

7 February 2020

Army Public Health Weekly Update

Army Public Health Center



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- Brazil accounts for 88% of the total confirmed measles cases in the Americas in 2019

U.S. MILITARY

Air Force saw record-breaking number of suicides in 2019

4 February- The U.S. Air Force says 137 airmen across the active duty, Guard and Reserve died by suicide in 2019, a 33% increase over the previous year. Officials confirmed the number last week after the latest statistics appeared on social media. "Suicide is a difficult national problem without easily identifiable solutions that has the full attention of leadership," said Lt. Gen. Brian Kelly, deputy chief of staff for manpower, personnel and services for the Air Force. "The Department of the Air Force has been and continues to pursue immediate, mid-term, and long-range suicide prevention initiatives for the total force that focus on connections between individuals, units, and Air Force family; protections in environments, services, and policies; detection of risk in individuals and units; and equipping the total force and family members to mitigate risk and increase resilience," he said in a statement provided to Military.com on Monday. Leaked slides posted on the popular but unofficial Air Force Facebook page Amn/Nco/Snco last week showed that the majority of the 2019 deaths were in the active-duty ranks -- 84 total. The slides noted that, as of Dec. 31, 68 of the 84 deaths were suspected suicides but had not been confirmed. While the Air Force did not break down the 137 number, a spokesperson confirmed that the slides "were accurate at the time they were created." The new total marks the highest annual number since the Air Force began keeping an official record in 2008, said service spokeswoman Lynn Kirby. Military.com

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Brain injuries from Iran air strike highlight military's failure to care for its own

1 February- First the Pentagon said no U.S. troops were injured in Iran's missile strike last month on an Iraqi air base hosting Americans. Then it rose to 11 with brain injuries, then 34, then 50, and by Thursday the number was up to 64. That's upsetting, as was President Donald Trump's recent comment that "it's not very serious." This is consistent with a decade's long tradition of downplaying the significance of traumatic brain injury. Senior government leadership and the departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs have failed utterly in caring for the mental health of war fighters. Later labeled the signature injury of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, the U.S. military was not prepared in the early days of 2003-4 to either defend against improvised explosive devices (IEDs) or treat the injuries they caused. Although the CIA operated a station in Afghanistan in the 1980s supporting the mujahedeen in fighting against the Soviets, it failed to learn that IEDs had been a weapon of choice. If the fighters and medics had paid attention, there should have been no surprises about the seriousness of the injuries and impact on brain health. Shameful failure to help war fighters Many years passed before the Pentagon acknowledged IED blasts as a game-changing combat injury. In 2004, I alerted the senior leadership in Army medicine. The

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Novel Coronavirus Outbreak

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Military Health System, and the U.S. Army Public Health Center are closely monitoring an outbreak of respiratory illness caused by a novel (new) coronavirus first identified in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China.



young amputees at Walter Reed Army Medical Center complained of headaches, sleep problems and “not thinking right.” Any blast powerful enough to take the legs off a ground trooper would certainly rattle his brains. But, then again, the conventional mentality across the country did not acknowledge the damage from repeated concussions, as too many professional football players have tragically experienced. It wasn’t until 2010 that the Army took the minimal step of giving 24 hours rest to soldiers who had been hit by IED blasts before sending them back out on patrol. Historically, mental health services get shortchanged in funding and support across the country, but the failure to care for the war fighters has been notably shameful. Looking back 18 years, we find that the medical campaign to treat psychological problems and brain injury has largely failed. Hundreds of thousands of veterans and service members suffer with the invisible injuries of war. [USA Today](#)

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Toxic ‘black goo’ base used by U.S. had enriched uranium- More veterans report cancer

3 February- For the last six weeks, a private Facebook group set up to help veterans who served at a toxic base in Uzbekistan has been flooded with new members, many with hauntingly familiar stories: I served at K2. I have cancer. “It was overwhelming,” said retired Army Chief Warrant Officer Scott Welsch, a special operations military intelligence officer who deployed to K2, or Karshi-Khanabad, Uzbekistan, in October 2001. McClatchy exclusively reported in December that the Pentagon had known from the beginning that K2, a former Soviet and Uzbek base, was contaminated with radioactive processed uranium, chemical weapons remnants and underground pools of fuel and solvents that broke through the soil in a “black goo.” Despite the contamination, about 7,000 U.S. forces were deployed there after the 9/11 attacks, from October 2001 to 2005, until Uzbekistan withdrew permission for the United States to use the base. After the K2 story became public, the veterans’ K2 Facebook site was flooded with new requests to join. Each new member was vetted for their military service. Once accepted, more names of ill veterans began to surface. As the new stories came in, Welsch volunteered to track the reported illnesses. But he had to step away. “I was in bad shape from reporting all these medical issues,” said Welsch, who was diagnosed with thyroid cancer in 2014. By the end of January the group had recorded 310 cancers. The last government count, done by the Army in 2015, was that 61 service members who had been at K2 were diagnosed with cancer. That study was prompted by a number of U.S. Army Special Operations Command forces at K2 who had developed various types of cancer. Despite the Army Special Operations Command requesting the review, special operations forces personnel could not be identified because of the classified nature of their missions, so those illnesses likely were not included in the 2015 count, the Army said at the time. [McClatchy](#)

