

6 December 2019

# Army Public Health Weekly Update

Army Public Health Center



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## Brief CBT cost effective for suicidal Army soldiers

2 December- Brief cognitive behavioral therapy may be a cost-effective intervention for United States Army soldiers who are at risk for suicide, according to results of an economic evaluation published in JAMA Psychiatry. "In response to increasing suicides in the U.S. military, the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) has prioritized suicide prevention, implementing many different preventive interventions," Samantha L. Bernecker, PhD, of the department of health care policy at Harvard Medical School, and colleagues wrote. "The cost-effectiveness of these interventions has not been systematically assessed; in most cases, the comparative efficacy of the interventions used in military service members remains unknown." According to the researchers, brief CBT is a suicide-focused intervention spread over 12 sessions that can accommodate the unpredictability of military because of its flexibility and brevity. They evaluated brief CBT's cost-effectiveness compared with treatment as usual for suicidal soldiers in the U.S. Army. Bernecker and colleagues obtained demographic data from the Army Study to Assess Risk and Resilience in Service Members, and a trial that randomly assigned 152 Army soldiers with recent suicidal crises to either treatment as usual or brief CBT plus treatment as usual. Using a decision analytic model that compared costs and effects of brief CBT vs. treatment as usual from a U.S. DoD perspective, they found that brief CBT was expected to prevent approximately 23 to 25 more suicide attempts and one to three more suicide deaths per 100 patients treated than treatment as usual. In most scenarios, brief CBT was cost-saving based on sensitivity analyses that assumed a range of treatment effects. The researchers used the federal discount rate and estimated that the DoD could save between \$15,000 and \$16,630 per patient with brief CBT vs. treatment as usual. They noted that assuming the weakest plausible brief CBT effect sizes, the intervention could cost an additional \$1,910 to \$2,250 per patient compared with treatment as usual. [Healio](#)

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## Five families file lawsuit over mold in military housing at Florida's MacDill Air Force Base

2 December- Jason Genrich's 17-year Army career is under threat because of his health. It's not because of injuries sustained on one of his four deployments — it's because of mold growing in his military housing at MacDill Air Force Base, Fla. Genrich, a chief warrant officer 3, and his wife Jenny moved into a house on the base near Tampa in August 2018. Within five months, Genrich visited four specialists for ongoing symptoms including chest pains, mood swings, dizziness and fatigue. For the first time in his military career, he was placed on a medical deferment from physical activity. In February, his neurologist diagnosed him with "sick building syndrome" and started him on a regimen of four daily medications. His story and those of four other military families are outlined in a lawsuit filed Monday in U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Florida, Tampa Division, claiming the Michaels

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## **An Ergonomic Overview on Exoskeletons, Orthosis, and Prosthesis: Potential Impacts and Future Research Directions**

For over 100 years, researchers and inventors have attempted to create devices that work in parallel with the body's muscles and tendons in order to augment them. The potential impact of recent Exoskeleton technology on decreasing Work Related Musculoskeletal Disorder (WMSD) injuries and their associated reduction of monetary costs is encouraging. With any new technology however, there are potential user risks involved with bionic exoskeletons that need to be addressed, specifically physical ergonomic and psychological human factor risks. This paper offers an overview on ergonomic risks on the future use of exoskeletons in an industrial environment.



Organization, the private company responsible for managing the on-base housing at MacDill, knew the houses there had mold problems and did not protect the health and safety of service members and their families. Instead, the company, known locally at MacDill as Harbor Bay, took an incomplete, piecemeal approach to remediating mold problems that was ineffective, according to the suit. The company's actions were a breach of contract, a violation of Florida Deceptive and Unfair Trade Practices Act and negligent, according to the lawsuit. Other names for the Michaels Organization listed in the lawsuit include Michaels Management Services, Inc., Interstate Realty Management Company, AMC East Communities and Clark Capital Realty. A representative for the organization could not be reached for comment Monday. [Stars and Stripes](#)

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## **US sailor at Pearl Harbor base kills two before shooting himself**

5 December-A US Navy sailor has shot three civilians, killing two of them, before taking his own life at the historic military base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, military officials said. "I can report that Joint Base security personnel did respond to the report of an active shooter today in the vicinity of Dry Dock 2 in the naval shipyard," Rear Admiral Robert B Chadwick said. Chadwick said he did not know the motive behind Wednesday's shooting. The third victim was hospitalized. The incident came three days before the 78th anniversary of the December 7, 1941, attack on the naval base that led the United States to enter the second world war by declaring war on Japan. Chadwick added that the shooter, who has been "tentatively" identified as an active duty sailor assigned to the USS Columbia, died from an apparent self-inflicted gunshot wound. An unnamed witness told Hawaii News Now in an on-air interview that he heard gunfire near Dry Dock 2 at the base and looked up from his desk to see the gunman put a gun to his head and shoot himself. [Al Jazeera](#)

