

26 April 2019

Army Public Health Weekly Update

Army Public Health Center



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Subscription or Comments

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U.S. MILITARY

Military law enforcement falling short in its response to domestic violence incidents, watchdog finds

24 April- Military installation law enforcement officials' inadequate responses to incidents of domestic violence may be exposing victims to more harm, and hindering commanders and prosecutors in their ability to make informed decisions about disciplinary and prosecuting actions, a Defense Department Inspector General investigation has found. These inadequate investigations and documentation, such as not submitting fingerprints to the FBI database, could also have an impact on law enforcement and national security by allowing someone to purchase a firearm who shouldn't, or allowing someone to illegally enter the U.S. who had previously committed a crime or had ties to a terrorist organization, investigators stated. Among other things, the IG recommends the services conduct a comprehensive review of criminal investigative databases and files to verify that all subjects arrested in domestic violence incidents from 1998 to present are properly entered into the Defense Central Index of Investigations. [Military Times](#)

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Prosecutors, NCIS investigator accused of 'misconduct' in war crimes case

24 April- A motion filed Tuesday in California threatens to derail the entire war crimes case against Special Warfare Operator Chief Edward "Eddie" Gallagher. Drafted by Gallagher's civilian defense attorney Timothy Parlatore, it paints a portrait of "stonewalling" prosecutors refusing to turn over evidence that could clear the embattled chief and a federal cop who allegedly went rogue by cherry-picking witness statements to salvage a rickety case. "Rather than conduct a proper investigation in search of the truth, (the agent) began with a pre-determined conclusion and went about finding evidence to support that conclusion, while ignoring or suppressing anything that conflicted with that narrative," Parlatore wrote in his filing. Gallagher, 39, is accused of stabbing to death an unarmed and seriously wounded Islamic State prisoner of war during a 2017 deployment to Iraq, plus shooting an old man and a young girl in a violent spree that prosecutors contend might have claimed hundreds of lives. Although the motion accuses prosecutors of withholding evidence benefiting Gallagher — records independently uncovered by Navy Times — the motion expends much of its ink on the Naval Criminal Investigative Service, an agency Parlatore accuses of botching the entire probe. And the lead investigator on the case, NCIS Special Agent Joe Warpinski, is in Parlatore's legal cross hairs. [Military Times](#)

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Explore Health of the Force

Empower Army senior leaders with knowledge and context to improve Army health and Soldier readiness.



Recording device reportedly found in women's bathroom aboard ship with the 22nd MEU

22 April- Naval Criminal Investigative Service is investigating a report that a recording device was found in a women's bathroom aboard the San Antonio-class amphibious transport dock Arlington, according to Navy officials. The device was found by a female Marine aboard the ship in a bathroom that is primarily used by female Marines, though available to female sailors as well, according to Cmdr. Kyle Raines, 6th Fleet spokesman. "The command has taken, and will continue to take, all necessary actions to ensure the safety and privacy of the victim," Raines said in an emailed statement to Marine Corps Times. "The Navy/Marine Corps team takes all reports of sexual harassment seriously, and are committed to thoroughly investigating these allegations and providing resources and care to victims of sexual harassment," Raines added. It's not the first time the Navy has had to deal with illicit filming or photos of female service members aboard a Navy vessel. In 2015, at least 12 sailors were caught up in a ring to film female crew undressing aboard the ballistic missile submarine Wyoming. [Marine Times](#)

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Victims of military medical mistakes to tell their stories at congressional hearing seeking legal fixes

22 April- House lawmakers will hear directly from the victims of military medical mistakes next week in a hearing looking at whether Congress should consider changing the rules regarding malpractice cases against the Department of Defense. Among those scheduled to testify at the hearing on April 30 are Sgt. 1st Class Richard Stayskal, a Green Beret fighting stage four lung cancer because of Army doctor's errors, and the widow of Air Force Staff Sgt. Dean Patrick Witt, who was left in a vegetative state after a botched appendectomy surgery. Natalie Khawam, an attorney for Stayskal, said the 37-year-old father of two is in considerable pain daily but will appear before the House Armed Services Committee to "show that there needs to be accountability for these doctors." [Military Times](#)

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GLOBAL

A common food additive is linked to insulin resistance

24 April- A common food additive could alter metabolism in ways that could increase the risk of diabetes, a preliminary study suggests. The study, which involved research in humans and mice, investigated a food additive called propionate, which prevents mold growth and is widely used as a preservative in cheeses, baked goods (including bread) and artificial flavorings. The study found that, in mice, consumption of propionate led to high blood sugar levels in the short term and weight gain and insulin resistance in the long term. (Insulin resistance means the body doesn't respond well to the hormone insulin, which helps

Executive Summary 2018 Health of the Force

Soldier health is the foundation of our Army's ability to deploy, fight, and win against any adversary. Health of the Force is an evidence-based portrait of the health and well-being of U.S. Army Active Component Soldiers. It communicates information leaders can use to understand and improve Soldier health, medical readiness, and health promotion measures.



cells take in sugar, or glucose. Such resistance can lead to the high blood sugar levels seen in people with diabetes.) In a small trial involving humans, people who consumed propionate experienced temporary increases in insulin resistance, over the space of a few hours, compared with those who didn't consume the additive. [Live Science](#)

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Death toll rises in Sri Lanka explosions carried out on Easter Sunday

