

21 February 2020

# Army Public Health Weekly Update

Army Public Health Center



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## Army working improvements for Exceptional Family Member Program

18 February- To improve assignment and case coordination for Families enrolled in the Exceptional Family Member Program, the Army's Human Resources Command has been developing a web-based system where support staff and families will be able to access cloud-based forms for faster processing. Eventually the system will be able to link EFMP information with the Army's assignments process. It will also provide quicker access to EFMP data for Soldiers and their families. Col. Steve Lewis, chief of the Army's Family Program Branch, G-9, calls it "stage 1" into making the system more efficient and accessible to EFMP families and plans to launch the system within the next year. Lewis testified at a House Armed Services Committee hearing Feb. 5 where EFMP military Families voiced their concerns about difficulties in navigating the system and getting needed healthcare. Additionally, during town hall meetings with EFMP Families in the past year, Lewis learned that some families have hardships when transferring healthcare and educational services from one installation to another during permanent-change-of-station moves. "As children move from school district to another school district and across various states, we are finding the individualized education plans that were established at prior sites aren't always being adopted and acted upon the same way in the new installation," Lewis said. [Army.mil](#)

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## Brain injuries are common in battle- The military has no reliable test for them

15 February- U.S. troops at Ayn al Asad Air Base in western Iraq hunkered down in concrete bunkers last month as Iranian missile strikes rocked the runway, destroying guard towers, hangars and buildings used to fly drones. When the dust settled, President Trump and military officials declared that no one had been killed or wounded during the attack. That would soon change. A week after the blast, Defense Department officials acknowledged that 11 service members had tested positive for traumatic brain injury, or TBI, and had been evacuated to Kuwait and Germany for more screening. Two weeks after the blast, the Pentagon announced that 34 service members were experiencing symptoms associated with brain injuries, and that an additional seven had been evacuated. By the end of January the number of potential brain injuries had climbed to 50. This week it grew to 109. The Defense Department says the numbers are driven by an abundance of caution. It noted that 70 percent of those who tested positive for a TBI had since returned to duty. But experts in the brain injury field said the delayed response and confusion were primarily caused by a problem both the military and civilian world have struggled with for more than a decade: There is no reliable way to determine who has a brain injury and who does not. Top military leaders have for years called traumatic brain injury one of the signature wounds of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan; at the height of the Iraq war in 2008, they started pouring hundreds

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**Army Medicine  
Campaign Research  
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The Army Medicine Campaign Research to Practice Education Series for military providers and staff covers medical readiness topics such as injury prevention, health promotion, and physical performance optimization. The series is held five times a year on Defense Collaboration Services (DCS) and is co-sponsored by OTSG Physical Performance Service Line and APHC Injury Prevention. Next Seminar: 24 February 2020, 1300-1410 ET



of millions of dollars into research on detection and treatment. But the military still has no objective tool for diagnosing brain injury in the field. Instead, medical personnel continue to use a paper questionnaire that relies on answers from patients — patients who may have reasons to hide or exaggerate symptoms, or who may be too shaken to answer questions accurately. [The New York Times](#)

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**GLOBAL**

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## **CDC director: Novel coronavirus 'is probably with us beyond this season, beyond this year'**

13 February- As an outbreak of a novel coronavirus has swept through Hubei province, China, the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has been preparing for its worst case scenario -- a widespread outbreak of illnesses in the United States. Right now we're in an aggressive containment mode," CDC Director Dr. Robert Redfield told CNN's Chief Medical Correspondent Dr. Sanjay Gupta in an interview on Thursday. "We don't know a lot about this virus," he said. "This virus is probably with us beyond this season, beyond this year, and I think eventually the virus will find a foothold and we will get community-based transmission." As of Thursday, there have been 15 cases of the novel coronavirus confirmed in seven states: eight in California; two in Illinois; and one in Arizona, Washington, Massachusetts, Wisconsin and Texas. [CNN](#)

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## **China enlists tech giants Alibaba and Tencent to roll out color-based QR codes to fight COVID-19**

18 February- China is using a very modern way of fighting the spread of the virus by using QR codes to individuals with smartphones to give or take away access. Alibaba and Tencent have partnered up for this ginormous endeavor. You read it right, QR codes to provide or take away access to civilians. The Chinese government has enlisted the help of the two biggest tech giants in Asia right now to help spread a nationwide color-based tracking system. [Tech Times](#)

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**The Surgeon  
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<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.

