part of the experiment, communications oversight agency Roskomnadzor would examine whether data transmitted between Russia's users can remain in the country without being rerouted to servers abroad, where it could be subjected to interception. The exercise follows aspirations of building an autonomous Internet infrastructure with the support of Russian President Vladimir Putin. [NPR](#)

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## Ukraine: 8th measles death of 2019 reported

13 February- In our continuing coverage of the measles outbreak in Ukraine, the Center for Public Health of the Ministry of Health of Ukraine reported the eighth measles fatality of the year in an adult. Of the eight measles-related deaths this year, two were in children. In 2018 measles took 16 lives in Ukraine. Officials also note that during the 6th week of 2019, measles affected 3,142 people – 1,472 adults and 1,670 children. In total from December 28, 2018 to February 8, 2019, measles in Ukraine sickened 18,170 people – 7,808 adults and 10,362 children. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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### USINDOPACOM

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## India: 'I rue the day we ever became farmers': In rural India, a struggle to survive

12 February- Onion farmer Sanjay Sathe was so disappointed with how little he made from his recent harvest that he decided to pull a stunt: He sent a money order for his entire profit — a paltry \$15 — to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who's running for re-election this spring. Sathe wanted to show him the meager earnings Indian farmers must live on...Sathe and fellow farmers increasingly blame the government. They've taken to the streets across India in recent months, staging giant protests and marches, demanding Modi forgive their debts and fix higher prices for produce. The Indian government sets minimum prices for many commodities, but farmers often have to take out loans from state banks and private lenders to make ends meet. About half of Indians work in agriculture, and two-thirds live in

rural areas. They are a powerful voting bloc in the upcoming election, which is expected by May. "The government neglects farmers. It gives tax breaks to big business, and plays up controversies over Hindu temples and such — all for votes," Sathe says. "But look at us! We're dying here." He's not exaggerating. A suicide epidemic has claimed the lives of tens of thousands of Indian farmers over the past two decades, as food prices drop and pesticides and fertilizers get more expensive. The state of Maharashtra, which also suffers frequent droughts, has been called the epicenter of the crisis, with more than 20,000 farmer suicides from 2001 to 2017. [NPR](#)

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## **Philippines: Measles outbreak in the Philippines**

11 February- ...Philippines health officials reported today that the measles outbreak this year, linked in large part to vaccine hesitancy, has taken 70 lives since January 1. The Epidemiology Bureau of the Department of Health (DoH) reports a total of 4,302 measles cases have been reported from 1 January to 9 February. Sixty-six percent of them had no history of vaccination against measles. Of the fatalities, 79% had no history of vaccination. Regions with high reported cases are NCR (1,296 cases and 18 deaths) CALABARZON (1,086 cases and 25 deaths), Central Luzon (481 cases with 3 deaths), Western Visayas (212 cases and 4 deaths) and Northern Mindanao (189 cases and 2 deaths). In addition, Eastern Visayas, MIMAROPA, CALABARZON, Central Visayas and Bicol are regions that have shown increasing trend as to reported cases for this week. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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### **USNORTHCOM**

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## **Canada: Toronto- Possible measles exposure at Toronto airport**

9 February- Health officials investigating contacts who may have been exposed to a lab confirmed case of measles. According to Region of Peel – Peel Public Health, people in the following areas of Pearson Airport on January 27, 2019 may have been exposed:

- Lufthansa flight LH-470, from Frankfurt to Toronto (Pearson Airport, arrival at 4:08 pm)
  - Air Canada flight AC-834 or LH-6829, from Toronto (Pearson Airport, departure at 6:00 pm) to Montreal
  - Pearson International Airport (Terminal 1) on January 27, 2019 from 4:00 pm to 8:00 pm
- [Outbreak News Today](#)

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## **U.S: Kentucky- Hepatitis A death toll jumps to 40 after review**