21 April- Nearly 300 people were killed and hundreds more wounded after explosions tore through Sri Lanka in a series of coordinated blasts that struck three churches and three hotels. It marked the country's worst violence since the end of its civil war in 2009. Police spokesman Ruwan Gunasekara said Monday the death toll had risen to 290 dead with more than 500 wounded, according to The Associated Press. A top police official reportedly had alerted security officials 10 days earlier about a threat to churches from a radical Islamist group, National Thowheeth Jama'ath. It was unclear what precautions, if any, had been taken, or whether that group had played any role in the assaults, according to The New York Times. Sri Lanka's prime minister, Ranil Wickremesinghe, pointedly said he and other ministers had not been warned, in what appeared to be a sign of the recent frictions within the government hierarchy, the paper adds. The blasts started as people gathered for Mass on Easter Sunday. In Colombo, the country's capital, bombings were reported at St. Anthony's Shrine and three high-end hotels: the Shangri-La, the Cinnamon Grand and the Kingsbury. [NPR](#)

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First ADHD device approved

22 April- The first medical device to treat attention deficit-hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) in children won marketing approval from the FDA Friday. The prescription-only device from NeuroSigma, called the Monarch external Trigeminal Nerve Stimulation (eTNS) system, delivers low-level electrical stimulation to branches of the trigeminal nerve, sending signals to parts of the brain thought to be involved in ADHD. The pocket-sized device is designed to be used externally at night and is indicated for children aged 7-12 currently not taking prescription ADHD medication. The FDA's decision -- technically, to permit marketing under the agency's de novo premarket review pathway -- marks the first non-drug treatment for ADHD to get the agency's OK. "This new device offers a safe, non-drug option for treatment of ADHD in pediatric patients through the use of mild nerve stimulation, a first of its kind," Carlos Peña, PhD, director of the Division of Neurological and Physical Medicine Devices of the FDA's Center for Devices and Radiological Health, said in a statement. [Med Page Today](#)

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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.

High body fat linked to possible brain shrinkage

23 April- Obesity is tied to a slew of harmful effects in the body, and now, a new study suggests it may also affect brain structure. The researchers analyzed brain scans and found that higher levels of body fat were tied to lower brain volumes in certain areas. Specifically, too much body fat was linked to reduced amounts of gray matter — the brain tissue that contains nerve cells — in structures in the center of the brain, the researchers said. The link between body fat and brain volume was stronger among men compared with women, according to the study, published today (April 23) in the journal *Radiology*. The researchers, from Leiden University Medical Center in the Netherlands, also saw changes in the brain's white matter — long nerve fibers that allow areas of the brain to communicate — tied to body fat. [Live Science](#)

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Liver illness strikes Latino children like a “silent tsunami”

18 April- Saira Diaz uses her fingers to count the establishments selling fast food and sweets near the South Los Angeles home she shares with her parents and 13-year-old son. “There’s one, two, three, four, five fast-food restaurants,” she says. “And a little mom and pop store that sells snacks and sodas and candy.” In that low-income, predominantly Latino neighborhood, it’s pretty hard for a kid to avoid sugar. Last year, doctors at St. John’s Well Child and Family Center, a nonprofit community clinic seven blocks away, became alarmed by the rising weight of Diaz’s son, Adrian Mejia. They persuaded him to join an intervention study run by the University of Southern California and Children’s Hospital Los Angeles (CHLA) that weans participants off sugar in an effort to reduce the rate of obesity and diabetes among children. It also targets a third condition fewer people have heard of: fatty liver disease. [Scientific American](#)

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Merck's Keytruda wins FDA approval as combination therapy for kidney cancer

22 April- The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has approved Merck & Co Inc’s cancer therapy, Keytruda, as part of a combination therapy for previously untreated patients with the most common type of kidney cancer, the company said on Monday. The drug was approved in combination with Pfizer Inc’s Inlyta to treat advanced renal cell carcinoma. The approval, which comes two months ahead of expectations, allows this combination therapy to get an early launch ahead of other rival products, Cowen analyst Yaron Werber said, after the company received FDA approval on Friday. The Keytruda/Inlyta combination could provide serious competition for Bristol-Myers Squibb Co’s immunotherapy combination of Opdivo and Yervoy, currently considered a gold standard for previously untreated advanced kidney cancer patients. Keytruda’s sales have surged past Opdivo’s, and the drug is

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expected to bring more than \$10 billion for Merck this year, according to IBES data from Refinitiv. Merck's Keytruda, which works by increasing the ability of the patient's immune system to help detect and fight tumor cells, has been its most important revenue growth driver with its domination of the lucrative lung cancer space. According to results from the study posted in February, about 90 percent of the patients who received the Keytruda/Inlyta combination were alive after 12 months, compared with about 78 percent of patients who were alive after a year when treated with an older Pfizer standalone therapy Sutent. [Reuters](#)
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Pain patients get relief from war on opioids

19 April- Ever since U.S. health authorities began cracking down on opioid prescriptions about five years ago, one vulnerable group has suffered serious collateral damage: the approximately 18 million Americans who have been taking opioids to manage their chronic pain. Pain specialists report that desperate patients are showing up in their offices, after being told by their regular physician, pharmacy or insurer that they can no longer receive the drugs or must shift to lower doses, no matter how severe their condition. Abrupt changes in dosage can destabilize patients who have relied for many years on opioids, and the consequences can be dire, says Stefan Kertesz, an expert on opioids and addiction at the University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Medicine. "I've seen deaths from suicide and medical deterioration after opioids are cut." Last week, after roughly three years of intensive lobbying and alarming reports from the chronic pain community, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) took separate actions to tell clinicians that it is dangerous to abruptly curtail opioids for patients who have taken them long term for pain. The FDA did so by requiring changes to opioid labels specifically warning about the risks of sudden and involuntary dose tapering. The agency cited reports of "serious withdrawal symptoms, uncontrolled pain, psychological distress, and suicide" among patients who have been inappropriately cut off from the painkillers. [Scientific American](#)

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Parkinson's results beyond researchers' wildest dreams