## China sees fall in coronavirus deaths but WHO urges caution

17 February- China reported its fewest new infections of coronavirus since January and its fewest deaths for a week, but the World Health Organization said data suggesting the epidemic had slowed should still be viewed with caution. China reported its fewest new infections of coronavirus since January and its fewest deaths for a week, but the World Health Organization said data suggesting the epidemic had slowed should still be viewed with caution. [Reuters](#)

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## Cruise ship passengers, some infected, flown back to U.S.

17 February- U.S. officials learned cruise ship evacuees were infected at the last minute. A day before 328 Americans were to be whisked away from a contaminated cruise ship in Japan, the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo told passengers that no one infected with the new coronavirus would be allowed to board charter flights to the United States. But those plans were hastily changed after the test results for 14 passengers came back positive — just as they were being loaded onto buses and dispatched to the airport, where two reconfigured cargo jets were waiting to fly them to military bases in California and Texas. After consultations with health experts, the U.S. government decided to let the infected evacuees, who were not yet exhibiting symptoms, board the flights. The reversal was the latest chaotic turn in a two-week quarantine of the ship, the Diamond Princess that has become an epidemiological nightmare. [The New York Times](#)

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## Data suggest antibiotics, PPIs blunt anti-PD activity

18 February- Survival in advanced non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC) declined significantly in patients treated with antibiotics or a proton pump inhibitor (PPI) at the same time they received a PD-L1 inhibitor, pooled data from two randomized trials showed. Overall, patients who received an antibiotic along with either docetaxel or atezolizumab (Tecentriq) had a 20% higher survival hazard, increasing to 26% for patients who received a PPI. Further analysis showed that the adverse associations were limited to patients randomized to atezolizumab, according to Fernanda Herrera, MD, of Lausanne University Hospital in Switzerland, and colleagues. [MedPage Today](#)

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## Diamond Princess COVID-19 cases top 600 on last day of quarantine

19 February- The Japan Ministry of Health reported today on an additional 79 passengers and crew onboard the Diamond Princess cruise ship testing positive for novel coronavirus. Positive cases were confirmed in 621 of the 3,011 people tested (including 322 asymptomatic pathogen carriers). The vessel, which arrived at Yokohama Port on February 3, reported its last day of quarantine. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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## Gene therapy to halt rare form of sight loss

17 February- A new gene therapy has been used to treat patients with a rare inherited eye disorder which causes blindness. It's hoped the NHS treatment will halt sight loss and even improve vision. Matthew Wood, 48, one of the first patients to receive the injection, told the BBC: "I value the remaining sight I have so if I can hold on to that it would be a big thing for me." The treatment costs around £600,000 but NHS England has agreed a discounted price with the manufacturer Novartis. Luxturna (voretigene neparvovec), has been approved by The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE), which estimates that just under 90 people in England will be eligible for the treatment. The gene therapy is for patients who have retinal dystrophy as a result of inheriting a faulty copy of the RPE65 gene from both parents. The gene is important for providing the pigment that light sensitive cells need to absorb light. Initially this affects night vision but eventually, as the cells die, it can lead to complete blindness. [BBC News](#)

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## Injection drug use tied to MRSA bloodstream infections in Tennessee