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2019 Novel Coronavirus: More cases reported in California, San Benito County reports 2

3 February- The fifth and sixth 2019-Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) cases in California were reported late Sunday from San Benito County in the Bay area. According to health officials, the confirmed cases are related; husband and wife, and both are 57 years of age. The husband recently traveled from Wuhan, China the wife did not. Therefore, there has been person-to-person transmission. Both patients have not left their home since returning from China. Currently, both patients are not hospitalized. "We continue to monitor the situation closely to protect the health of San Benito County residents and limit the spread of this virus," said Dr. Marty Fenstersheib, San Benito County Health Officer. "We are working closely with Bay Area health officials, local health care providers and community partners." These are the 10th and 11th cases in the United States. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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Burnout linked to potentially lethal heart condition

3 February- Scale it back — for your heart's sake. Burnout is not just an inconvenience. It can lead to a critical, possibly deadly heart condition, a new study has found. Researchers surveyed over 11,000 individuals for burnout, or "vital exhaustion," and then tracked their development of the heart condition atrial fibrillation over the course of 25 years. [Fox News](#)

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Coronavirus cases have more than tripled in past week; 17,000 sicken in China

3 February- China says it has more than 17,000 confirmed cases of the Wuhan coronavirus, representing a huge leap from the 4,400 cases reported as of last week. Chinese health officials said Monday morning that 2,829 new cases had been diagnosed in the past 24 hours alone. Outside of mainland China, nine countries or regions are reporting double-digit cases of the coronavirus, led by Japan with 20, according to a global dashboard created by the Johns Hopkins Whiting School of Engineering. The respiratory virus has killed more than 360 people. The first coronavirus fatality outside China was reported in Philippines over the weekend. In a sign of the economic toll, China's stock markets were pummeled Monday — the first day of trading since the Lunar New Year holiday — with the Shanghai Composite Index falling by nearly 8%. Trading was halted for hundreds of Chinese companies after prices for their stocks dropped by 10% — triggering a mandatory hold. Despite those sharp declines, many markets in the U.S. and elsewhere were holding steady. The S&P 500 rose by around 1% in its first hour of trading, and the Euro Stoxx 50 Index also rose slightly. The U.S. currently has 11 confirmed cases of the coronavirus, known as 2019-nCoV, with patients reported in California, Massachusetts, Arizona, Illinois and Washington

The Surgeon General Weekly Read Book

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

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state. And it has imposed new restrictions on people who want to travel from China to the U.S. "As of 5 p.m. last night, the federal government started banning anyone traveling from China who isn't a U.S. citizen or an immediate family member of an American from entering the United States," NPR's Rob Stein reports. [NPR](#)

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Heard of the low sulfur diet? Eating low-protein may prolong your life, say researchers

3 February- Fasting. Time-restricted eating. Eating for five days, then fasting for two. Lately it appears everyone is interested in some sort of calorie-restricted diet to better their chances for a longer life with fewer chronic diseases. But what if you could get the same longevity benefits without having to eat less? New research shows limiting protein-rich foods that naturally contain high levels of sulfur amino acids, such as meats, dairy, nuts and soy, may reduce the risk for cardiovascular disease. If future research bears that out, it may be another stepping stone to better health and longer life. "For decades it has been understood that diets restricting sulfur amino acids were beneficial for longevity in animals," said John Richie, a professor of public health sciences at Penn State College of Medicine in a statement. "This study provides the first epidemiologic evidence that excessive dietary intake of sulfur amino acids may be related to chronic disease outcomes in humans," Richie added. [CNN](#)

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Initial public health response and interim clinical guidance for the 2019 novel coronavirus outbreak

