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- Venezuela: Crisis- Guaidó calls on supporters to take to streets over blackouts
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U.S. MILITARY

If your military housing is contaminated, who pays your mold-related expenses?

23 March- After six months of living with mold, amid concerns about their children's ongoing medical issues that began after they moved into their house, Traci Lenz and her Air Force husband moved off base in January. "My home was not safe and has caused my family to suffer from ongoing illnesses, unnecessary expenses, and we were forced to move off base in order to protect our children," said Lenz, who lived in Harbor Bay at MacDill Air Force Base, Florida. The Lenz family and other military families have felt compelled to move out of their homes in government or privatized housing because of serious health issues and concerns that they attribute to the mold. In many cases, that's also an expensive financial burden, in addition to the health issues they believe have resulted from the mold. Lenz calculates that by the time everything is factored in, including moving costs and costs to replace mold-contaminated belongings, rental deposits, mold testing and medical expenses that weren't covered by insurance, they will have paid more than \$33,000. Who pays for mold damage to personal property in privatized housing? In this case — and a number of others — it appears it's the military family. The Lenz family hasn't been reimbursed by Harbor Bay, the privatized housing company, for any of the costs, although Harbor Bay paid for their stay in temporary lodging while technicians replaced one duct and installed new vent covers. But when the family returned, they found mold, and moved out to a hotel at their own expense. Lenz said she and her husband, an Air Force master sergeant, asked Harbor Bay to pay for some of their expenses, including their costs to move off base, but the company declined. [Military Times](#)

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Pentagon to move forward on limits for transgender troops as final legal hurdle falls

26 March- The Pentagon's new transgender policy cleared a final legal hurdle Tuesday, meaning new limits on whether troops who identify as other than their biological sex may serve may be implemented within weeks. On Tuesday, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit removed the last of four court injunctions lower federal courts had issued on the new policy, which had until today kept the Defense Department from prohibiting forces from serving who experience gender dysphoria, which is a discomfort with one's biological sex, or who have already transitioned to their preferred sex. Transgender personnel who are willing to serve according to their biological sex would be allowed to remain in the military. DoD had previously announced it would move forward with its new policy, but retracted that when it became clear the final injunction was still in place. With Tuesday's decision and removal of that last injunction, "at the moment, there is no legal barrier to the government's intended plan to start enforcing the ban on April 12,"

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2018 Health of the Force

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



said Perry Sacks, a spokesman for the various attorneys representing transgender clients. Shannon Minter, an attorney for the National Center for Lesbian Rights who represented clients in two of the four federal lawsuits, said they still have until Friday to seek a rehearing on this issue, but that rehearing request has no significance now that the final injunction has been lifted. Those advocacy groups may still pursue other legal options, including seeking a new injunction through the Court of Appeals or other avenues, Minter said. "We are weighing all those options," Minter said. [Military Times](#)

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Recruits with first partially gender-integrated Marine boot camp company earn the title Marine

23 March- The Marines of India Company, 3rd Recruit Training Battalion, the first partially gender-integrated company in the Corps' history, earned the title Marine on March 16 aboard the recruit depot Parris Island, South Carolina, according to Marine Corps officials. Wrapping up the 54-hour physical demanding event of recruit training known as the crucible and completing a culminating 9-mile hike, the Marines were handed Eagle, Globe and Anchors — marking the transformation from recruit to Marine. The Marines are now set to attend graduation on March 29, and after they will be spirited off to various follow-on combat training and job schools. [Marine Times](#)

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GLOBAL

A male birth control pill passed safety tests - Here's how it works

26 March- ...Yesterday (March 25), a team of scientists announced that its unique take on a male birth control pill passed human safety tests in a 28-day trial without any participants dropping out from side effects — a problem that has stymied other male birth control attempts...The researchers attribute their successful trial to the active agent in the pill, which is two hormones in one. Part progestin and part modified testosterone, the hybrid molecule means that the consumer always has matching levels of the hormones in the body. The coordination of these two hormones can help dodge low sex drive or other health problems that modified hormone levels can create, said Dr. Christina Wang, the associate director of the Clinical and Translational Science Institute at Los Angeles Biomed Research Institute (LA BioMed). Wang worked on the trial with researchers at the University of Washington School of Medicine in Seattle. When the two hormones are separate, the body processes identical doses at different speeds, Wang told Live Science. Progestin stops sperm production, but it also decreases natural testosterone levels; and if testosterone drops too low, the odds of blood clots, depression and other problems rise. [Live Science](#)

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Army Mold Remediation Guidance

This document provides the Army's guidance for remediation of clean water damage and mold contamination. This guide has been designed to provide information to industrial hygienists, facility managers, and anyone else who needs assistance with mold remediation. It will guide them in making a reasonable judgment as to whether the situation can be handled in-house or if additional assistance is required (i.e., contracting out).