14 February- Researchers in Tennessee have identified another indirect impact stemming from the nation's ongoing opioid epidemic: a rise in the most dangerous type of staph infection. In a study published this week in Emerging Infectious Diseases, epidemiologists from the Tennessee Department of Health and Vanderbilt University report that nearly a quarter of the community-onset methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus bloodstream infections (CO MRSA BSIs) identified in the state from 2015 through 2017 were related to injection drug use (IDU). During that period, IDU-related cases more than doubled. The study also found that cases linked to drug use were more common among white, uninsured women between the ages of 18 and 49. The findings could help explain why CO MRSA BSI rates rose by more than 37% from 2011 through 2016 in Tennessee, while remaining steady nationwide. Although MRSA BSIs are typically associated with previous healthcare procedures and hospitalization, use of commonly injected drugs like heroin and the synthetic opioid fentanyl is also a known risk factor, because MRSA typically lives on the skin and can easily get into the bloodstream, especially if users don't clean their skin or are

reusing needles. And in Tennessee, as in other states, opioid abuse in recent years has shifted from prescription opioids to heroin and fentanyl. "If you are injecting anything through your skin directly into the bloodstream, that is a prime opportunity to introduce bacteria into your bloodstream, especially if you are not using safe injection practices," said lead study author Meghana Parikh, VMD, MPH, an epidemiologist with the Tennessee Department of Health. [CIDRAP](#)

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## **Sanofi announces it will work with HHS to develop coronavirus vaccine**

18 February- The drug maker Sanofi Pasteur is entering the race to develop a vaccine to protect against the new coronavirus sweeping through China, the company announced Monday. David Loew, Sanofi's global head of vaccines, said the company would partner with the U.S. Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority — known as BARDA — to make a vaccine using the company's recombinant DNA platform. Loew said the company's previous work to develop a vaccine for SARS — a cousin virus — gives it a leg up on this work. Even so, the work won't be quick. The timeline to a licensed vaccine, even with an emergency use approval, is likely three or four years, said John Shiver, Sanofi's head of vaccine research and development. "That's probably about as fast as that can really happen," he said. Neither Loew nor BARDA would reveal how much money the government agency would be injecting into the work. BARDA would only say that it is "reprogramming funds" to support the project. [STAT News](#)

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## **Severity of kids opioid poisoning on the rise**

17 February- Roughly one in four opioid poisonings involve children and adolescents, and these poisonings have become more severe and life-threatening in recent years, a researcher said here. The retrospective analysis of 753,592 opioid poisoning cases reported to the National Poison Data System from 2005 until 2018 revealed that 207,543 (27.5%) involved children and adolescents younger than age 19 years, reported Megan Land, MD, of Emory University in Atlanta. Also, nearly one in 10 children and adolescents who overdosed on opioids were admitted to a critical care unit (CCU) between 2015 through 2018 and, during the same time period, more than one in five opioid overdoses involved an attempted suicide, she said in a presentation at the Society of Critical Care Medicine congress.

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## INFLUENZA

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

Week ending 08 February 2020 (week 6): During week 6, there were 7,105 specimens were submitted for testing, which represents a 13% decrease from week 5. Influenza A represented the majority (67%) of positive specimens submitted for testing. At 26%, PHC-A has the highest percentage of positive specimens for influenza A compared to other regions. Additionally, PHC-A accounted for the majority of positive influenza A specimens (53%); 70% of positive influenza A specimens were from non-AD beneficiaries. Beneficiaries younger than 18 years old formed the majority (50%) of total positive respiratory specimens, which was followed by those 18 to 29 years of age (18%). Eleven influenza-associated hospitalizations were reported in week 6. [APHC](#)

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### WHO: Influenza Update

17 February 2020 - Update number 361, based on data up to 02 February 2020:

- In the temperate zone of the northern hemisphere, respiratory illness indicators and influenza activity remained elevated overall.
- In North America, influenza activity remained elevated influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 and B viruses co-circulating.
- In Europe, influenza activity continued to increase across the region but appeared to have peaked in some countries of Northern Europe.
- In Central Asia, influenza activity increased with detections of all seasonal influenza subtypes.
- In Northern Africa, influenza activity increased in Algeria and Tunisia, with detections of influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 and B viruses.
- In Western Asia, influenza activity remained elevated overall, though in some countries activity returned to low levels.
- In East Asia, influenza-like illness (ILI) and influenza activity remained elevated overall.
- In the Caribbean and Central American countries, influenza activity was low across reporting countries, except for Mexico with increased activity of influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 viruses. In tropical South American countries, influenza activity was low.
- In tropical Africa, influenza detections were low across reporting countries.
- In Southern Asia, influenza activity was low overall, though remained elevated in Afghanistan.
- In South East Asia, influenza activity was low in most reporting countries.
- 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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### **Blackberry warning remains in place as outbreak declared over**