5 February- In December 2019, an outbreak of acute respiratory illness caused by a novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) was detected in mainland China. Cases have been reported in 26 additional locations, including the United States. ... CDC established a 2019-nCoV Incident Management Structure on January 7, 2020. On January 21, CDC activated its Emergency Operations Center to optimize coordination for domestic and international 2019-nCoV response efforts. To date, CDC has deployed teams to the U.S. jurisdictions with cases to assist with epidemiologic investigation and to work closely with state and local partners to identify and monitor close contacts and better understand the spectrum of illness, transmission, and virulence associated with this novel virus. Information learned from these investigations will help inform response actions. CDC has closely monitored the global impact of this virus with staff members positioned in CDC offices around the world, including mainland China, and in coordination with other countries and WHO. This coordination has included deploying CDC staff members to work with WHO and providing active support to CDC offices in affected countries. In addition, CDC in response to the escalating risks of travel from China has issued a series of Travelers' Health Notices for both Wuhan and the rest of China regarding the 2019-nCoV outbreak. On January 27, CDC issued a Level 3 travel notice for travelers to avoid all nonessential travel to mainland China. [CDC](#)

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Landmark study to transform cancer treatment

5 February- More than a thousand scientists have built the most detailed picture of cancer ever in a landmark study. They said cancer was like a 100,000-piece jigsaw, and that until today, 99% of the pieces were missing. Their studies, published in the journal Nature, provide an almost complete picture of all cancers. They could allow treatment to be tailored to each patient's unique tumour, or develop ways of finding cancer earlier. The Pan-Cancer Analysis of Whole Genomes Consortium analysed the whole genetic code of 2,658 cancers. A cancer is a corrupted version of our own healthy cells - mutations to our DNA change our cells until eventually they grow and divide uncontrollably. Most of our understanding of this process comes from the sets of genetic instructions for building the body's proteins. "That's a mere 1% of the whole genome," said Dr. Lincoln Stein from the Ontario Institute for Cancer Research. He said doctors would be "in the dark" when treating around a third of patients, as it was impossible to tell why their cells had become cancerous. It has taken teams in 37 countries more than a decade to figure out what the 99% were doing. The work, which took 22 scientific journal papers to describe, shows that cancer is massively complex, with thousands of different combinations of mutations able to cause cancer. The project found people's cancers contain, on average, between four and five fundamental mutations that drive a cancer's growth. These are potential weak-spots that can be exploited with treatments that attack these "driver mutations". "Ultimately, what we want to do is to use these technologies to identify treatments that are tailored to each individual patient," said Dr. Peter Campbell, from the Wellcome Sanger Institute. However, 5% of cancers appear to have no driver mutations at all, showing there is still more work to do. Scientists also developed a way of "carbon dating" mutations. They showed that more than a fifth of them occurred years or even decades before a cancer is found. "We've developed the first timelines of genetic mutations across the spectrum of cancer types," said Dr. Peter Van Loo from the Francis Crick Institute. He added: "Unlocking these patterns means it should now be possible to develop new diagnostic tests that pick up signs of cancer much earlier." The challenge will be knowing which of these mutations will go on to become cancer and which can be safely ignored. [BBC News](#)

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More flavonol, less Alzheimer's

29 January- Higher flavonol intake was linked to lower risk of Alzheimer's dementia in a prospective cohort study of older adults. After adjusting for genetic, demographic, and lifestyle factors, people who consumed the highest dietary intake of flavonols were 48% less like to develop Alzheimer's dementia than people with the least intake, reported Thomas Holland, MD, of Rush University in Chicago, and colleagues, in Neurology. "This research lends a further understanding of the contents of the foods we eat," Holland said. "The bioactives in foods -- which from our research would be specifically flavonols found in kale, spinach, tomatoes, tea, olive oil, apples, pears, and over 20 other foods -- have antioxidant

and anti-inflammatory properties that have the potential to protect against cellular damage due to oxidative stress and sustained inflammation," he told MedPage Today. [Medpage Today](#)

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Novel coronavirus: FDA issues Emergency Use Authorization for the first diagnostic test