Cat scratch disease caused teen's schizophrenia-like symptoms, report says

23 March- For several years, a 14-year-old boy's mood started to rapidly change, and it wasn't a result of puberty. When the Midwestern boy, who has not been identified, started experiencing psychosis-like symptoms including hallucinations, depression and suicidal thoughts several years ago, two psychiatrists diagnosed him with schizophrenia. But after getting another opinion from a physician, the boy learned his illness likely wasn't the result of a mental disorder but a physical wound — a scratch from his pet cat, to be exact. The rare diagnosis was detailed in a new case study published in the Journal of Central Nervous System Disease this week. [Fox News](#)

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City air pollution 'link to teenage psychotic experiences' explored

27 March- Scientists say that their research could provide possible clues about why children in urban areas are more likely to get psychotic disorders later on. But they caution that much more work is needed to be certain of the link. The study appears in JAMA Psychiatry. Scientists from King's College London tracked some 2,000 teenagers living in urban, semi-urban and rural areas. Almost a third (623) reported they had been through at least one psychotic experience between the ages of 12 and 18 - for example feeling like people were spying on them or hearing voices no-one else could. [BBC News](#)

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Ebola: 2nd largest outbreak tops 1000 cases

24 March- After reporting 16 new Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) cases on Mar.22 and 23, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) health ministry officials now put the outbreak total over 1,000 cases. Six new cases were reported on Mar. 22–3 in Katwa, 1 in Butembo, 1 in Vuhovi and 1 in Oicha and 10 on Mar. 23–4 in Vuhovi, 2 in Katwa, 2 in Butembo, 1 in Beni and 1 in Lubero. According to a release today (computer translated), the Ministry of Health reports a cumulative total of 1,009 cases since the beginning of the outbreak. 629 EVD deaths have been reported to date. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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New strategies take on the worst cancer—Glioblastoma

27 March- The most common form of malignant brain cancer—called a glioblastoma—is notoriously wily and considered the deadliest human cancer. Glioblastomas charge their way into normal brain tissue diffusely and erratically, making them surgical nightmares. And they mutate at such a rapid rate that most currently available cancer treatments can't keep up with them. Even neighboring tumor cells can be genetically distinct, and therefore hard

The Surgeon General Weekly Read Book

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to target with a single therapy...A report on new research technology published recently in the journal Nature Biomedical Engineering may address the limitations of previous ex vivo approaches. In short, researchers have concocted a glioblastoma-on-a-chip. Chip-based models of various organs and diseases—including many cancers—have debuted in the last few years. They are constructed by lining a plastic microchip with live human cells that mimic a particular organ or disease in order to simplify, cheapen and increase the efficiency of drug testing. The Wyss Institute at Harvard University and other groups have made impressive headway in developing a number of chip-based biologic models. Chip models of the lung, the intestine, skin, bone marrow ALS—even the blood-brain barrier—have been tested. The new report of a chip from researchers in South Korea may represent the most advanced ex vivo model of a glioblastoma to date. The authors used bio printing technology to put brain tumor cells from human patients on the chip alongside blood vessel-like cells printed in a ring around the tumor, mimicking the vital oxygen supply required by a glioblastoma. Further away from an air supply, the cells at the center of glioblastomas in humans tend to die and form a necrotic core. Finally, the researchers also incorporated an “extracellular matrix” into their model, the three-dimensional network of connective tissue, enzymes and other proteins that support animal cells, including tumors. This matrix is thought to play an essential role in how cancer behaves in the body. [Scientific American](#)

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Researchers gave people synthetic pot- Here's what happened

25 March- Synthetic marijuana, made from chemicals sprayed onto plant material, can have a range of effects and is thought to be more dangerous than natural marijuana. The drug, which is sometimes referred to as K2 or spice, has been linked to serious side effects, such as seizures and psychosis. But it's difficult to predict how synthetic marijuana will affect users, so a group of researchers in the Netherlands tested the substance's effects on 17 healthy volunteers in the lab. Their findings were published March 14 in the journal Cannabis and Cannabinoid Research. The participants came to the lab twice, seven days apart. During one visit, they were given a synthetic cannabinoid called JWH-018 that was mixed with hemp, and during another visit, they were given a placebo (in this case, just hemp, with no synthetic marijuana mixed in). During each visit, the participants were not told which compound they were receiving. [Live Science](#)

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The opioid disposal problem- A low-cost intervention may make it easy and effective

27 March- Giving surgery patients a special bag to deactivate and discard unused medication led to a substantial rise in self-reported opioid disposal, the SODAS trial showed. Receiving an activated charcoal pouch to discard drugs at home was associated

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with an adjusted 3.8-fold increase in opioid disposal compared with usual care, reported Chad Brummett, MD, of the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, and colleagues in JAMA Surgery. "We need everyday disposal options that address patients' needs and break down common barriers for safe disposal through other means, such as bringing unneeded medications to take-back drives or law enforcement locations that require a special trip and may make some patients uncomfortable," Brummett said in a statement. In prior research, a systematic review showed that 42% to 71% of all opioid tablets obtained by surgical patients went unused. A national poll last year showed that most older adults were not counseled about how to dispose of leftover opioids: 49% kept unused opioids at home, with most people saying they retained them for potential future use. About 9% said they had thrown the pills in the trash or down the toilet, and 13% said they had taken them to an approved location. In the SODAS (Safe Opioid Disposal After Surgery) trial, researchers recruited 396 opioid-naive patients (ages ≥ 18 years) who were undergoing an outpatient surgical procedure at Michigan Medicine in June and July 2017. They randomized patients to one of three arms: (1) usual care, (2) an educational pamphlet with detailed instructions about DEA-registered disposal locations, or (3) an activated charcoal bag (Deterra Drug Deactivation System) for opioid disposal. The researchers contacted patients by phone or email 4 to 6 weeks after surgery to ask about postoperative opioid use and whether they had disposed of unused drugs. [MedPage Today](#)

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INFLUENZA

AFHSB: DoD Seasonal Influenza Surveillance Summary

Seasonal Influenza Surveillance Summary- Week 11

NORTHCOM- Influenza activity decreased in several states and ranged from minimal to high depending on the state. Activity remained high in Utah, Texas, Oklahoma, and Virginia.