22 April- Previously housebound patients are now able to walk more freely as a result of electrical stimulation to their spines. A quarter of patients have difficulty walking as the disease wears on, often freezing on the spot and falling. Parkinson's UK hailed its potential impact on an aspect of the disease where there is currently no treatment. Prof Mandar Jog, of Western University in London, Ontario, told BBC News the scale of benefit to patients of his new treatment was "beyond his wildest dreams". "Most of our patients have had the disease for 15 years and have not walked with any confidence for several years," he said. "For them to go from being home-bound, with the risk of falling, to being able to go on trips to the mall and have vacations is remarkable for me to see." Normal walking involves the brain sending instructions to the legs to move. It then receives signals back when the movement has been completed before sending instructions for the next step. Prof Jog

believes Parkinson's disease reduces the signals coming back to the brain - breaking the loop and causing the patient to freeze. The implant his team has developed boosts that signal, enabling the patient to walk normally. However, Prof Jog was surprised that the treatment was long-lasting and worked even when the implant was turned off. He believes the electrical stimulus reawakens the feedback mechanism from legs to brain that is damaged by the disease. "This is a completely different rehabilitation therapy," he said. "We had thought that the movement problems occurred in Parkinson's patients because signals from the brain to the legs were not getting through. [BBC News](#)

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Scientists dig into hard questions about the fluorinated pollutants known as PFAS

22 April- Scientists are ramping up research on the possible health effects of a large group of common but little-understood chemicals used in water-resistant clothing, stain-resistant furniture, nonstick cookware and many other consumer products. Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances are generally referred to by their plural acronym, PFAS. PFAS are resistant to water, oil and heat, and their use has expanded rapidly since they were developed by companies in the mid-20th century. Today, PFAS' nonstick qualities make them useful in products as diverse as food wrappers, umbrellas, tents, carpets and firefighting foam. The chemicals are also used in the manufacture of plastic and rubber and in insulation for wiring. In short, they are all around us. And as a result, they've found their way into the soil and, especially in some regions, into our drinking water. "We're finding them contaminating many rivers, many lakes, many drinking water supplies," says Linda Birnbaum, director of the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences and the National Toxicology Program. "And we're finding them not only in the environment, but we're finding them in people." "Essentially everyone has these compounds in our blood," she explains. That's in part because PFAS don't break down easily — a quality that has earned them the nickname "forever chemicals." Some varieties have been found to stick around in the human body for years, if not decades. Others accumulate in soil or water, creating a continuous source of exposure. Despite their ubiquity, however, scientists know relatively little about the health effects of most types of PFAS. [NPR](#)

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Seniors' suicides in long-term care often go overlooked, analysis finds

23 April- ...In a nation where suicide continues to climb, claiming more than 47,000 lives in 2017, such deaths among older adults -- including the 2.2 million who live in long-term care settings -- are often overlooked. A six-month investigation by Kaiser Health News and PBS News Hour finds that older Americans are quietly killing themselves in nursing homes, assisted living centers and adult care homes. Poor documentation makes it difficult to tell exactly how often such deaths occur. But a KHN analysis of new data from the University of

Michigan suggests that hundreds of suicides by older adults each year -- nearly one per day -- are related to long-term care. Thousands more people may be at risk in those settings, where up to a third of residents report suicidal thoughts, research shows. Each suicide results from a unique blend of factors, of course. But the fact that frail older Americans are managing to kill themselves in what are supposed to be safe, supervised havens raises questions about whether these facilities pay enough attention to risk factors like mental health, physical decline and disconnectedness -- and events such as losing a spouse or leaving one's home. More controversial is whether older adults in those settings should be able to take their lives through what some fiercely defend as "rational suicide." Tracking suicides in long-term care is difficult. No federal regulations require reporting of such deaths and most states either don't count -- or won't divulge -- how many people end their own lives in those settings. [CNN](#)

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Sri Lanka dengue cases near 14k year-to-date, Expert warns of DEN-3

21 April- Sri Lanka health officials have reported nearly 14,000 dengue through Apr. 18. The health districts accounting for the most of the 13,975 cases to date include Colombo (3126), Gampaha (1748) and Jaffna (1705). At least 11 dengue-related fatalities have been reported. Last year, Sri Lanka reported nearly 52,000 cases, following the epidemic of 186,000 in 2017, in which Dengue Fever Virus Type 2 (DEN-2) was the predominant strain. Some experts in the country predict there may be an epidemic this year due to Dengue Fever Virus Type 3 (DEN-3). [Outbreak News Today](#)

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US flu still elevated but dropping; deaths as high as 57,000

19 April- Levels of influenza-like illness (ILI) in the United States remain elevated for the 21st consecutive week—the longest season in recent years—but the disease is on the decline, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) said today in its weekly update. Still, the agency says influenza has caused up to 57,300 deaths and sickened up to 41.3 million people, according to new estimates. And the CDC reported five new flu-related deaths in children, raising the total confirmed this season to 91. The 21 straight weeks of elevated outpatient ILI activity is more than any of the past five seasons, including last year, which was particularly severe. From 2013-14 to 2017-18, above-baseline ILI activity stretched for 11 to 20 weeks (in 2014-15), with an average of 16 weeks. The proportion of outpatient visits for ILI last week was 2.4%, down from 2.8% the week before but still above the baseline of 2.2%. Seven of 10 US regions reported ILI at or above their region-specific baselines. In its latest estimates on flu impact today, the CDC said the disease has sickened from 36 million to 41.3 million people this season through Apr 13, of whom 16.7 million to 19.4 million sought medical care. In addition, the disease has hospitalized 502,000 to

610,000 patients and killed 34,400 to 57,300. The CDC bases its estimates on its weekly FluView surveillance reports, which summarize key flu activity indicators. The agency has not previously provided in-season estimates. [CIDRAP](#)

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WHO Ebola responder killed in hospital attack