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## **Why the US military can't recruit more mental health professionals**

2 December- Low pay, fewer advancement opportunities and an excessive workload rank as the top reasons the military services fail to recruit and retain psychiatrists, psychologists and other mental health providers, according to a new Defense Department report. With more than 50 percent of psychiatrists nationwide able to run cash-only practices, with many making six-figure salaries, the Army, Navy and Air Force lack a competitive advantage when it comes to paying civilians and drawing military providers, as noted in a report Nov. 29 to Congress. Add in a slow hiring process, onerous paperwork and little say in assignments — particularly overseas — and the services can't keep up with demand. The challenges are a threat to morale, and subsequently, retention, the report states. "When combined with the Defense Health Agency's access-to-care standards, this reality creates a demoralizing situation in which providers can perform initial behavioral health evaluation but are

## The Surgeon General Weekly Read Book

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

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

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

subsequently unable to provide therapeutic interventions," the report noted. Providers who wear uniforms also face additional burdens that prompt many to leave, including frequent changes of duty station and low opportunities for advancement. The Army promotion system "validates and rewards leadership while often clinical career pathways," which can force effective providers out of the service, the report stated. [Military Times](#)

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### GLOBAL

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## Child life expectancy projections cut by years

2 December- Years have been knocked off official projections of children's life expectancies in the UK, an Office for National Statistics (ONS) report shows. A baby girl born in 2019 is now expected to celebrate three fewer birthdays on average, than under previous calculations. Official 2014 data thought that girl would make it to 93.6. Now the figure is 90.4. The report also slashed the likelihood of children reaching 100. Although life expectancies have been and are still improving, experts say previous estimates were too high. The improvement is much smaller than previously thought, as part of a widely acknowledged slowdown in life expectancy since 2011. In 2018, life expectancy growth stalled for the first time in more than 30 years. This has led statisticians to re-evaluate their assumptions about future improvements in life expectancy, resulting in the figures released today. The ONS report calculates the impact of this less-rosy picture on children's prospects of a long life. So a boy born in 2019 is now expected to live for 87.8 years. But the 2016 data thought he would reach 89.7 and the 2014 data said 91.1. And looking to the future, to children born in 2043, there is a dramatic drop in the chances of reaching 100. The latest report says:

-20.8% of newborn boys are expected to reach 100

-26.1% of newborn girls are expected to reach 100

But the projections two years ago thought:

-34.1% of newborn boys would reach 100

-40.2% of newborn girls would reach 100

The ONS said: "There has been considerable public debate about the causes of the slowdown in life expectancy improvements. "Researchers have suggested a range of possible explanations for the slowdown... several factors are at play, none of which can be singled out as being the most important with any certainty." Many reports, including by Public Health England and the Health Foundation think tank, have attempted to get to the bottom of the issue. [BBC News](#)

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## Don't toss that E-Cig: Vaping waste is a whole new headache for schools and cities

29 November- In her office at Boulder High School, the assistant principal has a large cardboard box where she can toss the spoils of her ongoing battle with the newest student addiction. "This is what I call the box of death," says Kristen Lewis. "This is everything that we've confiscated." The box is filled with vape pens like Juuls, the leading brand of e-cigarettes, dozens of disposable pods for nicotine liquid, and even a lonely box of Marlboros. At Boulder High, students are prohibited from smoking cigarettes or vaping electronic cigarettes anywhere on school grounds. But Lewis and other school employees still regularly pluck e-cigarettes from students' hands or find them scattered all around. Outside in the school parking lot, Lewis spots some discarded packaging and picked it up: "This one is an Orion vape device, it looks like." A little further on, she spotted a pile of vaping waste: "Yep, more Juul pods." She finds them even farther out: along the edge of nearby Boulder Creek, and in the yards of homes across from the school. The extent of the trash reveals "how much this has become a part of our students' lives," Lewis says. "And that's what's scary... It really has become an epidemic in our schools, and not just here at Boulder High, but every high school in the nation is really dealing with this." Colorado topped the list for teen vaping in 2018, and Boulder is one of the hot spots. The surge in vaping has led to health problems, of course, but has also created a new environmental problem in discarded pens and the abundant pods that come with them. The disposable pod is a small plastic cartridge that holds the nicotine liquid. It snaps onto the base smoking device, often called a "vape pen," which can look like an actual pen or an innocuous digital accessory such as a flash drive. In 2017, people bought more than 16 million of the devices in the U.S., a figure that doesn't include the disposable pods, which in the case of Juul, are often sold in packs of four. Where old cartridges and sleek battery-laden devices go after they're used is becoming a huge problem for waste managers — and school administrators.