EUCOM- Influenza activity remained minimal across EUCOM, with the exception of Germany which had low activity.

PACOM- Influenza activity was minimal across EUCOM, except for Hawaii which had low activity.

CENTCOM- Data for these commands are not presented this week due to continued delays in receiving the TMDS data.

AFRICOM- Data for these commands are not presented this week due to continued delays in receiving the TMDS data.

SOUTHCOM- Data for these commands are not presented this week due to continued delays in receiving the TMDS data. [DHA -Armed Forces Health Surveillance Branch](#)

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APHC: U.S. Army Influenza Activity Report

Week ending 16 March 2019 (week 11): A three percent decrease in the overall number of positive respiratory specimens in week 11 was noted when compared to week 10; there were 1123 positive specimens in week 10 and 1091 in week 11. There was a 20% increase among positive influenza B specimens and a 6% increase among positive RSV specimens from week 10 to week 11. There were reductions in the number of positive specimens among all other respiratory pathogens. The majority of the influenza A-positive specimens continue to be reported from installations in RHC-C (469, 47%) and RHC-A (488, 49%). Seven influenza-associated hospitalizations with an onset date in week 11 were reported in the Disease Reporting System internet, one of which was an Active Duty Service Member.

[APHC](#)

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

Influenza Season Week 11 ending March 16, 2019

-Viral Surveillance: The percentage of respiratory specimens testing positive for influenza viruses in clinical laboratories increased slightly. Nationally, during the most recent three weeks, influenza A(H3) viruses were reported more frequently than influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 viruses and in HHS Regions 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10.

-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: Eight influenza-associated pediatric deaths were reported to CDC during week 11.[CDC](#)

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ECDC: Flu News Europe

Week 11/2019 (11-17 March 2019)

-Influenza activity was widespread in one-third of the countries of the European Region. Widespread activity was located in northern, southern, and western areas of the European Region. Specimens collected from individuals presenting with ILI or ARI to sentinel primary health care sites yielded an influenza virus positivity rate of 34%, a decrease compared to 43% during the previous week.

-Influenza type A virus detections dominated with slightly more A(H1N1)pdm09 than A(H3N2) viruses. Very few influenza B viruses were detected.

-Of the specimens from the patients with severe acute respiratory infection (SARI) collected in week 11/2019 that were tested for influenza viruses, 31% were positive and almost all

were type A.

-Pooled data from 24 Member States and areas reporting to the EuroMOMO project indicated that the excess mortality observed in previous weeks continued to decline. Excess mortality was seen in person's ages 65 years and in persons 15-64 years. [European Center for Disease Prevention and Control/WHO](#)

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'When' is not as important regarding flu shot timing

25 March- A recent study tried to answer an annual question, when is it best to get the flu shot? A new research study answered this question by comparing a 'compressed' vaccination schedule, which means between October to May, with the 'normal' vaccination schedule, which is between August to May. This study published in the American Journal of Preventive Medicine found a compressed schedule would prevent 11,400 or more influenza cases in seniors in a typical influenza season. But, this positive impact could be offset if the overall flu shot uptake diminished...The researchers used data from the 2013-2014 and 2014-2015 flu seasons to forecast the number of cases, hospitalizations, and deaths for both scenarios (compressed vs normal) with flu season peaking in December (early), February (normal), or April (late). Every flu season is different, and influenza infection can affect people differently, but millions of people get the flu every year, hundreds of thousands of people are hospitalized and thousands or tens of thousands of people die from flu-related causes every year, says the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). As of March 22, 2019, the CDC has confirmed 76 pediatric deaths related to the influenza virus. For the 2018-2019 flu season, the CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommends annual influenza vaccination for everyone 6 months and older with any licensed age-appropriate flu vaccine including inactivated influenza vaccine (IIV), recombinant influenza vaccine (RIV4) or live attenuated influenza vaccine (LAIV4) with no preference expressed for anyone vaccine over another. [Precision Vaccinations](#)

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WHO reveals delayed pick for H3N2 flu vaccine strain

21 March- After waiting an extra month to decide on the H3N2 strain, World Health Organization (WHO) vaccine advisors today finalized their recommendations on strains to include in the Northern Hemisphere 2019-20 flu vaccines. Their H3N2 recommendation—an A/Kansas/14/2017-like virus—reflects a change from the current Northern Hemisphere vaccine and is not a component of the Southern Hemisphere 2019 flu vaccines, either...Delays in announcing recommendations and major changes in recommended strains can increase the risk of delays in vaccine manufacturing process. The WHO said all stakeholders are working together to minimize the threat of delayed vaccine supply and availability as much as possible. For example, it said one of the steps is intensive work by collaborating labs to ensure that manufacturers have access to a high-yielding vaccine virus for production. To account for possible delays, the WHO advised countries to prepare for a possible 2- to 4-week delay in vaccine supply and to consider extending time for

vaccination programs. [CIDRAP](#)