4 February- The U.S. Food and Drug Administration issued an emergency use authorization (EUA) today to enable emergency use of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) 2019-nCoV Real-Time RT-PCR Diagnostic Panel. To date, this test has been limited to use at CDC laboratories; today's authorization allows the use of the test at any CDC-qualified lab across the country. "Since this outbreak first emerged, we've been working closely with our partners across the U.S government and around the globe to expedite the development and availability of critical medical products to help end this outbreak as quickly as possible. This continues to be an evolving situation and the ability to distribute this diagnostic test to qualified labs is a critical step forward in protecting the public health," said FDA Commissioner Stephen M. Hahn, M.D. "Our collaboration with the CDC has been vital to rapidly developing and facilitating access to this diagnostic test. The FDA remains deeply committed to utilizing our regulatory tools and leveraging our technical and scientific expertise to advance the availability of critical medical products to respond to this outbreak in the most expeditious, safe and effective manner possible." Under this EUA, the use of 2019-nCoV Real-Time RT-PCR Diagnostic Panel is authorized for patients who meet the CDC criteria for 2019-nCoV testing. Testing is limited to qualified laboratories designated by the CDC and, in the U.S., those certified to perform high complexity tests. The diagnostic is a reverse transcriptase polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test that provides presumptive detection of 2019-nCoV from respiratory secretions, such as nasal or oral swabs. A positive test result indicates likely infection with 2019-nCoV and infected patients should work with their health care provider to manage their symptoms and determine how to best protect the people around them. Negative results do not preclude 2019-nCoV infection and should not be used as the sole basis for treatment or other patient management decisions. Negative results must be combined with clinical observations, patient history and epidemiological information. The FDA can issue an EUA to permit the use, based on scientific data, of certain medical products that may be effective in diagnosing, treating or preventing such disease or condition when there is a determination, by the Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS), that there is a public health emergency or a significant potential for a public health emergency that has a significant potential to affect national security or the health and security of U.S. citizens, and a declaration that circumstances exist justifying the medical products' emergency use. On Jan. 31, HHS Secretary Alex Azar declared a public health emergency recognizing the potential threat that 2019-nCoV poses and reiterating the government's dedication to leveraging all available resources to help prevent, mitigate and respond to this threat. As there are no commercially available diagnostic tests cleared or approved by the FDA for the detection of 2019-nCoV it was determined that a EUA is crucial to ensure timely access to diagnostics.

The HHS Secretary accordingly today made the necessary EUA determination and declaration and the FDA issued this EUA in response to a request from the CDC. This action is the result of the close collaboration between the FDA, the CDC and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, which provides oversight for U.S. laboratories, to prioritize the efficient development and implementation of critical medical products in response to emerging infectious disease outbreaks, such as novel coronavirus. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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U.S. whipping up panic over virus, China says, as Pakistan resumes flights

2 February- China accused the United States on Monday of whipping up panic over a fast-spreading coronavirus with travel restrictions and evacuations as Chinese stocks plunged on the first day back from the extended Lunar New Year holiday. The death toll in China from the newly identified virus, which emerged in Wuhan, capital of the central province of Hubei, rose to 361 as of Sunday, up 57 from the previous day, the National Health Commission said. The World Health Organization (WHO) last week declared the flu-like virus a global emergency and it has since spread to 23 other countries and regions. The first death outside China was reported on Sunday - that of a 44-year-old Chinese man who had traveled from Wuhan to the Philippines. Airlines around the world have suspended flights but Pakistan, a close Chinese ally, bucked the trend on Monday and said it was resuming air travel after a three-day suspension. Wuhan and some other cities remain in virtual lockdown with travel severely restricted, and China is facing increasing international isolation. [Reuters](#)

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INFLUENZA

APHC: U.S. Army Influenza Activity Report

Week ending 25 January 2020 (week 4): During week 4, 6,314 specimens were submitted for testing, which represents a 9% increase from week 3. Influenza A accounted for the majority (55%) of positive specimens submitted for testing. PHC-P continues to have the highest percent positive value for influenza A compared to other regions. PHC-C accounted for the majority of positive influenza A specimens (40%); 74% of positive influenza A specimens were among non-AD beneficiaries. Beneficiaries younger than 18 years old accounted for the majority (55%) of total positive respiratory specimens, which was followed by those 18 to 29 years of age (16%). Sixteen influenza-associated hospitalizations were reported in week 4. [APHC](#)

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

Key Updates for Week 4, ending January 25, 2020:

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 8,633 laboratory-confirmed influenza-associated hospitalizations were reported by FluSurv-NET sites between October 1, 2019 and January 25, 2020; 5,173 (59.9%) were associated with influenza A virus, 3,401 (39.4%) with influenza B virus, 27 (0.3%) with influenza A virus and influenza B virus co-infection, and 32 (0.4%) with influenza virus for which the type was not determined. Among those with influenza A subtype information, 1,080 (91.1%) were A(H1N1)pdm09 virus and 106 (8.9%) were A(H3N2). The overall cumulative hospitalization rate was 29.7 per 100,000 population which is similar to what has been seen during recent previous influenza seasons at this time of year. Rates in children and young adults are higher than at this time in recent seasons.

