

24 May 2019

Army Public Health Weekly Update

Army Public Health Center



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U.S. MILITARY

This is what the Army is considering as a fitness test for injured soldiers

20 May- It's been about nine months since the Army began a field test for its new PT exam, and next month, the Center for Initial Military Training will begin evaluating an alternate assessment for soldiers who are permanently unable to complete the standard six events of the Army Combat Fitness Test. The number of events will be cut in half, according to Michael McGurk, the director of research and analysis at CIMT, with three more options for an aerobic evaluation: A three-repetition dead lift, the sprint-drag-carry course and — if they can't complete the two-mile run — either a 5,000-meter row, 15,000-meter bike ride or a 1,200-meter swim. "We have to realize that there are some cases where we may choose to deploy soldiers who are not fully capable to do all the soldier tasks as the test is designed," he told Army Times in a Monday phone interview. [Army Times](#)

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Younger troops would be barred from buying tobacco products under new plan

20 May- A bipartisan congressional plan to raise the federal minimum age to purchase tobacco from 18 to 21 won't include an exception for military members, despite past indications from top Senate leaders those plans would not include active-duty troops. On Monday, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., and Sen. Tim Kaine, D-Va., announced details of their new legislation, calling it a way to curb the "public health crisis" of teenage smoking. "When teenagers use tobacco, they are quite literally altering their brain's chemistry and making it more susceptible to addiction," McConnell said in a floor speech unveiling the idea. "It is our responsibility as parents and public servants to do everything we can to keep these harmful products out of high schools and out of youth culture." In an interview with the Herald-Leader on Monday, McConnell acknowledged that he had considered an exemption on the new age limits for military members, but dropped that idea after discussions with public health advocates. "We've had plenty of evidence ... that this is a public health problem of significant proportions," McConnell told the paper. He added that the military should not be "treated differently on a public health issue." [Military Times](#)

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GLOBAL

After 19 tornadoes ripped through 4 states, millions are now under flash flooding threat

21 May- Severe thunderstorms will drench and flood parts of Oklahoma Tuesday, following on the heels of a series of tornadoes that touched down in that state and others. At least 19 tornadoes swept through central Oklahoma, Texas, Missouri and Arkansas Monday, carrying warnings of "considerable" damage to homes, businesses and vehicles with the possibility of "complete destruction." Oklahoma, Missouri and Arkansas were still under a tornado watch early Tuesday, with the National Weather Service warning of "flying debris" which could be dangerous to those caught without shelter. [CNN](#)

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Cannabis-derived CBD may help treat heroin addiction: Study

21 May- Experts reveal that cannabidiol or CBD could play an important role in treating heroin addiction with its ability to curb opioid-related cravings and anxiety. CBD, the non-psychoactive compound of the cannabis plant, is well-documented to relieve a variety of ailments and it is showing promise in helping break drug addiction as well. The cannabis compound is the focus of a new study published in the American Journal of Psychiatry in which researchers assessed the potential of cannabinoid in reducing the craving and anxiety of individuals with a heroin addiction. "The specific effects of CBD on cue-induced drug craving and anxiety are particularly important in the development of addiction therapeutics because environmental cues are one of the strongest triggers for relapse and continued drug use," explained study author Yasmin Hurd, Ph.D. of the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai...Clinical trials included 42 drug-abstinent individuals with heroin use disorder, where half of them received CBD as a treatment and the other half received a placebo. Then, participants were exposed to neutral and drug-related cues over three sessions: immediately after CBD or placebo administration, 24 hours afterward, and seven days after the final administration of the three-day treatment. Findings showed that the CBD significantly reduced the drug cravings of the participants compared to the placebo. The participants who were given CBD also displayed less anxiety when exposed to the drug-related cues, which included heroin paraphernalia and videos of drug use. CBD is also found to reduce heart rate and salivary cortisol levels, which typically rise upon exposure to drug-related images or videos. [Tech Times](#)

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Residential Indoor Mold and Residential Mold Air Sample Results What Do They Mean?

The term "mold" is used to refer to fungi that are naturally occurring in the environment. Molds are found in virtually every environment and can be detected, both indoors and outdoors, year round. Mold growth is encouraged by warm and humid conditions.