19 February- Federal officials still can't say for sure where the blackberries came from, but today they repeated their public warning about fresh berries that were sold in the fall of 2019 and linked to a multi-state hepatitis A outbreak. As of today, public health labs have confirmed 20 patients in the seven-state outbreak, according to an investigation update from the Food and Drug Administration. More than half have been so sick they required hospitalization, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, which is declaring the outbreak is over. Even though the blackberries were sold in September, there has been an ongoing concern because so many people freeze fresh berries for later use in smoothies, salads, and desserts. Also, it can take up to 50 days after exposure to the liver virus for symptoms to develop, according to the CDC. The most recent person to be confirmed in the outbreak became ill on Nov. 15, 2019. "People who purchased the fresh blackberries and then froze those berries for later consumption should not eat these berries. They should be thrown away," the FDA warned today. "If consumers purchased conventional blackberries from Fresh Thyme Farmers Market stores in the 11 (implicated) states . . . or from Woodman's Market located in Wisconsin and Illinois between Sept. 9-30, ate those berries in the last two weeks, and have not been vaccinated for the hepatitis A virus, they should consult with their healthcare professional to determine whether post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) is indicated. PEP is recommended for unvaccinated people who have been exposed to HAV in the last two weeks." The 11 states where the fresh blackberries were sold are Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Missouri, Minnesota, Nebraska, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin. [Food Safety News](#)

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### **E. coli prompts milk recall in Australian states**

17 February- Milk has been recalled across two Australian states due to potential E. coli contamination. The issue was identified as a result of company testing. It is not clear what strain of E. coli is involved but there have been no reports of illness. 7-Eleven Pty Ltd recalled its own brand 2-liter full cream milk with a use-by of Feb. 24 that was sold at multiple stores in New South Wales (NSW) and the Australian Capital Territory (ACT). Aldi recalled Farmdale full cream milk 3 liters with a use-by of Feb. 25 that was available for sale in the ACT and certain NSW Aldi stores. Lion Dairy & Drinks recalled its Dairy Farmers 1 liter full cream white milk products with a use-by date of Feb. 25 and its Dairy Farmers 3 liter full cream white milk products with a use-by date of Feb. 24. These products were

manufactured at the firm's Penrith dairy site and have been distributed across New South Wales through Coles, Woolworths, and IGA sites and some independent outlets such as milk bars, cafes and convenience stores. The company also recalled Dairy Choice full cream 2 liters and Community Co. The Good Drop full cream 2 liters with a use-by date of Feb. 25 and sold in NSW. Items were distributed in NSW for sale at IGA stores and various independents including milk bars, cafes and convenience stores. Lion Dairy & Drinks contract packs the 2 liter Community Co Good Drop product for Metcash and their IGA stores. [Food Safety News](#)

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## **FDA alert warns pet owners of Salmonella contamination in raw food**

14 February- The FDA is cautioning pet owners not to feed their pet's certain Aunt Jeni's Home Made frozen raw pet food "as it poses a serious threat to consumer and animal health" because of Salmonella Infantis contamination. The Salmonella was discovered in January when the FDA collected one retail sample of Aunt Jeni's Home Made Turkey Dinner Dog Food. The Salmonella was also found to be resistant to multiple antibiotic drugs. Salmonella in pet food is a threat to human and animal health because pets can get sick from this pathogen and can also be carriers of the bacteria and pass it on to their owners without appearing to be ill. People can also get sick from handling the contaminated pet food, or touching surfaces that have had contact with the contaminated food.