[NPR](#)

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## Fatal attacks on Congo clinics risk resurgence of Ebola epidemic

29 November- International organizations warned on Friday of a potential resurgence of Ebola in Congo after deadly militia attacks on health centers forced aid groups to suspend operations and withdraw staff from the epidemic's last strongholds. Mai Mai militia fighters killed four people and injured several others at two Ebola centers on Thursday in the worst yet of violence hampering efforts to tame the outbreak in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The world's second biggest Ebola epidemic on record has killed over 2,200 people since mid-2018, but new infections slowed in recent months. "Ebola was retreating and now it is likely to resurge," World Health Organization (WHO) spokesman Christian Lindmeier told a news briefing in Geneva. WHO has relocated 173 staff while the U.N. children's agency UNICEF has evacuated 20 staff. After Thursday's fatal raids on health

centers in Mangina and Byakoto, a screening center was also attacked overnight in the town of Oicha, Congolese health authorities said. Mai Mai fighters and local residents have attacked health facilities sometimes because they believe Ebola does not exist and in other cases because of resentment that they have not benefited from the influx of donor funding. The International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC) halted operations in the towns of Mangina, Beni and Butembo. [Reuters](#)

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## **Immunotherapy offers hope for men with prostate cancer**

28 November- A major trial of an immunotherapy drug has shown it can be effective in some men with advanced prostate cancer. The men had stopped responding to the main treatment options. Researchers found that a small proportion of men, described as "super responders", remained well even after the trial ended, despite a very poor prognosis before treatment. Last week it was reported the same drug had proved effective in treating advanced head and neck cancers...The study found It found that one in 20 men with advanced prostate cancer responded to the drug pembrolizumab - and saw their tumours actually shrink or disappear altogether. Although a relatively small number, some of them gained years of extra life, the study in the Journal of Clinical Oncology found. A further 19% saw some evidence of improvement. But most patients in the study lived for an average of eight months on the drug. The phase II clinical trial, led by the Institute of Cancer Research and the Royal Marsden, involved 258 men with advanced prostate cancer who had run out of all other options on treatment. [BBC News](#)

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## **New data highlight promise of 2 Ebola treatments**

27 November- A research group today published full results from a clinical trial of four Ebola therapies in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) outbreak, in which preliminary findings in August led health officials to push the pause button to steer patients into groups to receive two treatments that stood out as most promising. An international research group, which includes renowned Ebola researcher and DRC health official Jean-Jacques Muyembe-Tamfum, MD, published its findings in the New England Journal of Medicine (NEJM). In August, an independent board that was monitoring the study in people treated in DRC Ebola treatment units took an early look at the data and saw that mortality rates were significantly lower in those who received the monoclonal antibody cocktail REGN-EB3 (made by Regeneron of Tarrytown, New York) and the single monoclonal antibody mAb 114, developed from antibodies of an Ebola survivor. The other two therapies in the trial were the triple monoclonal antibody ZMapp, used as a control, and the antiviral drug remdesivir. Patients in the study were randomized to receive one of the drugs, plus standard care. The trial began in November 2018 and enrolled 681 patients. To compare the four treatments, the researchers assessed their impact against death at 28 days. Mortality was lower in the mAb114 group, 35.1%, compared with 49.7% in those who got ZMapp. For REGN-EB3, mortality was 33.5%, compared with 51.3% in a ZMapp subgroup. And for

remdesivir, overall mortality was 53.1%. Results were even more impressive for patients who had low viral loads. The team identified four serious adverse events that were possibly related to the trial drugs. The group concluded that both mAB114 and REGN-EB3 are superior to ZMapp in reducing death from Ebola and that it's possible to conduct ethically sound clinical research in an outbreak setting. [CIDRAP](#)

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## **New York City fully bans vaping**

27 November- In a move that sets the e-cigarette industry back, New York City has approved a vaping ban. The City council passed the local ordinance with 42 sidings for it and two against. Mayor Bill De Blasio is expected to sign the bill or let it automatically lapse into law, according to his deputy press secretary. City Council Health Committee Chair, in a statement to CNBC, said the following: "New York City is finally addressing a public health crisis which has been mounting for years while state and local governments across the nation did next to nothing. We are finally taking action to address the resurgence of youth nicotine addiction caused by e-cigarette usage. With this vote, the City Council is moving to ban the fruity, minty, candy-like flavors of e-cigarettes, which were clearly designed to appeal to young people in the first place." [Tech Times](#)