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Citrus farmers facing deadly bacteria turn to antibiotics, alarming health officials

17 May- A pernicious disease is eating away at Roy Petteway's orange trees. The bacterial infection, transmitted by a tiny winged insect from China, has evaded all efforts to contain it, decimating Florida's citrus industry and forcing scores of growers out of business. In a last-ditch attempt to slow the infection, Mr. Petteway revved up his industrial sprayer one recent afternoon and doused the trees with a novel pesticide: antibiotics used to treat syphilis, tuberculosis, urinary tract infections and a number of other illnesses in humans. "These bactericides give us hope," said Mr. Petteway's son, R. Roy, 33, as he watched his father treat the family's trees, some of them 50 years old. "Because right now, it's like we're doing the doggy paddle without a life preserver and swallowing water." [New York Times](#)

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Dengue fever epidemic in Reunion: 10,000 cases since January

19 May- Public Health France is reporting that the number of confirmed dengue fever cases seen in the island of Reunion has reached 10,000 since the beginning of 2019. Officials also note that estimates of the number of cases presenting with symptoms of the disease and consulting a doctor (whether or not tests were performed) are more likely to be around 3,500 cases per week, or more than 30,000 people since the beginning of the year. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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Hepatitis A outbreak declared in Pennsylvania: Philadelphia and Pittsburgh areas hardest hit

20 May- Pennsylvania Secretary of Health Dr. Rachel Levine announced the declaration of a hepatitis A outbreak in the Keystone State, making it the 23th state to do so since mid-2016. Since January 2018, 171 cases have been reported in 36 counties, with Philadelphia and Allegheny counties being hardest hit by this outbreak to date. "We are taking this action now to be proactive in our response to treating Pennsylvanians suffering from this illness and prevent it from spreading. The best way to prevent hepatitis A is through vaccination", said Dr. Levine. By declaring an outbreak, Pennsylvania is eligible for federal funds to purchase additional vaccine if it is needed. Neighboring states, Ohio and West Virginia have been battling outbreaks recording 2298 cases/8 deaths and 2513 cases/21 deaths, respectively. "It's hard to know for sure why we are experiencing an outbreak of hepatitis A," Dr. Levine said. "We do know that the commonwealth has seen an increase of diseases like hepatitis C and HIV because of the opioid epidemic." [Outbreak News Today](#)

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In cities where it once reigned, heroin is disappearing

18 May- ...The diminishing supply should be a victory for public health and law enforcement alike. Instead, in cities like Baltimore, longtime users who managed to survive decades injecting heroin are now at far higher risk of dying from an overdose. That is because synthetic fentanyl, a deadlier drug that is much cheaper to produce and distribute than heroin, has all but replaced it. The dramatic rise of fentanyl, which can be 50 times stronger than heroin, has been well documented. But its effect on many older, urban users of heroin, who had been able to manage their addiction for years, has been less noticed. The shift from heroin to fentanyl in cities has contributed to surging overdose deaths among older people and African-Americans and deeply unnerved many like William Glen Miller Sr., who first tried heroin as a 13-year-old in West Baltimore. "It doesn't take a second for it to hit you," said Mr. Miller, 64, describing the unfamiliar punch of fentanyl. "All I remember is pushing in the needle, and three hours later I am getting up off the ground." [New York Times](#)

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Indonesia tries a harm reduction approach

20 May- An abstinence-focused Alcoholics Anonymous program in Indonesia helped Sam Nugraha recover from heroin addiction—although the approach felt foreign to him, having grown up in the Malu culture that emphasizes concealing feelings. Now, Nugraha runs a rehab center in Indonesia with a harm reduction approach and a comforting motto: "When the whole world rejects you, stop by at Rumah Singgah." Rather than basing success on sobriety, Nugraha gauges success on patients' ability to keep a job, stay healthy, and maintain relationships. The Indonesian government is interested in Nugraha's model, and now he's doing trainings across the region. [Global Health Now](#)

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Malaysia MOH squashes monkeypox rumors on social media

22 May- Rumors and false stories of monkeypox in Malaysia prompted the Director General of Health Malaysia, Datuk Dr. Noor Hisham Bin Abdullah to release a statement about the fake news. The Ministry of Health Malaysia (MOH) wishes to refer to the news that is involved in social media about the alleged monkeypox events in Johor and Kuala Lumpur. For information to date, no monkeypox cases are detected or reported in Malaysia. According to reports from the World Health Organization (WHO), the latest reported monkeypox case was in Singapore on May 9, 2019, where it involved only a Nigerian national who came to Singapore on April 28, 2019 to attend a workshop. It was the first case reported in Asia. Prevention and control measures have been and are being undertaken by the Singapore Ministry of Health to reduce the risk of transmission of the disease, including quarantine on 23 people who have close contact history with cases for monitoring their health status. No Malaysian was reported by the Singapore Ministry of Health to contact the

monkeypox case. MOH once again wishes to emphasize that no monkeypox cases are detected or reported in Malaysia. People are reminded not to spread false information or news that can cause public unrest. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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Missouri governor expected to sign new abortion restrictions into law