Pneumonia and Influenza (P&I) Mortality Surveillance: Based on National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) mortality surveillance data available on January 30, 2020, 6.7% of the deaths occurring during the week ending January 18, 2020 (week 3) were due to P&I. This percentage is below the epidemic threshold of 7.2% for week 3.

Influenza-Associated Pediatric Mortality: Fourteen influenza-associated pediatric deaths occurring during the 2019-2020 season between weeks 45 and 4 (the weeks ending November 9, 2019 and January 25, 2020) were reported to CDC during week 4. Eight were associated with influenza B viruses; one had a lineage determined and was a B/Victoria virus. Six were associated with influenza A viruses, and three were subtyped; all were A(H1N1)pdm09 viruses. Of the 68 influenza-associated pediatric deaths occurring during the 2019-2020 season and reported to CDC: 45 deaths were associated with influenza B viruses, and eight had a lineage determined; all were B/Victoria viruses. 23 deaths were associated with influenza A viruses, and 13 were subtyped; all were A(H1N1)pdm09 viruses.

[CDC](#)

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WHO: Influenza Update

03 February 2020 - Update number 360, based on data up to 19 January 2020:

- In the temperate zone of the northern hemisphere, respiratory illness indicators and influenza activity remained elevated overall.
- In North America, influenza activity remained elevated influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 and B viruses co-circulating.
- In Europe, influenza activity continued to increase across the region but appeared to decrease in some countries of Northern Europe.
- In Central Asia, influenza activity increased with influenza B viruses predominant.
- In Northern Africa, influenza activity appeared to decrease in Egypt after peaking in recent weeks.
- In Western Asia, influenza activity remained elevated overall and continued to increase in Lebanon and Turkey.
- In East Asia, influenza-like illness (ILI) and influenza activity remained elevated overall.
- In the Caribbean and Central American countries, influenza activity was low across reporting countries, except for Mexico with increased activity of influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 viruses.
- In tropical South American countries, increased influenza activity was reported in Peru.
- In tropical Africa, influenza activity was low across most reporting countries.
- In Southern Asia, influenza activity was low in most reporting countries, but increased in Afghanistan.
- In South East Asia, influenza activity continued to be reported in Lao People's Democratic Republic and Malaysia and increased in Singapore.
- In the temperate zones of the southern hemisphere, influenza activity remained at inter-seasonal levels.
- Worldwide, seasonal influenza A viruses accounted for the majority of detections. [WHO top of page...](#)

VETERINARY/FOOD SAFETY

Cielo Glamping Maritime Clams Recalled in Canada for possible botulism

3 February- Cielo Glamping Maritime clams are being recalled in New Brunswick, Canada because they may permit the growth of Clostridium botulinum bacteria. There have been no reported illnesses associated with the consumption of this product. The recalled products were sold from Cielo Glamping Maritime, located at 232 Chemin des Huîtres, in Haut-Shippigan New Brunswick. They are bottled clams, with no label, that were sold in 500 ml and 1 liter glass jars with a metal lid. There is no UPC number on the product. Foods contaminated with the Clostridium botulinum toxin will not look, smell, or taste spoiled, and the texture is not affected. A tiny amount of this toxin can make you very sick and can kill. Symptoms of botulism poisoning in adults can include facial paralysis, loss of expression, fixed pupils, difficulty swallowing, drooping eyelids, blurred or double vision, slurred speech, difficulty speaking, and a change in the sound of the voice. Symptoms of botulism food poisoning in children can include difficulty swallowing, slurred speech, generalized weakness, and paralysis. Botulism does not cause a fever. Anyone experience these symptoms must see a doctor immediately. This recall was triggered by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency's inspection activities. The government is conducting an investigation which may trigger the recall of more products. If this happens, the recall will be posted on the CFIA web site. If you purchased either of these sizes of Cielo Glamping Maritime clams, do not eat them. Throw them away in a sealed package in a secure garbage can so other people and animals can't access them, or take them back to the store where you bought them for a full refund. [Food Poisoning Bulletin](#)