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## **'Sugar overload' warning for festive hot drinks**

3 December- Seasonal lattes and hot chocolates being sold by some High Street coffee chains can contain up to 23 spoonfuls of sugar per cup, a study has found. Action on Sugar analysed more than 200 drinks and found "shockingly" large amounts of sugar in many of them. Some were made using vegan-friendly alternatives to cow's milk. The "venti" (a pint) Starbucks Signature Caramel Hot Chocolate made with oat milk but topped with whipped cream had the most. It contains 23 teaspoons (93.7g) of sugar and 758 calories, which Action on Sugar says is as much as three cans of Coca-Cola or four white chocolate and strawberry muffins. Next was Caffè Nero's Grande Salted Caramel Hot Chocolate made with skimmed milk - containing 15 teaspoons (nearly 60g) of sugar and 503 calories. Third highest in sugar was a venti Starbucks Gingerbread Latte made with oat milk - containing 14 teaspoons (56.6g) of sugar and 523 calories - the same as 17 custard cream biscuits. [BBC News](#)

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## The crisis in youth suicide

2 December- ...In October, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported that after a stable period from 2000 to 2007, the rate of suicide among those aged 10 to 24 increased dramatically — by 56 percent — between 2007 and 2017, making suicide the second leading cause of death in this age group, following accidents like car crashes. “We’re in the middle of a full-blown mental health crisis for adolescents and young adults,” said Jean M. Twenge, research psychologist at San Diego State University and author of the book “iGen,” about mental health trends among those born since 1995. “The evidence is strong and consistent both for symptoms and behavior.” Along with suicides, since 2011, there’s been nearly a 400 percent increase nationally in suicide attempts by self-poisoning among young people. “Suicide attempts by the young have quadrupled over six years, and that is likely an undercount,” said Henry A. Spiller, director of the Central Ohio Poison Center, who called the trend “devastating.” “These are just the ones that show up in the E.R.” Although no one can say with certainty why suicide has become such a crisis among the young, experts cite several factors that parents, schools and others might be able to modify or control. Dr. Spiller, for example, attributes the rise in suicide attempts largely to the effects of social media and how teens and young adults communicate with their peers. “Kids now never disconnect,” he said. “They’re connected 24/7. They go to bed with their smartphones. It may be cyberbullying. It may be envy. Maybe many things are going on here.” One thing the research didn’t find was a link of teen suicides to the opioid crisis. Instead, in school-age adolescents, it found a rise in suicide attempts during school months — September until December, then again January through May — that doesn’t happen in adults. The rise in attempted and completed suicides by young people correlates directly with their access to smartphones, Dr. Twenge said. “Developmentally, these ages have always been difficult, but that’s been taken to the next level by smartphones, social media and the constant pressure to be online.” “Eighty-five percent of teens are looking at social media,” she said. “There’s less face-to-face time spent with friends. It’s now the norm to sit home Saturday night on Instagram. Who’s popular and who’s not is now quantifiable by how many people are following you. Kids are spending as much as eight hours a day on social media, where there’s a lot of negativity, competition and jockeying for status and unfiltered access to sites that tell them how to harm themselves.” Dr. Ackerman, who noted that “young brains are less adept at dealing with complex situations,” likewise believes social media plays an important role in the suicide crisis among the young. But he sees the problem more broadly and said there is a need for schools to help counter it. Staff can be trained and screening done within schools, he said. [The New York Times](#)

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## **Vital signs: Status of human immunodeficiency virus testing, viral suppression, and HIV preexposure prophylaxis**

3 December- ...The approximately 38,000 new human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infections that occur annually in the United States are preventable through testing, treatment, and preexposure prophylaxis (PrEP). A proposed initiative seeks to reduce new infections by at least 90% by 2030. The targets for the initiative are at least 95% for testing and treatment and 50% for PrEP. In 2017, 85.8% of persons with HIV infection had received a diagnosis, and 62.7% of persons with diagnosed HIV infection had a suppressed viral load. In 2018, PrEP had been prescribed to 18.1% of persons with indications. Accelerated efforts to diagnose, treat, and prevent HIV infection are urgently needed. [CDC](#)

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## **What you need to know about products containing cannabis or cannabis-derived compounds, including CBD**

25 November- The FDA is working to answer questions about the science, safety, and quality of products containing cannabis and cannabis-derived compounds, particularly CBD.

-The FDA has approved only one CBD product, a prescription drug product to treat two rare, severe forms of epilepsy.