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VETERINARY/FOOD SAFETY

Australia investigates Salmonella outbreak traced to eggs; Meals on Wheels pulls food because of Listeria risk

22 March- Authorities in Australia are investigating a Salmonella outbreak associated with human illness after eating eggs. The outbreak strain has been detected on chicken farms in New South Wales, and one farm in Victoria. Biosecurity measures and other regulatory action are being applied to affected farms by authorities. Confirmed cases of Salmonella Enteritidis have been found in New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland and Tasmania. It is not clear how many people have been affected. Agriculture Victoria placed controls on the business in that state, preventing the sale of eggs while the Salmonella contamination is investigated. Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) is leading the response by food regulators. The investigation has led to recalls coordinated by FSANZ in March this year and September 2018. [Food Safety News](#)

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Avocados recalled in 6 states over listeria concerns

24 March- California-grown avocados sold in bulk to retail stores in six states by the Henry Avocado Corporation are being recalled due to potential contamination with the bacterium listeria monocytogenes, the company announced on Saturday. "Henry Avocado is issuing this voluntary recall out of an abundance of caution due to positive test results on environmental samples taken during a routine government inspection at its California packing facility," reads the company's statement. There have been no reported illnesses associated with the recall at this time. The recalled products included California-grown conventional and organic avocados. They were packed at Henry Avocado Corporation's facility in California and distributed to six states: Arizona, California, Florida, New Hampshire, North Carolina and Wisconsin. Henry Avocado, a family-owned and managed company, started packing in this facility in late January 2019 and every shipment is subject to the recall. [CNN](#)

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CDC declares Salmonella outbreak over; continues warning about ground beef

23 March- Public health officials say a Salmonella outbreak traced to ground beef from the world's largest beef producer is technically over, but there is a continuing threat because unknowing consumers likely still have some of the implicated meat in their home freezers. With 403 laboratory-confirmed patients across 30 states, the outbreak spanned at least five

months, according to the final outbreak report posted March 22 by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Health officials did not confirm any deaths in relation to the outbreak, but a third of the outbreak victims had to be admitted to hospitals. Investigators found the outbreak strain of Salmonella Newport in unopened packages of ground beef produced by JBS Tolleason Inc., part of the multi-national, megalithic JBS, which has its corporate headquarters in Brazil. Public health labs reported to the CDC that the first patient confirmed in the outbreak became sick on Aug. 5, 2018, with the most recent having developed symptoms Feb. 8 this year. The patients ranged in age from less than 1 to 99 years old. Of 277 patients interviewed, 237 reported eating ground beef before becoming sick. [Food Safety News](#)

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Eggs recalled due to potential Salmonella in Australia

28 March- Another company has recalled eggs in Australia due to potential Salmonella Enteritidis contamination. CR and M Ash and Sons recalled items sold at IGA's, independent stores, bakeries and butchers in New South Wales (NSW). Ash and Sons Eggs Pty Ltd is an Australian family owned company that produce eggs on a number of its own farms, has a delivery fleet and supplies country-wide, according to the firm's website. Blue Mountains Free Range Eggs 700-gram, Blue Mountains Cage Free Eggs 700 gram, Fresh Eggs From My Farm 800 gram, Farm Fresh Eggs 600 gram, 700 gram and 800 gram and a catering pack 10 to 15 kilograms are affected. Best Before dates on cartons are April 26, 2019, or May 3, 2019. For the catering packs all eggs stamped with AF58 at the start of the code and Best Before date April 26, 2019, or May 3, 2019, are recalled. [Food Safety News](#)

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FDA finds Salmonella in three lots of Darwin's raw dog food; cautions pet owners

27 March- The U.S. Food and Drug Administrations (FDA) cautioned pet owners not to feed certain Darwin's Natural Pet Products raw dog foods after finding Salmonella in the products. FDA collected and analyzed unopened packages from the products in response to a consumer complaint. The products were manufactured by Arrow Reliance, Inc. (Arrow), a company based in Tukwila, Washington and doing business as Darwin's Natural Pet Products. The products that are affected by FDA's alert to pet owners are:

-Darwin's Natural Pet Products Natural Selections Chicken Recipe with Organic Vegetables for Dogs: 5309(11)181019, manufactured on October 19, 2018

-Darwin's Natural Pet Products Natural Selections Chicken Recipe with Organic Vegetables for Dogs: 5375(11)181106, manufactured on November 11, 2018

-Darwin's Natural Pet Products Natural Selections Turkey Recipe with Organic Vegetables for Dogs: 5339(11)181026, manufactured on October 26, 2018 [Food Safety News](#)

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Import alert for Mexican papayas over widespread Salmonella contamination

28 March- The conditions that two years ago led to a deadly multistate salmonella outbreak due to Maradol papayas imported from Mexico remain largely unchanged. Imported papayas from Mexico remain under an import alert issued by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) that permits U.S. ports of entry to detain the Mexican produce without physical examination. FDA's concern once again is the potential for widespread Salmonella contamination Mexican grown papayas for the American market...More than 250 people were sickened in those outbreaks involving about one-half of U.S. states due to Mexican-grown papayas. Two deaths were also blamed on the imported fruit. The federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta in 2017 went so far as to recommend that "consumers not eat, restaurants not serve and retailers not sell Maradol papayas.." The latest Import Alert is an update of one that provides for Detention Without Physical Examination of a whole, fresh papaya. Private laboratories may be used for sampling, method, and testing. Mexico produces 11 percent of the world's papaya crop, and 65 percent of the all papaya imported into the U.S are grown in Mexico. This makes Mexico the largest exporter of fresh papayas into the U.S. [Food Safety News](#)