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WELLNESS

Meat increases heart risks, latest study concludes

3 February- A new study found a meat-heavy diet carries a small but increased risk of cardiovascular disease. Four months ago, the Annals of Internal Medicine published a controversial report that encouraged people not to worry about the health risks of eating red and processed meat, contradicting decades of nutrition advice. The report was widely criticized by public health experts, including leading health groups like the American Heart Association and the American Cancer Society. Some experts called for the paper to be retracted, while others celebrated its findings and used it to raise questions about longstanding dietary guidelines discouraging meat consumption. On Monday, a group of prominent researchers pushed back, publishing a large study in JAMA Internal Medicine that once again highlighted the potential harms of a meat-heavy diet. The researchers analyzed data on a diverse group of thousands of people who were followed for an average

of three decades. They found that people who had the highest intakes of red meat, processed meat and poultry had a small but increased risk of developing cardiovascular disease. People who regularly ate fish, however, did not see an increased cardiovascular risk. The new findings are unlikely to settle the debate over red meat and its link to chronic disease. But they provide further evidence for experts who argue that red and processed meats contribute to the risk of heart disease, and they suggest that health authorities are unlikely to alter their recommendations to limit meat consumption. [The New York Times](#)
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USAFRICOM

Kenya: Suspected anthrax send 18 to hospital in Bomet County

2 February- Health officials in Bomet County, Kenya report 18 people from a local village have been hospitalized for suspected anthrax, according to a Standard Media report. Patients were admitted to various hospitals in Bomet and Kericho counties. "The villagers were brought to the hospital in the morning and are currently undergoing treatment and observation," said a doctor at the Kapkatet hospital. "The victims who slaughtered the carcass and buried it, have developed blisters on various parts of their bodies as a result. So far, there is no report of anyone having feasted on the carcass," said Mr. Stanley Mutai, a county disaster management officer. Lab results are expected within the next day for the confirmation of anthrax. Anthrax is a bacterial pathogen in livestock and wild animals. Ruminants such as bison, cattle, sheep and goats are highly susceptible, and horses can also be infected. Anthrax is a very serious disease of livestock because it can potentially cause the rapid loss of a large number of animals in a very short time. Affected animals are often found dead with no illness detected. When conditions become favorable, the spores germinate into colonies of bacteria. An example would be a grazing cow ingests spores that in the cow, germinate, grow spread and eventually kill the animal. Anthrax is caused by the bacterium, *Bacillus anthracis*. This spore forming bacteria can survive in the environment for decades because of its ability to resist heat, cold, drying, etc. This is usually the infectious stage of anthrax. There are no reports of person-to-person transmission of anthrax. People get anthrax by handling contaminated animal or animal products, consuming undercooked meat of infected animals and more recently, intentional release of spores. [Outbreak News Today](#)
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Lassa fever: Nigeria reports another 104 confirmed cases

5 February- In a follow-up on the Lassa fever outbreak in Nigeria, the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) reported an additional 104 confirmed cases the week ending February 2, bringing the outbreak total for 2020 to 365 confirmed cases. Of this total, six additional fatalities were reported. This brings the total to 365 confirmed cases since the beginning of the year, up from 294 the same period last year. The total deaths for 2020 is now 47. New cases were reported last week from 15 states, with 23 states have recorded at least one confirmed case across 74 Local Government Areas in 2020. Three-quarters of the confirmed cases come from 3 states—Edo (35%), Ondo (35%) and Ebonyi (6%) states. Delta state reported Lassa fever in one health care worker (HCW) last week, bringing the total HCWs affected to 10. Lassa fever is an acute viral hemorrhagic illness caused by Lassa virus, a member of the arenavirus family of viruses. It is transmitted to humans from contacts with food or household items contaminated with rodent excreta. The disease is endemic in the rodent population in parts of West Africa. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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Liberia reports increase in Lassa fever

4 February- The Liberia Ministry of Health reports an increase in Lassa fever cases since the beginning of the year. In just the week ending Jan. 26, the country saw 10 confirmed cases. Since the beginning of 2020, the West African country reported a cumulative total of 55 suspected cases has been recorded across the country. Among these, a total of 24 confirmed cases with nine associated deaths has been reported from nine health districts in six counties. Grand Bossa and Bong counties account for 20 of the confirmed cases. A number of public health measures have been implemented to include the deployment of response teams to the affected areas, the strengthening of infection control measures and information and education to the public. The World Health Organization says mitigating human and vector (rats) interaction need to be prioritized to decrease recurrence of Lassa fever outbreak. To achieve this, it requires effective social mobilization and community engagement strategies targeting vector control and environmental management especially in endemic areas. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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USCENTCOM

Pakistan polio cases rise to 4, three countries halt vaccine-derived polio outbreaks

2 February- In Pakistan, an additional six wild poliovirus type 1 (WPV1) cases were reported this week—three with onset in 2019 and three for 2020—bringing the WPV1 count to four for 2020. The six cases were reported from Sindh province (4) and one each from Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces. 139 WPV1 cases were reported in Pakistan in 2019.