-It is currently illegal to market CBD by adding it to a food or labeling it as a dietary supplement.

-The FDA has seen only limited data about CBD safety and these data point to real risks that need to be considered before taking CBD for any reason.

-Some CBD products are being marketed with unproven medical claims and are of unknown quality.

-The FDA will continue to update the public as it learns more about CBD.

...The FDA continues to believe the drug approval process represents the best way to ensure that safe and effective new medicines, including any drugs derived from cannabis, are available to patients in need of appropriate medical therapy. The agency is committed to supporting the development of new drugs, including cannabis and cannabis-derived drugs, through the investigational new drug and drug approval process. We are aware that there may be some products on the market that add CBD to a food or label CBD as a dietary supplement. Under federal law, it is illegal to market CBD this way. The FDA is evaluating the regulatory frameworks that apply to certain cannabis-derived products that are intended for non-drug uses, including whether and/or how the FDA might consider updating its regulations, as well as whether potential legislation might be appropriate. The information we have underscores the need for further study and high quality, scientific information about the safety and potential uses of CBD. The FDA is committed to setting sound,

science-based policy. The FDA is raising these safety, marketing, and labeling concerns because we want you to know what we know. We encourage consumers to think carefully before exposing themselves, their family, or their pets, to any product, especially products like CBD, which may have potential risks, be of unknown quality, and have unproven benefits. Our Consumer Update includes a practical summary of what we know to date. As we learn more, our goal is to update you with the information you need to make informed choices about CBD products. Also, as the regulatory pathways are clarified we will take care to inform all stakeholders as quickly as possible. [U.S. Food & Drug Administration](#)

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## **INFLUENZA**

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### **AFHSB: DoD Seasonal Influenza Surveillance Summary**

Week 47 (17 November 2019— 23 November 2019):

NORTHCOM-ILI activity remained low. The majority of positive specimens continued to be influenza B.

EUCOM- ILI activity increased to low. Among positive specimens, the majority were influenza A, with influenza A (H3N2) being the most prominent subtype among subtyped specimens.

INDOPACOM-ILI activity remained low. The majority of positive specimens continued to be influenza A (not subtyped).

SOUTHCOM-ILI activity remained minimal in Cuba. The majority of specimens continued to be influenza A (not subtyped).

CENTCOM- ILI activity was moderate overall. [DHA -Armed Forces Health Surveillance Branch](#)

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

Week 47, ending November 23, 2019: According to this week's FluView report, seasonal influenza activity in the United States continues to increase but the amount of activity and the predominant influenza virus varies by region.

Influenza-Associated Hospitalizations- The Influenza Hospitalization Surveillance Network (FluSurv-NET) conducts population-based surveillance for laboratory-confirmed influenza-related hospitalizations in select counties in the Emerging Infections Program (EIP) states and Influenza Hospitalization Surveillance Project (IHSP) states. A total of 573 laboratory-confirmed influenza associated hospitalizations were reported by FluSurv-NET sites between October 1, 2019 and November 23, 2019. The overall hospitalization rate was 2.0 per 100,000 population. The highest rate of hospitalization was among adults aged  $\geq 65$  (5.1 per

100,000 population), followed by children aged 0-4 (3.1 per 100,000 population) and adults aged 50-64 (2.0 per 100,000 population). Among 573 hospitalizations, 337 (58.8%) were associated with influenza A virus, 230 (40.1%) with influenza B virus, 4 (0.7%) with influenza A virus and influenza B virus co-infection, and 2 (0.3%) with influenza virus for which the type was not determined. Among those with influenza A subtype information, 40 (54.1%) were A(H1N1)pdm09 virus and 34 (45.9%) were A(H3N2).

Pneumonia and Influenza (P&I) Mortality Surveillance- Based on National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) mortality surveillance data available on November 27, 2019, 5.1% of the deaths occurring during the week ending November 16, 2019 (week 46) were due to P&I. This percentage is below the epidemic threshold of 6.3% for week 46.

Influenza-Associated Pediatric Mortality-One influenza associated pediatric death was reported to CDC during week 47. The death was associated with an influenza B virus for which the lineage was not determined and occurred during week 47 (the week ending November 23, 2019).