19 April- Armed militia members attacked clinics involved in the Ebola response in the hot spot Butembo today, killing a World Health Organization (WHO) outbreak responder and dealing another setback to efforts to recover from an earlier violence. Meanwhile, in an ongoing gush of cases following response delays from the earlier attacks, 15 more infections were confirmed in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) today, putting the outbreak total at 1,317. According to a DRC media report, the unidentified attackers struck clinics at Catholic University of Graben, killing a foreign doctor, burning a truck carrying health workers, and causing other damage. The clinics house an Ebola triage response team. [CIDRAP](#)

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World's first malaria vaccine to go to 360,000 African children

24 April- Some 360,000 children a year in three African countries will receive the world's first malaria vaccine as part of a large-scale pilot project, the World Health Organization (WHO) said Tuesday. Malawi has started vaccinating children under two years of age and Kenya and Ghana will begin using the vaccine in the coming weeks, with health ministries in these countries deciding where it will be used, the WHO said. The vaccine offers partial protection from the disease, with clinical trials finding that the vaccine prevented approximately four in 10 malaria cases, according to the WHO. "We have seen tremendous gains from bed nets and other measures to control malaria in the last 15 years, but progress has stalled and even reversed in some areas. We need new solutions to get the malaria response back on track, and this vaccine gives us a promising tool to get there," WHO Director-General Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said in a press statement. "The malaria vaccine has the potential to save tens of thousands of children's lives." Malaria is a parasitic disease transmitted through the bite of female Anopheles mosquitoes. It is both preventable and treatable, yet an estimated 435,000 people die of it each year. [CNN](#)

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INFLUENZA

AFHSB: DoD Seasonal Influenza Surveillance Summary

Seasonal Influenza Surveillance Summary - Week 15

NORTHCOM-Influenza activity returned to minimal or continued to decrease. No states had high activity.

EUCOM-Influenza activity remained minimal across EUCOM.

PACOM-Influenza activity was minimal across PACOM.

CENTCOM-Influenza activity was minimal in CENTCOM countries with available data.

AFRICOM-In Djibouti, influenza activity remained minimal.

SOUTHCOM-Influenza activity in Honduras was low and activity in Cuba remained minimal.

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

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APHC: U.S. Army Influenza Activity Report

Week ending 13 April 2019 (week 15): In week 15, a 39% decrease in the number of positive specimens was noted when compared to week 14; there were 450 samples in week 14 and 275 samples in week 15. Positive specimens of parainfluenza increased by 31%, with 13 positive specimens in week 14 and 17 in week 15. Two influenza-associated hospitalizations with an onset date in week 15 were reported in the Disease Reporting System internet; neither were Active Duty Service Members. This brings this flu season's total hospitalizations to 165, a 20% decrease from the 206 total cases reported at this point in the 2017-2018 season. As the influenza season closes, leaders should continue to stress the importance of proper hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette in the prevention of respiratory illnesses.

[APHC](#)

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

2018-2019 Influenza Season Week 15 ending April 13, 2019

-Viral Surveillance: The percentage of respiratory specimens testing positive for influenza viruses in clinical laboratories decreased. During the most recent three weeks, influenza A(H3) viruses were reported more frequently than influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 viruses nationally, and in all 10 HHS Regions.

-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: Five influenza-associated pediatric deaths were reported to CDC during week 15. [CDC](#)

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ECDC: Flu News Europe

Week 15/ 2019 (8-14 April 2019)

-Of 41 countries reporting on geographic spread, 5 reported widespread activity. Specimens collected from individuals presenting with ILI or ARI to sentinel primary health care sites yielded an influenza virus positivity rate of 20%, a further decrease for the fifth week in a row.

-Of 41 countries reporting on influenza activity, 40 reported baseline or low intensity levels and 1 reported medium intensity.

-Influenza type A viruses dominated with more A(H3N2) than A(H1N1)pdm09 viruses being detected among sentinel and non-sentinel source specimens. Very few influenza B viruses were detected.

-Of the subset of specimens from patients with severe acute respiratory infection (SARI) collected in week 15/2019 that were tested for influenza viruses, 16% were positive and all viruses were type A.

-Pooled data from 23 Member States and areas reporting to the EuroMOMO project indicated that the all-cause excess mortality observed in previous weeks has returned to normal levels. [European Center for Disease Prevention and Control/WHO](#)

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WHO: Influenza Update

15 April 2019 - Update number 339, based on data up to 31 March 2019

-In North America, influenza activity appeared to decrease with influenza A(H3N2) the dominant virus, followed by influenza A(H1N1)pdm09.

-In Europe, influenza activity decreased across the continent. Both influenza A viruses co-circulated; influenza A(H3N2) was the most frequently identified subtype.

-In North Africa, influenza detections were low across reporting countries.

-In Western Asia, influenza activity appeared to decrease overall, with exception of Saudi Arabia where activity remained elevated.

-In East Asia, although decreased influenza activity continued to be reported. Influenza B was the most frequently detected virus followed by influenza A(H3N2).

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

-In the Caribbean, Central American countries, and the tropical countries of South America, influenza and RSV activity were low in general.

-In the temperate zones of the southern hemisphere, influenza activity remained at inter-seasonal levels, with the exception of some parts of Australia where influenza activity was above inter-seasonal levels.