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Sri Lanka reports more than 8,400 dengue cases in January as Wolbachia project starts this month

2 February- Sri Lanka reported more than 100,000 dengue fever cases in 2019, one of the most active dengue years on the island country. Health officials continue to see high numbers of dengue fever during the beginning of 2020. During January, health officials saw 8,435 cases, including more than 1000 cases in Colombo and Trincomalee districts. This comes as Sri Lankan officials plan to launch a pilot project to combat dengue by means of Wolbachia bacteria on Feb. 17. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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USEUCOM

Germany: Munich man is country's 8th novel coronavirus case

2 February- The Bavarian Ministry of Health reported about an eighth novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) case in the country. According to the State Office for Health and Food Safety (LGL), it is a 33-year-old man who lives in the city of Munich. He is an employee of the company from the district of Starnberg, which also employs six of the previously known coronavirus cases. Like five other cases, he is in the Munich Clinic Schwabing. All eight cases are in stable condition. The seventh case was announced on Friday evening. It is a 52-year-old man who lives in the Fürstfeldbruck district. The sixth case had been confirmed on Friday afternoon. It is a child of the man from the district of Traunstein, the positive finding of which was published late Thursday evening. The father and the child are in a stable state of health in Trostberg in the hospital. Chief Physician Prof. Dr. med. Clemens Wendtner from the Clinic for Infectious Diseases at the Munich Clinic Schwabing emphasized on Sunday: "We are in close contact with national and international medical experts from universities and the WHO. All six cases with evidence of the coronavirus (2019-nCoV) are in a clinically stable condition, sometimes showed flu-like symptoms and are currently largely symptom-

free. All patients remain with us for clinical observation. " A test campaign for employees took place last Wednesday, Thursday and Friday in the company from the district of Starnberg. There are now 139 negative results and 2 positive results. The positive findings come from the man from Munich and the man from the Fürstfeldbruck district. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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USINDOPACOM

Australia: 2019-nCoV cases at 12 in four states

3 February- The Australia Department of Health reports twelve confirmed cases of novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) as of today. The twelve cases have been reported in New South Wales (4), Victoria (4), South Australia (2) and Queensland (2). The Australian Government remains vigilant about this virus and how it is developing. They have in place border, isolation, surveillance and case tracing mechanisms. The Government has provided its advice to Australians about the novel coronavirus, based on the latest medical advice. The advice of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) for travel to mainland China is 'level 4 – do not travel'. On the advice of the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee and the Communicable Diseases Network Australia, the Prime Minister has applied the following travel restrictions to people entering Australia having left mainland China after 1 February 2020:

- Foreign nationals (excluding permanent residents of Australia) who are in mainland China, will not be allowed to enter Australia until 14 days after they have left or transited through mainland China
- Australian citizens, permanent residents and their immediate family will still be able to enter Australia, as well as airline crews who have been using appropriate personal protective equipment

In addition the following isolation requirements apply:

- If you have travelled to Hubei Province within the past 14 days, you must isolate yourself until 14 days have elapsed after leaving Hubei Province
- If you have left, or transited through, mainland China on or after 1 February 2020 you must isolate yourself until 14 days after leaving China
- If you have been in close contact with a confirmed case of novel coronavirus, you must isolate yourself for 14 days after last contact with the confirmed case [Outbreak News Today](#)

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Philippines confirms 1st novel coronavirus pneumonia death outside China

2 February- The Philippines Department of Health (DOH) reported today on the first novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) death outside of China. Two patients have been confirmed with the virus in the country– the previously-announced 38-year-old Chinese female and her companion, a 44-year-old Chinese male. Both patients were admitted for isolation and supportive treatment at San Lazaro Hospital in Sta. Cruz, Manila. Both patients are from Wuhan, China and arrived in the Philippines via Hong Kong last January 21, 2020. The second confirmed case was admitted for pneumonia last January 25, 2020 after experiencing fever, cough, and sore throat. DOH also confirmed that the 44-year-old male died yesterday, February 1, 2020. Over the course of the patient's admission, he developed severe pneumonia due to viral and bacterial infections (*S. pneumoniae* and Influenza B). In his last few days, the patient was stable and showed signs of improvement, however, the condition of the patient deteriorated within his last 24 hours resulting in his demise. "I would like to emphasize that this is an imported case with no evidence of local transmission. We are currently working with the Chinese Embassy to ensure the dignified management of the remains according to national and international standards to contain the disease," Health Secretary Francisco T. Duque III said. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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Tonga continues to report measles cases