A total of five influenza-associated pediatric deaths occurring during the 2019-2020 season have been reported to CDC. [CDC](#)

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## WHO: Influenza Update

25 November 2019 - Update number 355, based on data up to 10 November 2019:

- In the temperate zone of the northern hemisphere, influenza activity remained at inter-seasonal levels in most countries. However, influenza activity continued to increase across the countries in Western Asia.
- In the Caribbean, and tropical South American countries, influenza activity was low overall, except for Cuba. In Central American countries, influenza activity decreased in El Salvador and Nicaragua.
- In tropical Africa, influenza activity remained elevated in some countries of Western Africa.
- In Southern Asia, influenza activity was low across reporting countries, but continued to increase in Iran (Islamic Republic of).
- In South East Asia, influenza activity continued to be reported in Lao PDR.
- In the temperate zones of the southern hemisphere, influenza activity returned to inter-seasonal levels in most countries and decreased to low levels in Chile.
- Worldwide, seasonal influenza A accounted for the majority of detections, with equal proportions of influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 and A(H3N2) viruses. [WHO](#)

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## **18 ill in E. coli outbreak linked to dairy products; pasteurization problem cited**

28 November- A dairy in an English town has been linked to an outbreak of E. coli, with 18 people sick. Darwin's Dairy has been advised to recall all whole, skimmed and semi-skimmed milk and cream products currently in circulation. Barnsley Council and Public Health England (PHE) informed residents across South Yorkshire of the recall. They did not mention the strain of E. coli involved. PHE Yorkshire and the Humber noted an increase in E. coli cases in South Yorkshire but the dairy has not yet been confirmed as the source of the outbreak. Nine of the 18 ill people consumed Darwin's Dairy products before becoming sick. In a joint statement, Julia Burrows, director of public health at Barnsley Council, and Dr. Nachi Arunachalam, consultant in communicable disease control at PHE Yorkshire and the Humber, said it advised the dairy to take recall action. "This became necessary after a potential processing problem was identified with the pasteurization process that could have affected some milk and cream products that could still be stored in people's fridges." Products can be identified by a Darwin's logo on the container either "Darwin's Dairy" or "NP & DJ Darwin Ltd", wording saying: "produced at Whitefield Farm, Oxspring, Barnsley" or an oval mark with "UK YB006 EC" inside it. Burrows and Arunachalam said the dairy was cooperating with the recall. [Food Safety News](#)

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## **Fuji recalls sushi sold at Trader Joe's, 7 Eleven over listeria concerns**

3 December- Heads up, sushi fanatics: Fuji Food Products, Inc. has announced a recall of its ready-to-eat sushi – as well as spring rolls and salads – sold at Trader Joe's, 7 Eleven, Walgreens and more popular stores across the East Coast and the Upper Midwest over concerns the products are contaminated with listeria. Affected items were sold or distributed in various states, such as Alabama, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Vermont, Virginia, Washington D.C., West Virginia and Wisconsin. [Fox News](#)

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## **Kentucky firm recalls 60 tons of pork, turkey products for undeclared soy**

2 December- Blue Grass Quality Meats initiated a recall of more than 121,000 pounds of bacon and turkey products after a supplier notified the company of an undeclared allergen, soy, in one of the ingredients. The Erlanger, KY, meat producer reported that there haven't been any confirmed injuries or other adverse reactions related to the recalled products, according to a notice posted by the USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS). Federal law requires specific labeling for known allergens...All of the recalled products have the establishment number "P-7417" or "EST. 7417" printed inside the USDA mark of inspection on their labels. The recalled turkey and bacon were produced from Oct. 29 through Nov. 19. [Food Safety News](#)

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## **Romaine outbreak patient list tops 100; warnings continue as harvest moves**

4 December- More than 100 people have now been confirmed with infections in an E. coli outbreak associated with romaine lettuce. Public health officials continue their warning against romaine lettuce grown in the Salinas, CA, area or any romaine from an unknown source. As of today, there are 102 patients spread across 23 states from coast to coast. The outbreak has an unusually high hospitalization rate with more than half of the patients have required hospitalization, according to an update from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. As of today, there are 102 patients spread across 23 states from coast to coast. The outbreak has an unusually high hospitalization rate with more than half of the patients have required hospitalization, according to an update from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. At least 10 people have developed hemolytic uremic syndrome (HUS), a type of kidney failure that is frequently fatal and also causes lifelong complications such as brain damage. The confirmed patients range in age from 1 to 89 years old. As the harvest of romaine begins moving from the Salinas area in California to the Yuma area in Arizona, federal officials continue their warnings. There have been five outbreaks related to romaine from California and Arizona since late 2017. "Epidemiologic, laboratory and traceback evidence indicates that romaine lettuce from the Salinas, CA, growing region is a likely source of this outbreak," according to an update today from the Food and Drug Administration. "Consumers should not eat romaine lettuce harvested from Salinas, California. . . . Romaine lettuce may be voluntarily labeled with a harvest region. If this voluntary label indicates that the romaine lettuce was grown in 'Salinas' — whether alone or with the name of another location — do not eat it. Throw it away or return it to the place of purchase. If romaine lettuce does not have information about harvest region or does not indicate that it has been grown indoors — i.e., hydroponically- and greenhouse-grown — throw it away or return it to the place of purchase. Consumers ordering salad containing romaine at a restaurant or at a salad bar should ask the staff whether the romaine came

from Salinas. If it did, or they do not know, do not eat it." [Food Safety News](#)