The product: Aunt Jeni's Home Made All-Natural Raw Turkey Dinner Dog Food, 5 lb. (2.3 kg), lot 175331 NOV2020.

Consumers who purchased the product are urged to not feed it to their pet, throw it away, and sanitize surfaces that may have come in contact with the product. If consumers have the product and cannot determine the lot code, the FDA recommends that the product be thrown away. [Food Safety News](#)

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## WELLNESS

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### **Car seat safety: Should you remove your child's winter jacket before buckling up?**

14 February- Frigid temperatures mean extra layers, and when it comes to little ones that usually means bundling them up from head to toe. But could the extra layers be putting them in harm's way, especially when it comes to car seats? At least one expert says yes. "As a rule of thumb jackets, winter coats or snowsuits should not be worn while riding in a car seat," Laura Flinn, an assistant professor in Bradley University's online nursing program, told Fox News. "By having extra bulky clothing on the child, it prevents the harness from securing the child in place during potential accidents." [Fox News](#)

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### **Losing sleep over the quest for a perfect nights rest**

18 February- If you're having a hard time falling asleep, that sleep tracker on your wrist might be to blame. And there's a name for this new kind of insomnia of the digital age: orthosomnia. It's "when you just really become fixated on having this perfect sleep via tracker," said Seema Khosla, medical director at the North Dakota Center for Sleep. "And then you start worrying about it, and you wind up giving yourself insomnia." Sleep trackers have become increasingly popular. They come in the form of watches, wristbands, rings and even mattresses. The gadgets measure how you breathe, how fast your heart is beating, how much you're tossing and turning. They crunch that data to produce a sleep score, usually through a smartphone app. But in an irony of our digital lifestyles, for some people, perfecting that sleep score becomes an end unto itself — so much so that they can lose sleep over it. [NPR](#)

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## Ethiopia chikungunya: No cases reported since early December

17 February- In a follow-up on the chikungunya outbreak in Ethiopia, UN health officials say no cases of the mosquito-borne disease have been reported since Dec. 8, 2019. From late July 2019 to Dec. 8, 2019, Ethiopia saw a total of 54,908 suspected cases—most in Dire Dawa City Administrative City. Chikungunya is a viral disease transmitted to humans by infected mosquitoes. It causes fever and severe joint pain, which is often debilitating. Other symptoms include muscle pain, headache, nausea, fatigue, and rash. Because of the lack of cases in more than two months, the World Health Organization has classified this as a closed event. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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## Uganda reports Crimean Congo hemorrhagic fever case in Kagadi district

17 February- The World Health Organization (WHO) is reporting a Crimean Congo hemorrhagic fever (CCHF) in Uganda. The patient is a 23-year-old male, a lumber jack, from Kagadi district who developed a fever on January 7 and had self-medication for malaria without improvement. He has no history of getting in contact with slaughtered animal meat or bush meat. He later developed generalized body weakness, abdominal pains and on January 20 followed by bleeding from the nose, vomiting and urinating blood. The bleeding increased and he was rushed to Kagadi hospital and isolated. A sample was collected and transported to UVRI on 21 January and the results were positive for CCHF on the same day. Nine contacts were followed up as of 10 February 2020. Crimean-Congo hemorrhagic fever is a widespread disease caused by a tick-borne virus (Nairovirus) of the Bunyaviridae family. The CCHF virus causes severe viral hemorrhagic fever outbreaks, with a case fatality rate of 10–40%. Animals become infected by the bite of infected ticks and the virus remains in their bloodstream for about one week after infection, allowing the tick-animal-tick cycle to continue when another tick bites. Although a number of tick genera are capable of becoming infected with CCHF virus, ticks of the genus Hyalomma are the principal vector. The CCHF virus is transmitted to people either by tick bites or through contact with infected animal blood or tissues during and immediately after slaughter. The majority of cases have occurred in people involved in the livestock industry, such as agricultural workers, slaughterhouse workers and veterinarians. Human-to-human transmission is possible.