-Worldwide, seasonal influenza A viruses accounted for the majority of detections. [WHO](#)
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VETERINARY/FOOD SAFETY

Costco's Kirkland Signature brand veggie burgers recalled because of metal pieces

20 April- Belmont Meat Products is recalling Kirkland Signature brand Harvest Burger, "Veggie Burgers" because they may contain pieces of metal, according to a recall notice posted Thursday on the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) website. Kirkland Signature is Costco's trademarked house brand. The Canadian company distributed the Kirkland Signature brand Harvest Burger products to British Columbia, Ontario, Quebec, and "possibly national" retail locations. The CFIA is verifying that industry is removing recalled product from the marketplace. Consumers can use the following information to see if they have any of the recalled product in their homes: Any consumers who have unused portions of the products in their homes are urged to immediately throw them out or return them to the place of purchase. "There have been reported injuries associated with the consumption of this product," the recall notice said. CFIA noted that this recall was triggered by a consumer complaint. 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." Consumers with questions about the recall can contact the Belmont Meat Products toll free line at 800-442-2342. [Food Safety News](#)

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E. coli outbreak from tainted ground beef expands to 10 states

24 April- At least 156 people in 10 states have been infected with E. coli after eating tainted ground beef at home and in restaurants, federal officials said. Of the people infected so far, 20 have been hospitalized, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said Tuesday. No deaths have been reported. The cases include people who've eaten the beef since March 1, the agency said, but no supplier, distributor or brand of beef has been identified.

"Traceback investigations are ongoing to determine the source of raw ground beef supplied to grocery stores and restaurant locations where ill people reported eating," the CDC said. People fell ill starting March 1, the agency said. Those infected range in age from younger than 1 to 83 years old, with a median age of 19. "Illnesses that occurred after March 26

might not yet be reported due to the time it takes between when a person becomes ill with E. coli and when the illness is reported. This takes an average of two to three weeks," the CDC said. The CDC earlier this month said it had identified ground beef as the food responsible for an outbreak that at the time involved 109 cases of illnesses in six states. The outbreak has now expanded to include: Georgia, Kentucky, Ohio, Tennessee, Virginia, Indiana, Florida, Illinois, Mississippi and Minnesota. Meanwhile, Colorado Premium Foods recalled more than 113,000 pounds of raw ground beef products due to possible E. Coli contamination, the Food Safety and Inspection Service said Tuesday in a statement. The Georgia company said the ground beef items were produced on March 26 and 29, and on April 2, 5, 10 and 12. There's no established link between the product and the ongoing E. coli outbreak, according to the statement. Symptoms of E. coli infection include severe stomach cramps, diarrhea and vomiting. They begin, on average, three to four days after ingesting the bacteria. Most people recover in five to seven days. Consumers are urged to prevent the spread of E. coli by washing hands, cooking ground beef to an internal temperature of 160 degrees and keeping uncooked foods away from raw beef to prevent cross-contamination. [CNN](#)

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FDA finds Listeria, Salmonella in U.S. ice cream production plants

25 April- This week the Food and Drug Administration released its findings from inspections and environmental sampling for Listeria monocytogenes and Salmonella at 89 ice cream production facilities in 32 states that the agency conducted from Sept. 12, 2016, through Aug. 30, 2017. The FDA detected Listeria monocytogenes in 19 of the facilities; however, only one of them was found to have the pathogen on a food-contact surface. The agency also detected Salmonella in one facility. The agency's report said FDA began the special sampling program following 16 recalls of ice cream products that occurred from 2013 to 2015 due to the presence of pathogens, and an outbreak of listeriosis linked to an ice cream maker in 2015 that involved three deaths. The FDA sampling was designed to gain insights into the extent to which Listeria monocytogenes and Salmonella may be in the manufacturing environment, and to evaluate each establishment's ability to identify, prevent, reduce, and/or eliminate microbial hazards of public health concern. "Inspecting food facilities and collecting and testing samples from the environment where foods are produced are two of the many ways the FDA works to better understand microbial hazards and to help prevent contaminated products from reaching consumers," said FDA's Deputy Commissioner for Food Policy and Response Frank Yiannas. [Food Safety News](#)

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More sick in outbreak linked to fresh melon sold by Walmart, Kroger, others

25 April- An outbreak of Salmonella linked to pre-cut fresh melon continues to grow, with 117 people across 10 states confirmed with infections. More than a third of the patients have required hospitalization. Public health officials are urging consumers to not eat the pre-cut fresh melon products listed in the chart below because of the risk of contracting Salmonella Carrau infections. The FDA and CDC say the melon should be discarded. Consumers who have such products in their homes but are not sure of the brand or where the melon was purchased should throw it out. Traceback evidence indicates imported melon that was processed, packaged and distributed by Caito Foods LLC of Indianapolis is the likely source, according to the Food and Drug Administration and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The agencies updated their outbreak reports Wednesday. The company posted a recall of some of its fresh melon products on April 12. "In interviews, ill people answered questions about the foods they ate and other exposures in the week before they became ill," according to the CDC's outbreak update. "Forty-six (73 percent) of 63 people interviewed reported eating pre-cut melons purchased at grocery stores, including pre-cut cantaloupe, watermelon, honeydew, or a fruit salad mix or fruit tray with melon. Five additional people reported eating pre-cut melon outside the home. Information collected from stores where ill people shopped indicates that Caito Foods LLC supplied pre-cut melon to these stores." [Food Safety News](#)

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One dead in Listeria outbreak caused by deli-sliced meats, cheeses

18 April- Deli-sliced meats and cheeses are to blame for a multistate outbreak of Listeria infections involving eight people, one of whom has died. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention late Wednesday announced a state and federal investigation into the Listeria outbreak is underway. Both the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration have joined the effort. Listeria specimens from ill people were collected from Nov. 13, 2016, through March 4, 2019. People confirmed with Listeria monocytogenes infections range in age from 40 to 88 years, with a median age of 57. Thirty-eight percent are female. All eight confirmed patients were hospitalized. Michigan officials reported one patient in their state died. Epidemiologic and laboratory evidence indicates that deli-sliced meats and cheeses might be contaminated with Listeria monocytogenes and could make people sick, according to the CDC. In interviews, ill people answered questions about the foods they ate and other exposures in the four weeks before they became ill. Of six patients who have been interviewed by public health officials, five reported eating products sliced at a deli counter, including meats and cheeses. Delis where ill people shopped served many different brands of products and there is limited information available about the brands' ill people bought. FSIS and FDA evaluated records state inspectors collected from delis where the ill people

ate to determine whether a common meat or cheese product was served at the delis. The analysis of the available documentation could not identify a common product. The FSIS and FDA will continue to assist with the investigation should additional information become available. [Food Safety News](#)