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## WELLNESS

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### 8 tips for making fitness part of your family life (no home gym required)

2 December- ...Experts say it's important that kids get in the habit of exercising. Research indicates that parents' activity level and encouragement play vital roles in determining how physically active their kids are. Want to foster your own culture of family fitness? Here are eight tips to help (having a gym at home isn't required).

- Just get moving.
- Be enthusiastic — and sincere — about exercise.
- Make a plan and stick with it.
- Consider an app or a fitness tracker.
- Find a family-friendly gym.
- Try an event that isn't timed.
- Don't push your kids too hard.
- Get creative with your workouts. [The Washington Post](#)

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### A 'blue zones' diet: Live longer from what you eat

3 December- Want to live a long, healthy life? So do I. That's why for the past 15 years I've explored places around the world where people have done exactly that — places I dubbed "blue zones." And I'm convinced that the foods the people in these areas eat are a big part of their secret. On the Italian island of Sardinia, I've broken bread in mountain villages that boast some of the highest concentrations of male centenarians on the globe. On the Japanese islands of Okinawa, I've sat down for tea with those who rank among the world's longest living women. On the Greek island of Ikaria, where it's said people simply "forget to die," I've tucked into a hearty bowl of minestrone with friends who not only live long, healthy lives but also stay sharp to the very end and suffer the world's lowest rates of dementia. On Costa Rica's Nicoya Peninsula, I've started the day with tortillas, beans and pico de gallo among country folk who are more likely to reach a healthy 90 years old than anyone else on the planet. And in and around Loma Linda, California, I've been invited to dinner with members of a thriving Seventh-day Adventist community whose vegetarian diet has helped them live up to a decade longer than other Americans. For most of their lives, the world's super-agers have nourished their bodies with whole, plant-based foods, such as leafy vegetables, tubers, nuts, beans and whole grains. And they ate meat fewer than five

times monthly. It may not come as a surprise to learn that a plant-based lifestyle underpins the world's longevity diet, but how those who eat this way manage to stay true to the diet is probably a bigger secret for the rest of us to learn. Next month, after the holidays, most of us will resolve to eat healthier. But by January 17, most of us will be back to our old habits -- that's according to data from Strava, a social network for athletes, based on more than 108 million usage entries. That's because diets don't work for the vast majority of people for more than about seven months. If you want to live a long, healthy life, the key is to do the right things — and avoid the wrong things — for decades, not just a few months. Because when it comes to longevity, there's no short-term fix. People in blue zones have been eating the "right" foods because the right foods -- beans, grains and garden vegetables -- were cheapest and most accessible. Their kitchens were set up to cook them quickly and they had time-honored recipes to make simple peasant food taste delicious. Finally, their communities gathered around this food: They sat down at the table with people who ate the same way. They weren't surrounded by people who grilled burgers and ate cheese puffs. A healthy diet was just one part of a mutually supportive web of factors promoting longevity in the blue zones. [CNN](#)

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#### **USAFRICOM**

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### **MEASLES in Africa: 5,000 dead in DRC**

29 November- The World Health Organization (WHO) put out a report this week that shows that some 440,000 measles cases have been reported during the past 10 months or so in 2019. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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#### **USCENTCOM**

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### **People with disabilities left behind in Yemen**

3 December- Conflict has overwhelmed Yemen's public health and social welfare services—and its 4.5 million people with disabilities suffer disproportionately, Amnesty International concludes in a report marking today's International Day of Persons with Disabilities. Many with limited mobility can't escape the violence. Those who could flee often lack wheelchairs or crutches. Upon reaching camps, poorly designed latrines and aid distribution points rob them of their independence. Humanitarian organizations can and should do more, Amnesty says. Recommendations:

- Collect and analyze better disaggregated data on people with disabilities
- Seek input from people with disabilities in planning aid
- Provide better assistive devices and accessible latrines [Global Health Now](#)

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## USEUCOM

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### Brussels University issues mumps warning