20 May- Missouri's Republican governor could sign a law as early as this week banning most abortions in the Midwestern state after the eighth week of pregnancy, part of a wave of restrictions aimed at driving a challenge of abortion to the U.S. Supreme Court. Republican Governor Mike Parson told reporters on Friday he planned to sign the bill, which was approved by the Republican-controlled state legislature last week and would enact one of the United States' most restrictive bans. He did not set a date for the signing but has until July 14 to do so, according to local media reports. The state is one of eight where Republican-controlled legislatures this year have passed new restrictions on abortion. It is part of a coordinated campaign aimed at prompting the nation's now conservative-majority top court to cut back or overturn the 1973 Roe v. Wade decision that established a woman's right to terminate a pregnancy. The most restrictive of those bills was signed into law in Alabama last week. It bans abortion at all times and in almost all cases, including when the pregnancy resulted from rape or incest, but allows exceptions when the mother's life is in danger. The Missouri bill also offers no exception for cases of rape or incest. The American Civil Liberties Union has said it will sue to block Alabama's law from taking effect. Last week, the ACLU joined Planned Parenthood, the women's reproductive healthcare provider, in suing Ohio over its recent six-week abortion ban. [Reuters](#)

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Teens made up most of e-cigarette maker Juul's Twitter following – study

20 May- Almost half of the people who followed Juul Labs Inc on Twitter last year were not old enough to legally purchase e-cigarettes in the United States, according to a study published on Monday. Researcher's analyzed data collected in April 2018 on public followers of Juul's Twitter account (@JUULvapor) with at least one public tweet. About 45 percent of those who followed Juul were 13 to 17 years old, according to the study published online in JAMA Pediatrics. Only 19 percent of Juul's followers were at least 21. These findings from more than a year ago may not reflect what is happening on social media today. The study was not a controlled experiment designed to prove whether or how following Juul directly impacts vaping habits. Other research has linked teen vaping to an increased risk of smoking cigarettes. In a statement, Juul said it had questions about the study's methodology, which it said "differs significantly" from data Twitter made available to the company. Juul also said that during the study timeframe it "proactively, manually blocked underage users from following our Twitter feed." The company said it conducted an

analysis drawing from Twitter's back-end data that found users between the ages of 13 and 17 made up 3.9% of Juul followers in May 2018. "We do everything we can to prevent youth from engaging our company on Twitter," Juul said. [Reuters](#)

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Too many children in mental health hospitals, says report

20 May- Research for the Children's Commissioner for England found children were often unable to get appropriate support at school and in the community. This was contributing to children ending up in institutions, sometimes for months or years, the report found. Children with learning disabilities or autism were being particularly let down by the system, it added. Children's Commissioner Anne Longfield's report says successive governments have tried to tackle the problem, but the number of children in mental health hospitals remains "unacceptably high". Research shows a clear need to "focus on children's journeys before they are admitted into inpatient care", the report says, but often this is not happening. "Children, families and staff working in this area spoke again and again about how the failure to provide appropriate support to children when they are in school and living in the community, and particularly when they reach a crisis point, has contributed to inappropriate hospital admissions and delayed discharges," it says. The review says there were 250 children identified as having a learning disability or autism in mental health hospitals in England in February 2019, compared with 110 in March 2015. According to the report, NHS England said the figure of 110 was due to under-identification of these children in the past. But even using adjusted figures from NHS England, the number has still not come down in the last four years, the report says. [BBC News](#)

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Vaccine hesitancy: Change minds by exposing people to who suffered a vaccine-preventable diseases

22 May- The re-introduction of measles, mumps and other previously eradicated diseases to the United States is nothing short of a public health crisis. Since Jan. 1, a staggering 880 individual cases of measles have been confirmed in 24 states — the greatest number of cases since 1994. Measles was declared eliminated in the U.S. in 2000. The outbreaks have been attributed to an increasing number of Americans who choose not to vaccinate themselves or their children. Overcoming this "vaccine hesitancy" is a major concern for government and health agencies, which have tried a variety of approaches to convince anti-vaxers to change their minds, including mandating vaccinations in some communities.

[Outbreak News Today](#)

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INFLUENZA

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

2018-2019 Influenza Season Week 19 ending May 11, 2019

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

-Pneumonia and Influenza Mortality: The proportion of deaths attributed to pneumonia and influenza (P&I) was below the system-specific epidemic threshold in the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) Mortality Surveillance System.