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Listeria outbreak sickens 18 in five countries

28 March- The ECDC has identified a link between an outbreak of nine Listeria cases in Denmark and nine more infections between 2014 and 2018 in four other countries. The European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) said there is a microbiological link between the outbreak of Listeria monocytogenes strain type (ST) 1247 in Denmark linked to fish and additional cases in Estonia, Finland, France, and Sweden. The latest case was in Denmark in February 2019. Two cases in Estonia are from July 2014 and February 2016. Finland's two cases date from August 2016 and December of that year, the sole case in France was in August last year. Four infections in Sweden occurred in February and July 2015 as well as January and March 2016. In Denmark, the first person fell sick in December 2016, five cases were reported in 2017, one in 2018 and two in 2019. Two people died but all patients had other illnesses that put them at high risk for serious infections. Patients are five males and four females aged 52 to 90 years old. Statens Serum Institut has been investigating the outbreak in Denmark since 2017. Earlier this month, it identified the source of infection as imported cold-smoked trout and salmon products from Estonia. The Estonian fish processor, a company called M. V. Wool, rejected the link and said products are delivered to customers in accordance with limits set in EU Regulation 2073/2005 and are safe to eat. [Food Safety News](#)

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More frozen breaded chicken nuggets recalled in connection with outbreak

22 March- Canadian officials have posted the 13th recall notice related to more than a dozen Salmonella outbreaks — some ongoing — in their country in the past 22 months. Investigators have traced the outbreaks to frozen breaded chicken nuggets, patties and similar products. In the latest recall, posted March 21, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency urged consumers to check their homes for certain Janes brand “Pub Style – Chicken Nuggets – Breaded Chicken Cutlettes” and throw them away even if some have been eaten and no one appeared to have become sick. The agency reported the Sofina Foods Inc. distributed the recalled products to retailers nationwide. The Public Health Agency of Canada continues to warn the public about the dangers of raw frozen breaded chicken products. The agency reported that as of March 1, there had been a total of 555 laboratory-confirmed outbreak victims nationwide. Of those for whom complete information is available, 92 people had to be admitted to hospitals. Three of the confirmed patients have died. However, the government reported two of them died because of other conditions present during their salmonellosis. The third patient’s specific cause of death remained under investigation as of the March 1 update. [Food Safety News](#)

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Recall of California-grown avocados over listeria fears is talk of town

26 March- Henry Avocado Corporation has recalled California-grown whole avocados sold in bulk at retail stores because they have the potential to be contaminated with *Listeria monocytogenes*. Henry Avocado said this recall was made “out of an abundance of caution” due to positive test results on environmental samples taken during a routine government inspection at its California packing facility. “What stands out is the breadth of dangers we’re seeing because of failures in the food safety system, said Adam Garber, who is with the U.S. PIRG Education Fund Consumer Watchdog. “Last week, Tyson’s recalls chicken because it might contain metal, and now avocados are potentially laced with listeria, a bacteria that a little more than a year ago killed 200 in South Africa. Garber says such recalls underscores the need to refocus food safety efforts to ensure that “Americans are safe every time they sit down to eat a meal.” Michael Droke, a partner with the NYC-based Dorsey & Whitney law firm, says “the recent multi-state avocado recall is occurring just when consumers are making their favorite March Madness guacamole. Many will be surprised to learn that even fruits and vegetables with an inedible shell can be contaminated.” Droke, who represents agriculture and food-based companies, says avocados are sliced before processing, which can transmit *Listeria* or other food-borne pathogens into the edible section beneath the inedible shell. He says consumers should carefully wash all potentially contaminated food before cutting or using, including any surfaces used to prepare their food. Suppliers and packers must remain vigilant in the face of foodborne illnesses. “This type of voluntary recall became more prevalent after the FDA received legislative authority to mandate recalls,

Droke added. "The threat of a forced recall has led many producers and suppliers to increase the frequency of voluntary recalls. Recent actions by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, such as last year's Romaine lettuce recall, have also increased producer awareness and the likelihood of a voluntary recall." No known illnesses are associated with the avocado recall. Escondido-based Henry Avocado is one of the oldest avocado growers in California. The original Henry farm has been in continuous avocado production since 1925. [Food Safety News](#)

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WELLNESS

Doctors explain what happens to your body after drinking soda

27 March- ...Within the first ten to 15 minutes of that cola, your intestines mainline that sugar to your blood, spiking levels of glucose—blood sugar. That's a lot of quick energy, and to manage the onslaught, multiple organs in your body kick into overdrive so you can process that sugar. Your pancreas releases insulin to help transport the sugar (which is a carbohydrate) to your muscles for energy. But that soda contains much more sugar than your muscles need. "When an individual drinks a 20-ounce soda, they are getting an entire meal's worth of carbohydrates through liquid," explains Meltem Zeytinoglu, MD, MBA, an endocrinologist and assistant professor of medicine at the University of Chicago Medicine. "In most cases, this soda is consumed in addition to a meal, so the additional carbohydrates will need to be processed. This extra sugar, instead of being stored in muscle tissue, gets converted to fat in the liver." Your kidney also comes into play by getting rid of excess sugar through your urine. That means your body loses water, which, along with the diuretic effect of the caffeine in the soda, increases your risk of dehydration. The sugar and caffeine in soda is "quite the unhealthy combination," says Dr. Zeytinoglu. Be sure to check out these 23 infused water ideas that'll make you forget about soda. [Fox News](#)