[Outbreak News Today](#)

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## Pakistan polio cases up to 12 this year, Imran Khan says Afghanistan a key source of polio

14 February- Pakistan reported an additional five wild poliovirus type 1 (WPV1) cases this past week—three from Sindh province and two from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. This brings the number of cases in 2020 to 12 and 144 for 2019. In a recent interview, Prime Minister Imran Khan has said that poliovirus is spreading in the country from Afghanistan. “Special arrangements are being made to monitor cross-border movement of people from Afghanistan and that will help prevent spread of poliovirus,” the prime minister said. According to the Prime Minister Office (PMO), Mr. Khan said that Pakistan’s biggest priority was to eradicate polio from the country as the government was taking all steps in its fight against the ailment. Khan is also quoted as saying the fact that polio still exists is a “matter of shame”. “We all need to understand that if this disease starts spreading, it would have many repercussions on our country,” the prime minister cautioned. “It would become very hard for our workers who go abroad, for our tourists and businessmen.” [Outbreak News Today](#)

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## France records 12th COVID-19 case, more cases in Singapore

16 February- France’s health ministry, or the Sante publique France has reported an additional COVID-19 case in the country. As of today, the national epidemiological situation reported 12 confirmed cases, including 6 cases grouped in the Alps. A death has been reported in France since 02/14/20 in a confirmed case diagnosed at the end of January 2020, an 81-year-old man who was hospitalized in Paris.

Singapore: The Ministry of Health (MOH) has confirmed and verified three additional cases of COVID-19 infection in Singapore. Of these, two are linked to the cluster at Grace Assembly of God, and the other is linked to a previous case. As of 1February 16, 871 of the suspect cases have tested negative for COVID-19, and 75 have tested positive. Test results for the remaining 119 cases are pending. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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## Spain: Mumps outbreak in Girona, Catalonia

18 February- The Public Health Agency of Catalonia in Girona reports investigating an outbreak of mumps in the Gironès and Pla de l'Estany regions. According to an El País report, since the beginning of the year more than a hundred people were infected and the number continues to grow. In all of 2018, only 33 cases were detected in the entire Region of Girona. Nine out of 10 people affected by the outbreak are young (ages 16-30 years). Many of them share educational centers, football clubs or entertainment venues, which has caused the virus to spread rapidly, the report notes. Public Health has sent a letter to people close to the cases detected in which specifies, "in accordance with the protocol for prevention and control of mumps of the General Directorate of Public Health, vaccination is recommended to contacts born after 1966, who are not vaccinated and who have not had the disease." In addition, it notes that "during the years 1994, 1995 and 1996, the Triple viral vaccine was administered with a low immunogenic parotidic component", for this reason people who have received one of the doses in these years, the letter states, and "should administer a booster dose." [Outbreak News Today](#)

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### USINDOPACOM

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## Taiwan, Hong Kong and China COVID-19 update

17 February- Taiwan: Today, the Central Epidemic Command Center (CECC) announced two more cases of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). One of the cases is a female in her 80s (21st case) while the other case is a male in his 30s (22nd case). The two patients are family members of 19th and 20th cases announced yesterday. The contact tracing initiated by the health agency found that the 21st case developed symptoms February 6, and the 22nd case had a fever and cough from January 28 to February 6. The two patients were confirmed infected with COVID-19 after lab tests today. As 22nd case don't live with the other 3 family members, the case is believed to be contracted from the index case at a family reunion during the Lunar New Year holiday, and thus it is determined to be a family cluster.

Hong Kong: The Hong Kong Centre for Health Protection (CHP) reported investigating three additional cases of novel coronavirus infection, taking to 60 the number of confirmed cases so far in Hong Kong. A spokesman for the CHP said, "According to our preliminary epidemiological investigations, some of the confirmed cases are locally infected. The CHP strongly urged the public to maintain at all times strict personal and environmental hygiene which is key to personal protection against infection and prevention of the spread of the disease in the community."