-Influenza-associated Pediatric Deaths: Three influenza-associated pediatric deaths were reported to CDC during week 19. [CDC](#)

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ECDC: Flu News Europe

Week 19/2019 (06-12 May 2019):

-For week 19/2019, all countries reporting ILI or ARI thresholds reported activity at or below baseline levels, indicating a return to interseason levels.

-Few countries reported influenza detections. Of 79 sentinel specimens tested, only 8 were influenza positive.

-For week 19/2019, only one of the 54 specimens from patients with severe acute respiratory infection (SARI) tested positive for an influenza virus.

-Pooled data from 24 Member States and areas reporting to the EuroMOMO project indicated that all-cause mortality was at expected levels. [European Center for Disease Prevention and Control/WHO](#)

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VETERINARY/FOOD SAFETY

Argentina reports two botulism cases linked to hummus

18 May- Two people from Villa Urquiza have contracted botulism and health officials have linked it to consumption of hummus, according to a Perfil report. According to the report, the packaged hummus was from a firm that marketed -without any type of authorization- vegan products in its Buenos Aires neighborhood of Palermo. The two female patients, aged 25 and 32, presented Thursday with symptoms compatible with botulism: blurred vision,

difficulty in swallowing, muscle weakness, muscle fatigue, among others. Both are hospitalized in the intensive care unit of Sanatorium Güemes. The Buenos Aires Ministry of Health began an epidemiological investigation and prevention and control measures were implemented. It was determined that the cases of intoxication were associated with the product: "Hummus, organic chickpea, Tsuki Macro Vegan brand". The General Directorate of Food Safety and Hygiene of the Government Control Agency (AGC) closed the processing plant located in the Buenos Aires neighborhood of Palermo (Ravignani 1434) for not possessing authorization for the preparation of food and for the possession of merchandise for distribution and sale without regulatory labeling. "The establishment was a private house used as a processing plant", the AGC noted. Samples were taken of all the products and sent to the Malbrán Institute for analysis. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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California's backyard poultry flocks falling dead from highly contagious virus

21 May- Virulent Newcastle disease generally is not a human food safety threat, which is lucky because the poultry sickness is spreading like wildfire in California's backyard flocks. Virulent Newcastle disease was formerly known as exotic Newcastle disease. Humans are not likely to be exposed to Virulent Newcastle disease so long as poultry and eggs are thoroughly cooked. People who work with or otherwise come into contact with sick birds can become infected, but it is rare. The U.S. Department of Agriculture has since May 18, 2018, confirmed 440 premises in California as infected with Virulent Newcastle disease (vND), including 139 in San Bernardino County, 256 in Riverside County, 44 in Los Angeles County, one in Ventura County, and one in Alameda County. The federal agency also found an infected premise in Utah County, UT, and another in Coconino County, AZ. California's Department of Food and Agriculture has announced new field biosecurity guidelines for state, county and city personnel who enter shell egg packing facilities, poultry harvest facilities, and poultry farms. [Food Safety News](#)

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Cat TB cases linked to raw pet food; people also sick

22 May- Raw pet food has been linked to an outbreak of feline tuberculosis that has infected dozens of cats and two people in the United Kingdom. One hundred people and 90 felines have been referred for tests, researchers have told U.K. media. The issue was identified when six cats were taken to separate vets across England with clinical signs of Tuberculosis (TB) and five of them died. Tests confirmed the animals were infected with *Mycobacterium bovis* that usually causes TB in cattle. It can also infect rodents, deer and people. An additional seven cats living in the same households were infected but did not have symptoms. All affected animals were indoor pets and had no contact with wildlife that could have passed on disease. Two owners of affected cats were found to be interferon-gamma release assay (IGRA) and Mantoux (tuberculin skin test) positive and one required

anti-tuberculosis medical therapy. [Food Safety News](#)

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Foodborne illness advisory: Del Monte vegetable trays pose Salmonella risk

21 May- An investigation into an ongoing multi-state outbreak of salmonellosis in Minnesota and Wisconsin that is linked to consumption of certain Del Monte vegetable trays led to a public health warning today. The Wisconsin Department of Health Services, Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection, Minnesota Department of Health, and Wisconsin local health departments, working with the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), joined in warning the public about the Del Monte Vegetable Trays. To date, the agencies reported that all ill patients associated with this outbreak, three in Wisconsin and one in Minnesota, have reported consuming a Del Monte vegetable tray purchased from a Wisconsin or Minnesota Kwik Trip location prior to their illness. Kwik Trip is cooperating with regulatory officials and has removed all Del Monte vegetable trays from their stores. These patients reported becoming ill between April 13 and April 27, 2019. It is possible additional illnesses will be reported due to the delay from when a person becomes ill to when it is reported to public health agencies. The Del Monte vegetable trays associated with the investigation contain broccoli, cauliflower, carrots, and dill dip. Del Monte vegetable trays may also have been distributed to other retailers in Wisconsin. Investigation for product distribution is ongoing. [Food Safety News](#)