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Nappuccinos to more weekend Z's: Strategize to catch up on lost sleep

24 March- ...A study in the current issue of Current Biology points to just how quickly the adverse effects of sleep deprivation can kick in. Researchers at the University of Colorado Boulder recruited a bunch of young, healthy adults who agreed to a stay in a sleep lab. Some were allowed to sleep no more than five hours per night for five consecutive days. "After five days, people [gained] as much as 5 pounds," says study author Christopher Depner, who studies the links between sleep loss and metabolic diseases. Lack of sleep can throw off the hormones that regulate appetite, he explains, so people tend to eat more. Depner and his colleagues also documented a decrease in insulin sensitivity among the sleep-deprived participants. "In some people, it decreased to a level where they'd be

considered pre-diabetic," he says. Presumably, that rise in blood sugar would be only temporary in these young, healthy people. But it's a striking indicator of how much a lack of sleep can influence metabolism. And, even after a weekend of catch-up sleep, the participants still gained as much weight as those in the study who had not been allowed to get the extra weekend sleep. So, bottom line: It can be hard for our metabolism to recover from a week of sleep deprivation, and — over time — chronic sleep loss can increase the risk of Type 2 diabetes. These findings are eye-opening, but they don't paint the full picture. After all, many of us who lose out on sleep miss only a few hours here or there. Our sleep loss is occasional, not chronic. [NPR](#)

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Women lose less weight from Keto diet compared to men

27 March- Many swear that the ketogenic diet aids in weight loss, but men might be reaping more benefits than women from the high-fat/low-carbohydrate meal plan. A new study presented at the annual meeting of the Endocrine Society revealed that in animal models, female mice failed to demonstrate the metabolic benefits of keto, including weight loss and improved blood sugar control. "Our findings in mice suggest that females on the ketogenic diet are less likely than males to experience significant fat loss and are more likely to exhibit impaired blood sugar control," shared Jesse Cochran, lead investigator of the study and a research assistant at the University of Iowa. "These results may help explain discrepancies in this diet's success rates across the sexes." [Tech Times](#)

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Working night shift increases risk for miscarriage among pregnant women

27 March- Pregnant women who work two or more night shifts in a week are at higher risk for miscarriage the following week, a new study revealed. Researchers in Denmark found that women who work at night are exposed to light that disrupts their circadian rhythm and decreases the release of melatonin, which is important in a successful pregnancy because it preserves the placenta. However, other experts dismiss the findings of the study because it is "not strong enough for people to think they need to change their lifestyles." ...The study revealed that among 10,047 women who went on night shift during the third week to the 21st week of their pregnancies, 740 women had miscarriages. Meanwhile, among 12,697 women who did not go on night shift, 1,149 women had miscarriages. Taking into account the age of the mother, body mass index, smoking habits, number of previous births, socioeconomic statuses, and former miscarriages, the study found that working two or more night shifts in a single week between the 8th week and 22nd week of pregnancy was linked to a 32 percent increased risk of miscarriage in the next week. Pregnant women who worked 26 or more graveyard shifts between the fourth week and 22nd week were more than twice as likely to have a miscarriage compared to those who worked no night shifts. This finding was based on eight women, researchers said. [Tech Times](#)

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USAFRICOM

Africa: Plague in DRC, Measles in Madagascar

25 March- The DRC Ministry of Health reported four deceased suspected cases of pneumonic plague identified retrospectively in the same family from Atungkulei Village, Mahagi District, Ituri Province. The cases were identified following an alert received from the Uganda Ministry of Health on 8 March 2019 of two probable cases of pneumonic plague in Zombo District, located in the West Nile sub-region, at the border with the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The cases in the Democratic Republic of Congo are epidemiologically linked to those in Uganda. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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Mozambique: Start cholera vaccinations next week after cyclone

28 March- Mozambique will start a cholera vaccination campaign next week in areas ravaged by Cyclone Idai, the World Health Organisation (WHO) said on Thursday, after five confirmed cases were detected. Thousands of people were trapped for more than a week in submerged villages without access to clean water after Cyclone Idai smashed into the Mozambican port city of Beira on March 14, causing catastrophic flooding and killing more than 700 people across three countries in southeast Africa. With tens of thousands of displaced people moved to makeshift camps, relief efforts have increasingly focused on containing outbreaks of waterborne and infectious diseases. David Wightwick, a senior member of the WHO's response team in Beira, told reporters that seven clinics had been set up in Mozambique to treat cholera patients and that two more would be ready soon. "We have 900,000 doses of oral cholera vaccines which are coming in on Monday, and we will start a vaccination campaign as soon as possible next week," Wightwick said. Cholera is endemic to Mozambique, which has had regular outbreaks over the past five years. About 2,000 people were infected in the last outbreak, which ended in February 2018, according to the WHO. [Reuters](#)

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Nigeria: Reports 23 new Lassa cases in past week