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Pea shoots recalled after positive test result for Listeria contamination

20 April- Golden Pearl Mushrooms Ltd. is recalling GPM brand Pea Shoots from the marketplace due to possible Listeria monocytogenes contamination. Consumers should not consume the recalled products described below, according to a notice posted by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA). Golden Pearl Mushrooms distributed the raw pea shoots to retailers in the provinces of Alberta and British Columbia. The recall was triggered by CFIA test results. The agency 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. The CFIA is verifying that industry is removing recalled products from the marketplace. There have been no reported illnesses associated with the consumption of these products. [Food Safety News](#)

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WELLNESS

Blankets, bed-sharing common in accidental baby suffocations

22 April- Accidental suffocation is a leading cause of injury deaths in U.S. infants and common scenarios involve blankets, bed-sharing with parents and other unsafe sleep practices, an analysis of government data found. These deaths "are entirely preventable. That's the most important point," said Dr. Fern Hauck, a co-author and University of Virginia expert in infant deaths. [Fox News](#)

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Popular e-cigarette products contaminated with bacterial and fungal toxins, study finds

24 April- Makers of e-cigarettes claim that their products are safe, but a study published Wednesday shows that dozens of popular e-cigarette products are contaminated with bacterial and fungal toxins that cause lung disease. The impurities found in the e-cigarettes — which are associated with asthma and chronic obstructive lung disease — were found in nearly a quarter of single-use e-cigarette cartridges and in over three quarters of e-liquids, the team at the Harvard School of Public Health found. "Finding these toxins in e-cigarette products adds to the growing concerns that we have about the safety of e-cigarettes," said

Dr. David Christiani, study author and professor of environmental genetics at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health in Boston. The researchers examined 75 popular e-cigarette products — 37 single-use cartridges and 38 e-liquids from 10 top selling U.S. brands. The products were classified into four different flavor categories: tobacco, menthol, fruit, and other; and screened for the presence of endotoxin and glucan, toxic inflammatory substances that damage the lungs. They found that 17 of 75 products, 23%, contained traces of endotoxin, a potent inflammatory molecule found in bacteria, and 61 of 75 products, 81%, contained traces of glucan, a toxic substance found in the cell walls of most fungi. Exposure to these microbial toxins has been associated with a myriad of health problems, including asthma, reduced lung function, and inflammation. The study also found that endotoxin concentrations were higher in fruit-flavored products, indicating that raw materials used in the production of flavors might be a source of the contamination. [NBC News](#)

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Should you be eating eggs?

22 April- ...While suggesting that Americans “eat as little dietary cholesterol as possible,” the guidelines’ scientific report in 2015 stated “cholesterol is not a nutrient of concern for overconsumption.” Then a report in JAMA of a very thorough long-term analysis involving nearly 30,000 men and women initially free of cardiovascular disease suggested otherwise. The researchers, headed by Victor W. Zhong of Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine, found that eating as little as one-half an egg a day could increase a person’s risk of heart disease, stroke and premature death. “My study showed a dose-response relationship,” Dr. Zhong, a nutrition epidemiologist, told me. “The higher the consumption of eggs, the greater the risk. Those who consumed less than one egg a week had no increased risk.” Among study participants, every 300 milligrams of cholesterol added to the daily diet increased the risk of cardiovascular disease by 17 percent and premature death from any cause by 18 percent during an average follow-up of 17.5 years, the study found.

[New York Times](#)

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The sugar in fruit doesn’t make it bad for you, despite some trendy diet claims

16 April- In recent months, my dietitian colleagues and I have been encountering more and more people making claims like “fruit is bad for you” or “fruit is toxic.” “What is going ON?” one of them posted on a dietitian Internet mailing list. What’s going on is that the current crop of fad diets, such as paleo, keto, carnivore and pegan — have convinced a lot of people that fruit is a dietary no-no. There was a time when we didn’t question whether fruit was good for us, when we more or less took “eat your fruits and veggies” to heart. Today, many people are worried that fruit is too high in carbs, sugar and calories. One of my patients wouldn’t eat any fruit other than blueberries because she had bought into the myth — again, promoted by fad diets — that blueberries are the only “safe” fruit to eat because

they are “low glycemic” (in other words, they don’t cause your blood sugar to spike). Here’s the kicker: She didn’t even like blueberries. Berries are the only fruit allowed on the pegan diet, the subtext being that other fruit is a ticket to high blood sugar; but this is a fairly liberal stance compared with other fad diets du jour. For example, many followers of the keto diet and the trending carnivore diet (a.k.a. the “zero carb” diet) call fruit toxic because of its sugar. Now, that’s what I consider disordered eating. It’s true that whole fruit contains sugar, but it is natural sugar. The sugar we would be wise to limit is added sugar, found in regular soda and many highly processed foods. When you eat an apple, a pear, a peach or some berries, their sugar comes wrapped in a fiber-rich, water-rich, nutrient-rich package. That fiber slows the release of fruit’s natural sugar into your bloodstream, preventing a sugar spike, especially if you eat your fruit as part of a meal or snack that contains protein and healthy fats. [The Washington Post](#)