China: Today, Chinese officials reported 1886 new confirmed cases and 98 new deaths (93 in Hubei, and 3 in Henan). To date, 72,436 confirmed cases have been reported in China, including 1,868 deaths. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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## U.S.: Chicago- Two COVID-19 patients released from home isolation

16 February- In a follow-up on the two COVID-19 patients in Chicago, Illinois (HERE and HERE), the Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH), Cook County Department of Public Health (CCDPH) and Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) announced this weekend the two Chicago area patients were released from home isolation late yesterday, following U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance. "Our two Illinois residents with confirmed coronavirus disease 2019 have recovered from their illnesses and there has been no further spread of the virus from these two cases," said IDPH Director Dr. Ngozi Ezike. "The risk to the general public remains low and we are continuing to use every tool at our disposal to keep our community safe." "Based on what is currently known about the virus, and after close consultation with CDC and IDPH, we believe both patients can now safely return to their regular activities, including work, without restrictions," said CDPH Commissioner Dr. Allison Arwady. "They have now had multiple rounds of negative testing for the virus and are clinically well. They do not need to wear masks, and neither does anyone interacting with them. They have been cleared." "We understand people may be concerned because this is a new disease, but it's difficult to spread what you don't have. The negative test results mean there is no virus present," said CCDPH Chief Operating Officer Dr. Terry Mason. "You can't spread what you don't have. We hope the media and the public will respect the couple's privacy and be kind to them. They have been through a lot. We thank them, and everyone else involved, for their cooperation throughout the process; including the hospital, healthcare workers, public health employees and contacts who were later ruled out." [Outbreak News Today](#)

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## Costa Rica: Child who contracted 'brain-eating amoeba' 'progressing satisfactorily'

20 February- In a follow-up on the third ever *Naegleria fowleri* infection, and the second in 2020, in Costa Rica, the Ministry of Health reports the 4-year-old girl is "progressing satisfactorily". Daniel Salas, the Minister of Health said the girl is "out of danger" and recovering thanks to prompt medical attention. On Wednesday, businessmen and owners of hot springs met Mr. Salas, the Director General of Health, Priscila Herrera and the Director of Health Surveillance, Rodrigo Marín, in order to discuss the regulations that are promoted to the sector to prevent cases of amebic meningitis (computer translated). The space allowed a positive exchange where both parties agreed on the importance of protecting the health of the population. Entrepreneurs expressed interest in actively participating in the



public consultation of the regulation being promoted. In addition, together with the National Chamber of Tourism (CANATUR), they offered contributions of international legislation in order to be contemplated in the construction of the new regulations. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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## Dengue epidemic prompts ‘state of sanitary emergency’ in Paraguay Senate; Sent to Executive

18 February- In an extraordinary session Monday, the Chamber of Deputies sanctioned the bill “That declares a state of sanitary emergency throughout the territory of the Republic of Paraguay in the face of the dengue epidemic”; this, for a period of 90 days. The regulations are referred to the Executive Branch. The proposal, coming from the Senate, provides that the Ministry of Public Health and Social Welfare, Hospital de Clínicas and the other public institutions affected by this health emergency be authorized to adopt administrative measures that they deem appropriate, and may carry out procurement on goods and services under the exceptions regime provided for in the Public Procurement Law. It is also contemplated that this initiative will be a tool to consider all the technical support that is required, to deal with the dengue epidemic. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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## Haiti reports typhoid outbreak in North-East

17 February- The Mayor of the commune of Mont-Organisé, in North-East department, said today that Typhoid fever is raging because of the poor quality of the water consumed by the population. “Several cases of typhoid, but also of malaria, are registered in Mont-Organisé, because the question of water constitutes a crucial problem in Mont-Organisé”, deplores the municipal council of Mont-Organisé. Health case is limited there and when cases of illness exceed capacity, patients are transferred to other centers in Milot or in Cap-Haitien (North). Typhoid fever, caused by the bacterium *Salmonella typhi*, is a life-threatening bacterial infection. Typhoid fever is still common in the developing world, where it affects about 21 million people annually. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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