25 March- Nigerian health officials reported 23 new confirmed Lassa fever cases in the past week, bringing the outbreak total to 495 confirmed positive since the beginning of the year. The new case were reported from the following nine states: – Edo(8), Ondo(4), Ebonyi(3), Bauchi(3), Taraba(1), Imo(1), Enugu(1), Benue(1) and Kebbi(1). In addition, four new deaths in Edo (2), Benue (1) and Bauchi (1) were reported. Since the onset of the 2019 outbreak, there have been 114 deaths in confirmed cases. Case fatality ratio in confirmed cases is 23.0%. Lassa fever is spread primarily by rats. Rats that carry the Lassa fever virus live in

homes and areas where food is stored. People usually become ill with Lassa fever after direct contact with rat droppings or urine and through touching objects or eating food contaminated with rat droppings or urine. Lassa fever may also spread when a person comes into contact with an infected person's blood, tissue, or body fluids, especially when that person is seriously ill. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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USCENTCOM

Yemen: Witnessing another sharp increase in reported cases of acute watery diarrhea and cholera

26 March- In Yemen, since the beginning of the year until 17 March, nearly 109 000 cases of severe acute watery diarrhea and suspected cholera were reported with 190 total associated deaths since January. Nearly one third of the reported cases are children under the age of 5. This comes 2 years since Yemen witnessed the world's largest outbreak when more than 1 million cases were reported. "We fear that the number of suspected cholera cases will continue to increase with the early arrival of the rainy season and as basic services, including lifesaving water systems and networks, have collapsed. The situation is exacerbated by the poor status of sewage disposal systems, the use of contaminated water for agriculture, unreliable electricity to store food and the displacement of families as they flee escalating violence, especially in Hudaydah and Tai'z. "Our teams in Yemen are working day and night with a wide network of local partners to respond and stop the further spread and transmission of disease. Focusing on 147 priority districts, additional health, water, hygiene and sanitation supplies are being mobilized. Rapid response teams have been deployed. A total of 413 diarrhea treatment centres and oral rehydration centres are operational in all 147 priority districts. Partners are repairing water and sanitation systems. In the past weeks, we scaled up chlorination activities to disinfect water in 95 priority districts and provided fuel and spare parts to keep going water supply and sanitation networks. A round of oral cholera vaccine campaign reached over 400 000 people in several districts. Meanwhile, community-based awareness-raising efforts reached 600 000 people in house-to-house campaigns since early 2019 to provide families with information on hygiene practices and improve the reporting of symptoms and seeking of treatment. [WHO](#)

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USEUCOM

Ukraine: Measles death toll now 14

26 March- The death toll due to measles in Ukraine has risen to 14 this year, according to new data from the Center for Public Health of the Ministry of Health of Ukraine. In addition, 2,179 people – 1,020 adults and 1 159 children contracted measles during the past week, bringing the outbreak total to 32,939 cases. After several weeks of falling, the incidence of measles in Ukraine began to increase again. According to the operative data, the most recent cases of measles on March 15-21 were registered in Khmelnytsky (207 patients: 95 adults and 112 children), Lviv (186: 56 adults and 130 children), Kyiv (177: 99 adults and 78 children), Rivne 157:39 adults and 118 children), as well as in Kiev (203: 110 adults and 93 children). For reliable protection from illness, all children must receive both the first and second dose of measles vaccine in a timely manner. All children under the age of 18 as well as adults from risk groups – military, health care workers, students, educators and physicians – can get vaccinated by the Calendar and make up for lost vaccinations. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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USINDOPACOM

Australia: Congenital syphilis has re-emerged in Victoria

28 March- Victoria health officials are reporting that syphilis infections in 2018 reached a record high and congenital syphilis has re-emerged in the southeastern state. A total of 1,372 cases of infectious syphilis were notified in Victoria, compared to 1,351 cases in 2017 and 1,134 cases in 2016. The majority of notified cases continue to occur in males with 73 per cent of males reporting male sexual partners as the source of infection. Thirty per cent of the cases among MSM were HIV positive and of these, 57 per cent were reinfections. There has been an increase of notified syphilis cases among women over the last few years. In 2018, 163 cases were notified (representing 12 per cent of total cases). There were 152 cases in 2017 (11 per cent of total cases) and 101 in 2016 (9 per cent of total cases). The increase of syphilis in women of reproductive age is of particular public health concern as syphilis during pregnancy can cause congenital syphilis which may result in serious birth defects and stillbirth. For the first time since 2004, congenital syphilis has re-emerged in Victoria, with two cases notified in 2017 and two cases in 2018. Two cases have resulted in fetal death. Women may be unaware of their risk of syphilis. Screening at-risk groups, including antenatal screening, and adequate timely treatment of cases and sexual partners are crucial for the prevention of syphilis infections. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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Japan: Syphilis cases top 1000, Vaccine-preventable diseases rise

25 March- After reporting more than 5,500 syphilis cases in 2017 and more than 6,000 last year, the most cases in decades, 2019 is shaping up to be another rough year with the serious sexually transmitted infection. Through Mar. 10, Japanese health officials have reported 1,132 cases. Tokyo and Osaka have reported the most cases with 304 and 195, respectively. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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Philippines: Dengue in Calabarzon, Chickenpox in Iloilo