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USAFRICOM

Africa: Mayotte Rift Valley Fever- 12 new animal foci and 5 new human cases

22 April- The circulation of Rift Valley Fever (RVF) continues in Mayotte, according to state services in Mayotte. During the past week, 12 new animal foci and 5 new human cases have been reported, for a total of 104 animal foci and 122 human cases since the first cases occurred at the end of November 2018. Samples taken by veterinarians on sick animals or during abortions have identified 104 foci of sick animals (including 82 bovines). Animal foci are mainly located in the center and north-west of the island. Additional outbreaks have appeared since the end of March in the communes of Dembeni, as well as on Petite Terre. After a steady decline in human cases during the last 3 weeks of March, a new increase has been observed since the beginning of April. Since the beginning of the health alert, human cases have remained mainly in the center and north-west of the island. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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Africa: Measles in Africa- Madagascar, DRC hit especially hard

23 April- ...The number of cases started increasing since the beginning of this year and peaked in epidemiological week 7, 2019 with 130 suspected cases reported. Since the beginning of the year 2019, a total of 718 suspected cases were reported. The outbreak is affecting six districts, which are: Kousseri, Mada, Goulfey, Makary, Koza et Ngaoundere rural. The measles outbreak is ongoing in three health districts (Paoua, Batangafo and Vakaga) in the country. From epidemiological week 5 to week 13, a total of 151 suspected measles cases, including 19 confirmed were reported. Two deaths were reported. [Outbreak News](#)

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USCENTCOM

Pakistan: Karachi reports 1st Naegleria fowleri death of the year

21 April- Officials with the Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Centre (JPMC) in Karachi, Pakistan is reporting the death of a 21-year old student from the Orangi Town area due to the “brain-eating amoeba”, Naegleria fowleri. The patient presented with a high-grade fever and other complaints. Upon suspicion of meningitis, he was transferred to the hospital ICU and died from primary amoebic meningoencephalitis (PAM) Friday. Laboratory analysis confirmed the presence of the parasite, Naegleria fowleri in the cerebrospinal fluid. How the patient contracted the amoeba is not noted in the report. In 2018, seven fatalities were reported in Karachi. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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USEUCOM

Scotland: Several wound botulism cases reported since February

23 April- Scotland health officials have received at least four notifications of wound botulism cases (3 confirmed and one probable) since February. The source of the infection is believed to be heroin contaminated with Clostridium botulinum spores. The first case, in NHS Fife, presented in early February 2019 and has been confirmed microbiologically. Two further cases presented in mid-late March in NHS Lanarkshire and NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde (GGC) respectively, and have also been confirmed microbiologically. In the past few days, a further probable case from NHS Lanarkshire presented. All cases presented with clinical features consistent with wound botulism, and all involve people who inject drugs (PWID). There have been no deaths among the identified cases. The last confirmed case of wound botulism among PWID in Scotland was in 2017. Botulism is a rare, potentially fatal paralytic illness caused by the neurotoxins produced by Clostridium botulinum. Wound botulism occurs when a wound is contaminated by C. botulinum spores that germinate and produce toxin inside the wound. Wound botulism in drug abusers occurs in dermal abscesses from subcutaneous or intramuscular injection (skin or muscle “popping”).

[Outbreak News Today](#)

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Ukraine: Closes in on 40,000 measles cases

20 April- With an additional 2,279 people infected with measles during the week ending April 13, the outbreak in Ukraine now stands at 39,549 including 14 fatalities, according to the Center for Public Health of the Ministry of Health of Ukraine. Fifty-four percent of cases have been reported in children. During the most recent week, cases were reported in Kyiv (309 patients: 199 adults and 110 children), Kharkiv (239: 165 adults and 74 children), Khmelnytsky (186: 93 adults and 93 children) and Lviv (157: 41 adults and 116 children) areas. The Ministry of Health of Ukraine together with the local authorities continues special measures to stop the outbreak of measles in the country. During the first quarter, a special operation to raise the level of vaccination continued in the Lviv region. As a result, 90% of children in the region have protection from measles, Lviv region has ceased to be a leader among the regions with the highest rates of measles. In the near future such a special operation will begin in Khmelnytsky region, where the number of new diseases increases every week. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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USINDOPACOM

Australia: Dengue in Vanuatu- More than 200 cases in 2019 to date

25 April- Since the beginning of the year through April 16, Vanuatu health officials have reported a total of 216 suspected dengue cases reported including 18 confirmed cases. In just the past week, 42 suspected dengue cases reported in Port Vila and Luganville and 4 cases were confirmed positive for dengue in Luganville only. The DENV-2 serotype has been circulating in Vanuatu for the last 2 years. Since Nov. 2016, some 2000 suspected dengue cases, two thirds are under 25 years old, have been reported in Vanuatu. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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Australia: Salmonella outbreaks likely to become more severe- University of Sydney researchers develop model

18 April- Australia has more salmonella outbreaks than any other country in the world, with the number of cases doubling over the last decade. Over the past month alone, there have been numerous reports of the salmonella pathogen infecting eggs, leading to vast recalls of products and sparking calls from experts for more stringent hygiene practices. In a study published in Nature – Scientific Reports, University of Sydney researchers developed a model that can predict outbreaks several months in advance. While this prediction can provide early warning signs for disease surveillance and enable a timelier and precise allocation of health resources, the team discovered future salmonella outbreaks are likely to become more severe. Led by the Director of Complex Systems Research Group Professor

Mikhail Prokopenko, the team used 2008-2016 strain data to demonstrate that genetic networks of salmonella pathogens are linked through just a few degrees of separation, indicating an increasing severity of future epidemics. "The data on salmonella outbreaks in NSW in the last decade or so highlights a continuing "arms race" between pathogens and their human hosts," explained Professor Prokopenko. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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China: Draws up tighter rules on human gene and embryo trials- Xinhua