1 February- The outbreak of measles in Tonga that began in early October 2019, continues into late January as five additional cases were reported, including two cases which were included retrospectively, during the last week of the month. All cases are from the island of Tongatapu. As of January 29, 652 confirmed or suspected cases of measles have been reported in Tonga including 72 lab confirmed cases. Of these, 574 (88.0%) cases occurred on Tongatapu and 66 (10.1 %) occurred on Vava'u Island. Cases have mostly presented with mild symptoms. Till date there have been twenty hospitalizations (none since 25-December-2019), and all cases have been discharged. No deaths have been reported till date. The outbreak of measles in Tonga began in October following the return of a national youth team of Tongan rugby players from New Zealand. The index case developed measles while in New Zealand. Subsequently, a further 12 teammates developed laboratory-confirmed measles. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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Canada: Third novel coronavirus case reported in Ontario

2 February- On Friday, the Ontario Ministry of Health announced the Province's third confirmed case of novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV). The newly confirmed case, a female in her 20s and a student at Western University, arrived asymptomatic in Toronto on January 23, 2020 and was transported to London by way of a private vehicle. On January 24, 2020, the individual started to exhibit symptoms and that same day was assessed and tested at London Health Sciences Centre. She was released with follow up by the Middlesex-London Health Unit. This individual has had limited exposure to other individuals and has otherwise been in isolation since January 24, 2020, with regular contact by the Middlesex-London Health Unit to monitor her condition. She is now recovered and is well. The student has not been on Western's campus since returning to London, and Middlesex-London Health Unit (MLHU) officials have confirmed there is very low risk to the campus community. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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U.S.: Houston- Congenital syphilis up 121 percent, 'My Prenatal Promise' campaign launched

6 February- Health officials in the city of Houston are reporting a significant increase in congenital syphilis cases, prompting a new campaign emphasizing importance of prenatal care, syphilis testing for expectant mothers. According to their data, the number of congenital syphilis cases among pregnant mothers in Houston and Harris County more than doubled from 2017 (47 cases) to 2018 (104 cases) — a 121 percent increase. In addition, women ages 18-34 in Harris County accounted for 92 percent of all syphilis cases from 2017 to 2018. In 2018, Houston ranked first (at 88 percent) in Harris County for all reported congenital syphilis cases. In 2018, Texas saw increased cases of syphilis in women of childbearing age along with a rise in congenital syphilis cases. The number of congenital syphilis cases in Texas increased 124 percent between 2017 (164 cases) and 2018 (367 cases), led by Harris County. This is the largest number of congenital syphilis cases reported annually in Texas in more than 20 years. The new campaign, called "My Prenatal Promise," targets women of childbearing age (16-44), and emphasizes the importance of prenatal care and getting tested three times for syphilis, as required by Texas state law. The goals are to increase awareness about prenatal care and its link to the prevention of congenital syphilis, to promote the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of syphilis and to educate and encourage women to get tested for syphilis, HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs) during pregnancy. The campaign emphasizes three actions: "Talk, Test and Treat." The first action, "talk," urges expectant mothers — preferably accompanied by the fathers of the unborn babies — to specifically discuss STI testing with their doctors. The second action, "test," urges taking all necessary tests to detect syphilis, HIV or other STIs. The third action,

"treat," urges expectant mothers to get treated immediately if diagnosed with syphilis.

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USSOUTHCOM

Brazil accounts for 88% of the total confirmed measles cases in the Americas in 2019

2 February- Brazil reported 18,073 confirmed measles cases since January 1, 2019, accounting for 88 percent of the 20,430 confirmed cases reported in the Americas in 2019, according to the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO). Of this total, 15 deaths were reported (19 total measles deaths were reported in the Americas region). By the end of 2019, 23 federal units have had active outbreaks: Alagoas, Amapá, Amazonas, Bahía, Ceará, Espírito Santo, the Federal District, Goiás, Maranhão, Mato Grosso do Sul, Minas Gerais, Pará, Paraíba, Paraná, Pernambuco, Piauí, Rio de Janeiro, Rio Grande do Norte, Rio Grande do Sul, Roraima, Santa Catarina, São Paulo, and Sergipe. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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