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New outbreak of Salmonella from live birds spurs CDC to renew warning

17 May- People in 21 states have been confirmed with Salmonella infections, with seven out of 10 of them reporting they handled birds in backyard flocks before becoming ill, according to an outbreak alert from the CDC. Five of the 52 confirmed patients have been so sick they had to be admitted to hospitals, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Four of the Salmonella Salmonella Braenderup and Salmonella Montevideo strains detected in the ill people are resistant to some antibiotics that are commonly used to treat such infections. Five isolates from ill people did not show evidence of antibiotic resistance. State public health officials have reported to the CDC that the first confirmed patient became ill on Jan. 12. The most recent was confirmed on April 29. Salmonella is easily transferred to hard and soft surfaces. It is particularly easy to contaminate kitchen counters, cooking utensils, pots and pans. [Food Safety News](#)

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One ton of beef frankfurters recalled for containing metal

18 May- Chicago's Vienna Beef Ltd. has recalled approximately 2,030 pounds of beef frank links products that may be contaminated with extraneous materials, specifically metal, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS). The beef frank links items were produced on May 2, 2019...The recalled beef products bear establishment number "EST. 1" inside the USDA mark of inspection. These items were shipped to food service locations in Illinois, Indiana, and Wisconsin. [Food Safety News](#)
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Positive test results for sulfites prompt recall of rattan shoots packed in brine

21 May- Following results from state testing, US Trading Co. is recalling Global Pride brand rattan shoots because of sulfites, which are not declared on the product labels as required by federal law. "The product(s) may cause adverse reactions if consumed by sulfite sensitive individuals," according to the company's recall notice posted by the Food and Drug Administration. "Consumers that have purchased these products should not consume if anyone in the household is sulfite sensitive." Consumers who have allergies or sensitivities to sulfites run the risk of serious or life-threatening reactions if they consume the product. The recall notice does not provide any distribution information. "The recall was initiated after routine sampling by New York Department of Agriculture and Markets Food Inspectors. After analysis, 555.0 ppm of sulfite was detected in the Global Pride Rattan Shoot in Brine," according to the recall notice. Consumers are urged to check their homes for the recalled rattan shoots because the products has a shelf life through Sept. 18, 2020. [Food Safety News](#)
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WELLNESS

Calories, carbs, fat, fiber: Unraveling the links between breast cancer and diet

18 May- ...Dozens of news organizations, including NPR, reported on a new study that found that a low-fat diet helped women reduce their risk of dying from breast cancer. The findings stem from the federally funded Women's Health Initiative, a huge, long-term, national health study launched back in 1993. At the time the study began, women who enrolled were in their 50s, 60s and 70s. As part of the study, about 20,000 women were coached to change their diets in a number of ways for at least eight years. "We asked women to reduce their total fat intake," explains Rowan Chlebowski of the Los Angeles Biomedical Research Institute at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center. In addition, the women were asked to eat more fruits, vegetables and grains. A comparison group of nearly 30,000 women continued to follow their normal diet. The strength of this study is twofold: its size,

nearly 50,000 women in all, and its long-term follow-up, nearly 20 years. During the study, some women in both groups were diagnosed with breast cancer, but those who had changed their diets had a 21 percent lower risk of dying from the disease. "This is significant, because this is the first intervention study targeting breast cancer where a reduction in deaths from breast cancer has been seen," Chlebowski told us. [NPR](#)

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Ultraprocessed foods really do lead to weight gain, small study finds

17 May- Filling your plate with ultraprocessed foods really does appear to lead people to eat more and gain weight, according to a new study. Ultraprocessed foods refers to products that tend to go through a number of manufacturing steps to be produced, and contain ingredients that result from industrial-food manufacturing, such as hydrogenated oils, high-fructose corn syrup, flavoring agents and emulsifiers, according to the study. For example, an ultraprocessed breakfast meal could consist of a bagel with cream cheese and turkey bacon, while an unprocessed breakfast could contain oatmeal with bananas, walnuts and skim milk...The researchers found that, when people were given the ultraprocessed diet, they ate about 500 calories more per day than they did when they were on the unprocessed diet. What's more, participants gained about 2 pounds (0.9 kilograms) while they were on the ultraprocessed diet; they lost about 2 pounds while on the unprocessed diet. [Live Science](#)