20 April- China's top legislature will consider tougher rules on research involving human genes and embryos, the first such move since a Chinese scientist sparked controversy last year by announcing he had made the world's first "gene-edited" babies. He Jiankui, associate professor at Southern University of Science and Technology in Shenzhen, attracted condemnation from the global scientific community when he said he had used a technology known as CRISPR-Cas9 to alter the embryonic genes of twin girls born in November. Chinese authorities launched an investigation into He's work and said they had halted the kind of research he was undertaking. Under the draft laws sent to China's legislature for review on Saturday, medical and human trials would face closer scrutiny and stricter requirements, such as ensuring human subjects are properly briefed, state media outlet Xinhua reported. The rules would also require all future trials to be approved by administrative authorities as well as ethical committees, it said. The report did not specify a timeline for the approval of the regulations, or make specific mention of He's research. In videos posted online and at the November 2018 conference where He made his controversial presentation, He said he believed his gene editing would help protect the girls from infection with HIV, the virus that causes AIDS. Chinese authorities and institutions, as well as hundreds of international scientists, condemned him and said any application of gene editing on human embryos for reproductive purposes was against the law and medical ethics of China. [Reuters](#)

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Japan: Syphilis update and other infectious diseases

20 April- Nearly a month after our last report on the syphilis situation in Japan, officials report an additional 495 cases, bringing the total cases for 2019 to 1627. According to the National Institute of Infectious Diseases (NIID), Tokyo has seen 425 cases followed by Osaka prefecture with 283 and Aichi and Hyogo with 88 each. Japan reported more than 5,500 syphilis cases in 2017 and more than 6,000 last year. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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Thailand: Streptococcus suis infections, 10 deaths in first three months

20 April- The Thailand Division of Disease Control (DDC) with the Ministry of Health (MOH) is warning (computer translated) the public against eating pork that isn't properly cooked due to the risk of Streptococcus suis infection. During the first three months of 2019, health officials have reported 50 S. suis infections, including 10 fatalities. The risk to the community is raw pork dishes mixed with raw pig's blood like spicy minced pork and spicy blood pork soup. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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USNORTHCOM

Canada: Ontario- York Region lists possible measles exposure sites

22 April- A lab-confirmed measles case linked to travel was reported in York Region, Ontario and health officials have reported on possible exposure sites: Individuals who attended or worked at any of the following York Region locations during the identified times listed below may have been exposed to measles: Southlake Regional Health Centre – Emergency Department 596 Davis Drive, Town of Newmarket Sunday, April 14 from 5:30 p.m. to Monday, April 15 at 5:45 a.m. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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U.S: Indiana- Mumps outbreak: 20 confirmed cases at IU Bloomington

23 April- The Indiana University Bloomington (IU Bloomington) Health Center reports three additional mumps cases on campus, bringing the outbreak total to 20. A mumps outbreak was declared at IU Bloomington on March 12 after a third case of mumps was confirmed. Mumps is a contagious disease caused by a virus. An outbreak is considered three confirmed cases and can occur at any time of the year, but often occur in the winter and spring. Symptoms of mumps may include: Swelling and tenderness in front of and below one or both ears and along the jaw, pain along the jaw and in front of and below one or both ears, fever, tiredness, muscle aches and loss of appetite. Most people recover completely in a few weeks. People who do not have swelling may still spread the virus to others. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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U.S: Los Angeles County measles outbreak investigated

23 April- The Los Angeles County (LAC) Department of Public Health (DPH) has recently confirmed 5 cases of measles. All of the cases were adults, the majority were unvaccinated, and two had recently travelled internationally. LAC DPH is currently investigating multiple exposures in adults and children related to these cases. Health officials urge residents who have not been fully immunized against measles with two doses of the measles immunization, to contact their healthcare provider to get fully immunized in order to better protect their individual health and to prevent the spread of measles to others. "We will likely see additional measles cases in Los Angeles County, so it is important if you or someone you know has the symptoms of measles or has been exposed to measles to contact your healthcare provider by phone right away before seeking treatment," said Muntu Davis, MD, MPH, Los Angeles County Health Officer. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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USSOUTHCOM

Brazil reports yellow fever fatality rate of 23%

24 April- A new update published by the World Health Organization (WHO) reveals a significant Yellow Fever health risk in the country of Brazil. According to the WHO on April 18, 2019, from July 2018 through March 2019, Brazil recorded a Yellow Fever case-fatality ratio of 23 percent. In the current Yellow Fever season in Brazil, a total of 75 confirmed human cases, including 17 deaths (case fatality rate of 23%), have been reported in the states of São Paulo (62), Paraná (12), and Santa Catarina (1). This is actually good news when compared with 2017-18, when Brazil confirmed 1,376 human cases, including 483 deaths, which is a 35 percent case fatality rate. [Precision Vaccinations](#)

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Venezuela: Stopping the spread of vaccine-preventable diseases within Venezuela is a matter of urgency for the country and region

16 April- Vaccine-preventable diseases have not just returned, but surged in crisis hit Venezuela, according to new research presented at this year's European Congress of Clinical Microbiology & Infectious Diseases (ECCMID) in Amsterdam, Netherlands (13-16 April). The study is by Dr Adriana Tami (University Medical Center Groningen, Netherlands and University of Carabobo, Venezuela) and Dr Alberto Paniz-Mondolfi (IDB Biomedical Research Institute, Barquisimeto, Venezuela), and colleagues. Venezuela has plunged into a humanitarian, economic and health crisis of extraordinary proportions. This complex situation has progressed into a general collapse of Venezuela's health system, the dismantling of structures at the institutional, social and economic level affecting the life and wellbeing of the entire population. Some two thirds of the Venezuelan population currently

live in extreme poverty, amid escalating violence. The country's crumbling healthcare infrastructure is now more typical of conflict zones or war-torn nations. More than 280,000 children are now perceived to be at risk of death from severe malnutrition. In response, an ongoing exodus towards neighbouring countries has ensued. Emigrating individuals with infectious diseases may be unwillingly causing a spill-over of diseases beyond Venezuela's boundaries. This study provides new data on the resurgence and ongoing epidemics of measles and diphtheria and their disproportionate impact on indigenous populations.

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