1 December- A warning letter concerning mumps cases on the Université libre de Bruxelles campus was issued last week. No specific number of mumps cases are mentioned in the letter, just "several" cases. Mumps is a contagious viral infection that is transmitted person to person through coughing, sneezing, or talking. The most common symptoms include low-grade fever, headache, muscle aches, tiredness, loss of appetite, and swollen or tender salivary glands along the jaw or behind the ears. While vaccination against the mumps is the best protection against the mumps infection, vaccinated individuals may still become infected. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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### England reports monkeypox case, believed contracted in Nigeria

4 December- In 2018, health officials in England reported three monkeypox cases– two imported cases in travelers from Nigeria and one in a healthcare worker. Today, health officials again report a monkeypox case in the country. According to Public Health England (PHE), the patient is believed to have contracted the infection while visiting Nigeria. The patient was staying in the south west England prior to transfer to the specialist high consequence infectious disease centre at Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust, London, where they are receiving appropriate care. As a precautionary measure, PHE experts are working closely with NHS colleagues to implement rapid infection control procedures, including contacting people who might have been in close contact with the individual to provide information and health advice. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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## USINDOPACOM

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### Plague in China: An update and review

2 December- According to Chinese officials, there has been 5 human plague cases in China in 2019. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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## Samoa measles death toll tops 50

1 December- In an update on the measles epidemic in Samoa, health officials reported an additional 198 cases in the past 24 hours, bringing the outbreak total to 3,728 measles cases since early September. In addition, during the same 24 hours, tragically five more measles related deaths have been reported, bringing the total to 53. 48 deaths have been reported in children 4 years and younger. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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## Singapore closes in on 15,000 dengue cases in 2019

29 November- While the 2019 dengue fever season is a far cry from 2013 when more than 22,000 cases were reported, the country's Environmental officials are reporting nearly 15,000 dengue cases in the first 11 months of the year. Through November 29, 14,910 dengue cases have been reported, around five-times the numbers reported in 2018.

[Outbreak News Today](#)

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### USNORTHCOM

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## U.S.: San Diego- Dozens of mumps cases prompts advisory

27 November- Health officials in San Diego County issued a health advisory today due to an unusually high number of cases being reported in the region. In 2019 to date, 60 residents have been reported with confirmed or probable mumps, the most reported in 25 years. There have been no deaths; however, six people were hospitalized. Two people had hearing loss and five men had swelling of the testicles. "We're asking providers to report suspected mumps cases to the County, and we'd like the public to know about the symptoms of mumps, so they seek care," said Wilma Wooten, M.D., M.P.H., County public health officer. About a month ago, Los Angeles County reported an outbreak this month in that county's Men's Central Jail. As of November 16, 2019, a total of 3,067 mumps cases have been reported nationwide this year to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The Mexican Ministry of Health reported 7,200 cases of infectious parotitis/mumps in Mexico in 2019 through November 9. This includes 754 cases in Baja California, the largest number there since 2001. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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## Brazil: Second phase of measles vaccination campaign ends, measles outbreak is still active

2 December- Brazil health authorities marked the end of the second phase of the Measles Vaccination Campaign Saturday, which began on Nov. 18. The campaign targeted young people aged 20-29 years who have not yet updated their vaccination booklet. The goal of the second phase of the campaign was to vaccinate 9.4 million young adults. For Health Minister Luiz Henrique Mandetta, prevention is essential to prevent measles from advancing in the country. "We need to raise vaccination rates. Now is the time to vaccinate to avoid new cases," said the minister. "Vaccination is of utmost importance at this time to address the outbreak that is occurring in the country. Health services are prepared with vaccines to serve the target audience," said Franciele Fontana, coordinator PNI, during vaccination action at the Health Unit of the Governor Eduardo Campos Family in Recife. The age group of 20 to 29 years is the one that accumulates the largest number of confirmed cases of measles, according to the latest epidemiological bulletin, so the importance of this step to interrupt the chain of transmission of the virus in the country. For this public, the biggest problem is not the severity of the disease, but the transmission factor for groups more susceptible to complications of the disease, such as children, for example. The measles outbreak is still active in the country. Currently, 11,896 cases and 15 deaths from the disease are confirmed by week 45. Most cases, 11095 (93.2%) are concentrated in the state of São Paulo, mainly in the metropolitan region. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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## Chile: Salmonella outbreak sickens dozens in Maipú, linked to sushi

23 November- A salmonella outbreak in Maipú commune in Santiago Province has now affected 80 people, according to the Chile news source. This is up from 45 cases reported ill at the El Carmen Hospital with symptoms of Salmonella on Tuesday. Health officials have linked to outbreak to the consumption of sushi at a Bokado sushi store. "This is an important call for the preparation of these products, they must be cooked. They must not use salmon or raw seafood, they must use cooked products," said Health Seremi, Rosa Oyarce. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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