24 March- Health officials in the Calabarzon region report intensifying its anti-dengue campaign as numbers rise in the Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, and Quezon provinces. The Regional Epidemiology and Surveillance Unit (RESU) reports some 5,616 cases of dengue fever with 18 deaths in the region through March 16, 2019. Cavite has reported the most cases with 1,788, followed by Batangas with 1,248; Laguna with 1,135; Quezon with 823; and Rizal with 622 cases. DOH Calabarzon regional director Eduardo Janairo said, "We have deployed regional vector control spray men to barangays with high incidence of dengue cases and also trained sanitary inspectors and spray men of Laguna and the top 10 municipalities or cities with dengue cases on the preparation and application of insecticides for Dengue control such as misting or fogging and residual spraying, for outbreak response. "We are already making rounds in the provinces to ensure that Dengue Fast Lanes are established and functional in all hospitals, and also to ensure that Dengue NS1-RDT are available to all health centers and public hospitals to be used for the early detection of dengue disease," Janairo said. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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Philippines: Measles update- Nearly 600 cases in 2 days

26 March- In a follow-up on the measles outbreak in the Philippines, government officials have reported an additional 596 cases since the last update. Through Mar. 21, 23,563 measles cases have been reported, including 338 fatalities. CALABARZON (4838), NCR, or Metro Manila (4568) and Central Luzon (3761) regions have been most affected. To date, measles outbreaks have been declared in six Philippine regions. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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Vietnam: African swine fever has spread to 21 provinces

27 March- The Vietnam Ministry of Agriculture reported this week (computer translated) on three additional provinces having reported African swine fever (ASF). This brings the total 21 provinces reporting cases in the past five weeks, according to the Head of Epidemiology, Department of Animal Health (MARD), Nguyen Van Long. The disease has been seen in 447 communes, 84 districts of 21 provinces and cities including: Hung Yen, Thai Binh, Hai Phong,

Thanh Hoa, Ha Noi, Hai Duong, Ha Nam, Hoa Binh, Dien Bien, Thai Nguyen, Quang Ninh, Ninh Binh, Nam Dinh, Lang Son, Bac Kan, Son La, Nghe An, Bac Ninh Thua Thien – Hue Province, Lai Chau and Bac Giang, with 64,879 pigs affected. To date, ASF has mainly appeared on small farms where sanitation and biosecurity is not good. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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USNORTHCOM

U.S.: Arkansas: Hepatitis A outbreak tops 300 cases

24 March- Health officials in Arkansas continue to report a hepatitis A outbreak, particularly in the northeast counties. Since February 2018, 303 cases and at least 3 deaths have been reported as part of this outbreak. Greene, Clay, Poinsett and Craighead counties have reported the most cases. The hepatitis A outbreaks in all 18 affected states are among injection and non-injection drug users, homeless populations, and men who have sex with men (MSM). Hepatitis A is a vaccine-preventable, highly contagious liver disease caused by the hepatitis A virus (HAV). The hepatitis A vaccine is safe, effective and given as two shots, six months apart. Both shots are needed for long-term protection. It can be given to people with compromised immune systems, and getting extra doses of the vaccine is not harmful.

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U.S.: Colorado: El Paso County- Dog tests positive for rabies, 1st case since 1974

25 March- El Paso County Public Health in Colorado have reported a dog that tested positive for rabies and say individuals and animals who have been exposed to the rabid dog have been assessed by health officials and are receiving preventative vaccination. This is the first reported case of a rabid dog in El Paso County since 1974. El Paso County Public Health can't confirm where the dog's rabies vaccine came from or who administered the vaccine, based upon further information received. Rabies has largely been eliminated in domestic animals in the United States through successful vaccination and licensing programs. All domestic animals in El Paso County are required by law to be vaccinated for rabies by a licensed veterinarian. This ensures that the vaccine is given properly (that is, the proper type of vaccine, dose, route of administration, storage conditions, frequency of boosters, etc.) and will prevent the spread of disease. Self-administering a rabies vaccine that was purchased at a store does not guarantee protection against rabies and the pet will be considered unvaccinated. This year three animals (dog, skunk and a fox) have tested positive for rabies in El Paso County. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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U.S.: Michigan- Measles in Oakland County: Outbreak now at 18 cases

26 March- In a follow-up on the measles outbreak in the Detroit-Oakland County, MI area, county health official's report the outbreak total has risen to 18 cases since Mar. 13. Nearly 1000 vaccination were given during the past three days as special vaccination clinics were made available. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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U.S.: Ohio- Hepatitis A outbreak tops 2,000 cases

26 March- The Ohio Department of Health (ODH) reported an additional 26 hepatitis A outbreak cases during the past week, bringing the total to 2005. Of this total, 62 percent required hospitalization and seven deaths were recorded. Franklin (309), Butler (290), Montgomery (215) and Hamilton (143) counties have seen the most cases. ODH has declared a statewide community outbreak of hepatitis A after observing an increase in cases linked to certain risk factors since the beginning of 2018. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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USSOUTHCOM

Venezuela: Crisis- Guaidó calls on supporters to take to streets over blackouts

28 March- Venezuela's opposition leader Juan Guaidó has called on his supporters to take to the streets in protest at nationwide power cuts. He also told followers to prepare for a final push to try to overthrow President Nicolás Maduro. The power cuts started on Monday and have hit hospitals, public transport, water and other services, worsening a national economic crisis. Mr. Maduro blamed the blackouts on sabotage by the opposition and the US. But the opposition argues that two decades of underinvestment and corruption by Venezuela's socialist government as the cause. [BBC News](#)

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