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USAFRICOM

Crimean-Congo: Hemorrhagic fever (CCHF) outbreak declared in Namibia

21 May- The Ministry of Health and Social Services of Namibia officially declared an outbreak of Crimean-Congo hemorrhagic fever (CCHF) on May 6 after reporting a number of cases from different regions of the country. As of 15 May 2019, seven suspected cases of CCHF were reported from five regions, including one laboratory confirmed case out of seven samples tested and one death (case fatality ratio 14%). The Ministry of Health and Social Services detail the cases/locations in the following press statement. The World Health Organization says CCHF outbreaks have been recurrent in Namibia in the past two years, with cases reported from Omaheke, Omusati and Karas regions. The last recorded outbreak occurred in March 2018 in Karas region, where one fatal confirmed case was reported. The current outbreak arises in the context of a national drought emergency that can intensify the risk of transmission and geographical spread of the disease, with livestock movements from arid to less dry areas, if mitigating measures are not implemented in a timely manner. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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DRC: 1st polio case of 2019 reported

21 May- One case of circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus type 2 (cVDPV2) was reported in week ending on May 5 in Kamonia, Kasai State, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). The onset of paralysis was reported on February 8. This is the first cVDPV case in DRC in 2019. DRC is affected now by four separate cVDPV2 outbreaks, in the provinces of Haut Katanga; Mongala; Haut Lomami/Tanganika/Haut Katanga/Ituri and Kasai. A reactive vaccination campaign has been conducted in Kamonia health zone, in Kasai province from 9 to 11 May 2019. The last indigenous wild poliovirus case was reported in 2000. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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Nigeria: Lassa fever- Vaccine candidate, update

23 May- Inovio Pharmaceuticals, Inc. announced Tuesday announced it has dosed subjects in a Phase 1, first-in-human clinical trial to evaluate INO-4500, its DNA candidate vaccine to prevent infection from the Lassa virus. Inovio plans to enroll approximately 60 volunteers in this placebo controlled, blinded, dose escalation study evaluating INO-4500 for safety, tolerability and immune responses. This trial represents the first Lassa candidate vaccine to enter the clinic. Dr. J. Joseph Kim, Inovio's President and CEO, said, "Inovio's class-leading synthetic nucleic vaccines delivered intradermally with its proprietary CELLECTRA® efficacy enhancing systems are well suited to rapidly produce countermeasures against emerging viral threats potentially protecting large populations from a pandemic. Inovio has rapidly advanced several global health candidate vaccines, including those against HIV, Ebola, MERS, and Zika, and has reported above 90% immune response rates from multiple clinical studies. We join our partner CEPI in the shared quest to bring new vaccines to medicine and save lives." [Outbreak News Today](#)

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Pakistan: Four new polio cases as study tackles partial-dose vaccination

17 May- In new polio developments, Pakistan has reported four more wild poliovirus type 1 (WPV1) cases, and research findings lend support to the use of fractional dosing for inactivated poliovirus vaccine (IPV). Pakistan this year has reported a small but steady stream of new WPV1 cases and has also seen an increase in deadly attacks on polio vaccination teams and security details that protect them. According to the latest weekly update from the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI), two of the four new cases are from Bannu district in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province in patients who had paralysis onsets of Apr 18 and Apr 26. Another is from North Waziristan district in the same province in a patient whose paralysis symptoms began on Apr 22. The fourth case involves a patient from

Larkana district in Sindh province whose symptoms began on Apr 17. Pakistan—one of three countries in which WPV1 is still considered endemic—has now reported 15 cases this year, the most of any country. Also, its number of cases this year has passed the 12 reported for all of 2018. [CIDRAP](#)

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Belgium: Legionnaires' disease update

18 May- In a follow-up on the Legionnaires' disease outbreak in the Evergem area, Flanders, Belgium, health officials now report (computer translated) 19 cases, including two deaths, as of May 17. Most cases are clustered geographically to the Evergem area, either by place of residence or their working area. The latest case was a man commutes daily through the southern Ghent canal zone. His illness started later than those of the other patients. This strongly suggests that the source of the contamination has been active for several days. Joris Moonens, spokesperson for Care and Health: "We expect that more patients will be added in the coming days. After all, the period of possible infection has been longer than we had initially hoped, and even if the source has stopped, patients can still fall ill until 19 days later. The most important advice remains to be aware of symptoms (dry cough, fever, headache, flu-like feelings) and to report in time to the doctor, who will refer you to the antibiotic treatment hospital for diagnosis of legionella. The chance of infection remains small." [Outbreak News Today](#)