12 February- Earlier this month, we reported on a hepatitis A outbreak update for Kentucky. In that report, Kentucky health officials put the death toll in the outbreak at 25. However, according to new data released for week 5 of 2019, we see a 15 death increase to 40 total since the outbreak began. According to the Kentucky Department for Public Health (DPH), the additional 15 deaths were identified following a 2018 year-end death record review. DPH notes that these additional deaths occurred throughout various months in 2018. The outbreak total in cases now stands at 3,997 since Aug. 2017, and half required hospitalization. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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## **U.S: Maine- Vaccine misinformation- Maine health officials warn fake CDC flyer**

11 February- The Maine Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (Maine CDC) is warning the public of a fake flyer claiming to be from the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention which states: "Educate before you vaccinate" and lists a group of "known vaccine side effects" without providing references or citing any sources (see flyer [HERE](#)). The flyer lists among the side effects- autism, cancer and 42 others. In addition, the website listed as CDC.org is not an active website, nor is it supported by the federal CDC. The flyers are known to have been circulating through big box stores in Southern Maine. Be advised that these flyers were not issued or endorsed by the Maine CDC or federal CDC. "Misleading flyers such as these are concerning; especially when that information pertains to something as important to public health as vaccines," said Maine CDC Director Dr. Bruce Bates. "I encourage anyone who comes across one of these flyers to disregard it." Maine CDC states: In the United States, vaccines are thoroughly tested and then continuously monitored to ensure ongoing safety. Immunizing yourself and your children will help protect you, them, and your community from contracting vaccine-preventable diseases. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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## **U.S: New York: 11 additional measles cases confirmed, 'This is a totally preventable disease!'**

14 February- In an update on the measles outbreak in the New York City metro area, eleven additional confirmed cases of measles have been reported in the Rockland County and Brooklyn areas this past week. In the Orthodox Jewish community in Brooklyn, five additional cases were reported in the Williamsburg neighborhood and one in Borough Park, bringing the outbreak total in the area to 73 cases since October. In Rockland County, five additional confirmed measles cases have been reported, bringing the total to 135 since September, making it the longest measles outbreak in the country since 2000...CDC recommends all children get two doses of MMR vaccine, starting with the first dose at 12-



through 15-months of age, and the second dose at 4 through 6 years of age. One dose of measles vaccine is about 93% effective at preventing measles if exposed to the virus. Two doses are about 97% effective. Measles vaccine does not cause measles illness. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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**USSOUTHCOM**

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## **Brazil: WHO- Expect southward movement of yellow fever in Brazil**

11 February- In December and January, Brazil recorded 36 cases of yellow fever, including 8 deaths. Today the World Health Organization (WHO) published an update on the outbreak and warned that given recent trends in human and animal cases, the virus could spread across parts of the country with low population immunity. The WHO said recent human cases in Parana state could be the beginning of a third wave of virus activity in that country. Parana state, located in southeast Brazil, had not seen a yellow fever case since 2015. The other cases recorded in the last 2 months were from Sao Paulo state. "While too early to determine if this year will show the high numbers of human cases observed in the last two large seasonal peaks, there is indication that the virus transmission is continuing to spread in a southerly direction and in areas with low population immunity," the WHO said. Since 2016, Brazil has battled two distinct waves of yellow fever outbreaks. In 2016 and 2017 there were 778 human cases, including 262 deaths, and during the 2017–2018 seasonal period, there were 1,376 human cases, including 483 deaths. [CIDRAP](#)

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## **Jamaica dengue: Six confirmed deaths to date**

13 February- In a follow-up on the dengue fever outbreak in Jamaica, local media report that Portfolio Minister Dr. Christopher Tufton told Parliament this week that the number of dengue cases now stands at 1,166 suspected, presumed, or confirmed cases with dates of onset in 2019. This compares with the 1,023 suspected and confirmed cases reported in all of 2018. In addition, six confirmed deaths have been reported to date, all in children. Most of the children were from Kingston & St Andrew. Tufton did tell Parliament that 29 suspected dengue cases have been identified. The good news is that Tufton noted that the outbreak appears to be plateauing; however, it's still early to say for sure. St Catherine continues to be the hardest hit area of the island. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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