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Ukraine: Measles cases close in on 50,000

20 May- Ukrainian health authorities report that the number of measles cases recorded in 2019 to date is very close to 50,000. During the week ending May 18, the Center for Public Health of the Ministry of Health of Ukraine reported an additional 1,935 cases, putting the total at 49,288. In addition, the number of measles-related fatalities has risen to 17 this year. Health officials remind the public that vaccination is the only reliable protection against measles, especially if you have an outbreak in your area. All children and adults of all ages can get vaccinated free of charge. Infants, for whom measles are particularly dangerous, can be vaccinated at 6 months. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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New Zealand: Auckland- Measles cases rise to 60

20 May- Officials with the Auckland Regional Public Health Service (ARPHS) report the number of measles confirmed has now reached 60 to date in 2019. Medical Officer of Health Dr. William Rainger says there have now been measles cases in every part of the city, but ARPHS has seen more than half of cases come from West Auckland. "Measles spreads very easily through households if family members are not vaccinated. The early cases were in extended families in West Auckland, so the illness has been passed on for longer in this area, amongst groups more likely to catch it," Dr. Rainger says. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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Philippines: Food poisoning sickens 100s at Bukidnon event

20 May- Philippines officials are reported an outbreak of suspected food poisoning in Bukidnon province in the Northern Mindanao region. It is reported that 233 delegates of the 8th National Youth Convention held by the Seventh Day Adventists at the Center of Ecological Development and Recreation (CEDAR) in Impasogong experienced vomited and loose-bowel movements with fever. Some patients were transported to hospitals in Malaybalay for treatment, while others were locally by the Rural Health Unit. A Department of Health response team was sent to the area. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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Taiwan: Reports 1st Japanese encephalitis case of year in Kaohsiung City man

20 May- The Taiwan Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has reported (computer translated) the first case of Japanese encephalitis of 2019 in a 60-year-old man from Kaohsiung City. On May 1st, he developed fever, headache, convulsions and unconsciousness. He was admitted to hospital and subsequently admitted to hospital. The case persisted and the consciousness changed. On May 4, the hospital was notified by the hospital and transferred to hospital for treatment. On May 17, the test was confirmed. The current case is still consciously comatose in the intensive care unit. An investigation into the case showed no recent history of foreign travel, and the history of related vaccination is unknown. During the incubation period, he had been at friends in Datun District and the natural recreation area of Fengshan District. Within 2 to 3 km of these sites, there are pig houses, meat markets and a number of paddy fields. Taiwan is the epidemic season of Japanese encephalitis from May to October every year, and the peak of epidemics from June to July. Japanese encephalitis is the most important cause of viral encephalitis in Asia. About 68,000 clinical cases are reported annually. It usually occurs in rural or agricultural areas, often

associated with rice farming. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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Thailand: Chikungunya update

18 May- The Bureau of Epidemiology with the Thailand Health Ministry are reporting (computer translated) 3379 chikungunya cases in 23 provinces through May 13. Phuket, Songkla and Ranong have been the most affected by the mosquito borne viral disease. Health officials report the numbers are declining. Chikungunya Virus (CHIKV) is an arbovirus of the alphavirus genus (Togaviridae family) transmitted by the bite of infected Aedes mosquitoes. The word, Chikungunya, translates to "that which bends up", based on the stooped position of patients during the rheumatic symptoms of the disease. In humans bitten by an infected mosquito, the disease symptoms usually appear after an incubation period of three to seven days (range 1- 12 days). [Outbreak News Today](#)

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Thailand: Congenital syphilis, dengue update

23 May- The Thailand Public Health Ministry is reporting at least 249 congenital syphilis cases this year, according to a report from the Strait Times. "The babies were affected because their mothers were infected," the ministry's permanent secretary, Dr. Sukhum Karnchanapimai said. Dr. Sukhum said between Jan 1 and May 13 this year, 3,080 people of all ages were diagnosed with syphilis. Congenital syphilis is a preventable condition that results from untreated syphilis during pregnancy. Potential consequences for the infected baby include stillbirth, neonatal death, blindness, deafness and skeletal deformations.

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Canada: Measles case investigated in Montreal, 100s may have exposed

18 May- Montreal health authorities issued a public notice Friday looking for people who may have been exposed to a new confirmed measles case in the city. This new case of measles is linked to the case reported to the Montreal Regional Department of Public Health (DRSP) on May 2nd. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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Canada: Ontario- Increase in HIV and invasive Group A strep cases reported in Hamilton

21 May- Hamilton, Ontario health officials report investigating an increasing trend in the number of newly diagnosed HIV cases, and invasive Group A strep (iGAS) cases among people who inject drugs in Hamilton. Between September 1, 2018 to May 17, 2019 there were 16 new HIV diagnoses of which 7 persons reported injection drug use and/or shared drug equipment history (44 per cent), and 40 cases of iGAS of which 12 were amongst people who inject drugs (30 per cent). The increase in incidences within the population is higher than it has been historically. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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U.S.: Berkeley, CA- Measles case confirmed, potential exposure place is the Berkeley Bowl

18 May- Berkeley Public Health has confirmed that a Berkeley resident has measles. While the adult is no longer contagious, those who are not immune and who visited the Berkeley Bowl on 2020 Oregon Street on Tuesday May 7 from 3pm to 5pm are at greater risk of developing measles. Anyone who visited the supermarket during this time should look for the first stage of symptoms: runny nose, red eyes, cough and fever. Symptoms start to emerge 7 to 21 days after exposure. The next stage of measles symptoms involves a rash that typically appears on the face and spreads down the body. Measles is highly preventable – the recommended two doses of vaccine provides immunity to 97% of people. Even a single dose protects 93% of those vaccinated. As of May 15, 45 confirmed measles cases, including 30 outbreak-associated cases (1 completed outbreak, 3 cases; 3 ongoing outbreaks, 27 cases), have been reported in California. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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U.S.: Chicago- Measles case confirmed; possible exposures at University of Illinois Chicago, Millennium Park

18 May- City of Chicago health officials identified an individual with a confirmed measles infection in Chicago Friday. The Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH) is working closely with the highest-risk locations to contact exposed individuals. In addition, exposures may have occurred on May 16 on public transportation from O'Hare International Airport to University of Illinois Chicago (UIC) campus, and the Chicago Loop, in Millennium Park and in retail establishments on State Street between Monroe and Randolph Streets and on South Canal Street. On the morning of May 17, exposures may have occurred at UIC Student Center East. "Measles is a serious yet preventable disease through a safe, effective and universally available vaccine" said CDPH Commissioner Julie Morita, M.D. "Chicagoans should make sure their children and family members are up to date on vaccines now.

Vaccination is the best way to protect against measles.” [Outbreak News Today](#)

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U.S.: Hantavirus case reported in Grant County, Washington

18 May- The Grant County Health District has reported a confirmed Hantavirus Pulmonary Syndrome (HPS) case in a young adult last week, according to local media. The patient presented with flu-like symptoms in late April, which then progressed into respiratory failure that required hospitalization. The patient is currently recovering at home. This is the first case of HPS reported in Washington this year and the fourth case reported in Grant County in the past decade. People can be exposed to hantavirus by breathing in air contaminated with the virus when fresh rodent dropping, urine, or nesting materials are disturbed. The greatest risk is associated with exposure to rodent droppings in closed, dry areas.

Hantavirus is not transmitted from person to person. Symptoms of HPS can occur up to six weeks after exposure, with most cases showing symptoms within about two weeks. Early symptoms commonly include fever, muscle and body aches, fatigue, headache, dizziness, chills, nausea and vomiting. Within a few days the illness progresses to include coughing and severe shortness of breath as the lungs fill with fluid. Anyone with exposure to wild rodents who experiences these symptoms should contact their physician and tell them about their exposure. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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USSOUTHCOM

Malaria-free: Argentina and Algeria certified by WHO

22 May- The World Health Organization (WHO) announced Monday that two additional countries have been certified as malaria-free—Algeria and Argentina. Algeria is the second country in the WHO African Region to be officially recognized as malaria-free, after Mauritius, which was certified in 1973. Argentina is the second country in the WHO Region of the Americas to be certified in 45 years, after Paraguay in June 2018. They reported their last local transmission of malaria in 2013 and 2010, respectively. “Last year, Uzbekistan and Paraguay received certification as malaria-free countries, and this assembly will be joined by Argentina and Algeria, congratulations to both countries,” said the director general of the World Health Organization (WHO), Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus. “Their success serves as a model for other countries working to end this disease once and for all.” The certification is granted when a country proves that it has interrupted indigenous transmission of the disease for at least 3 consecutive years. Malaria is a mosquito-borne disease caused by a parasite. People with malaria often experience fever, chills, and flu-like illness. Left untreated, they may develop severe complications and die. In 2017 an estimated 219 million cases of malaria occurred worldwide and 435,000 people died, mostly children in the African Region. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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