

USACHPPM
HEALTH INFORMATION OPERATIONS (HIO)
WEEKLY UPDATE

11 April 2002

The HIO Weekly Update provides information regarding global medical and veterinary issues of interest to the United States (US) Army. The weekly update does not attempt to analyze the information regarding potential strategic or tactical impact to the US Army and as such, should not be regarded as a medical intelligence product. Medical intelligence products are available at <http://mic.afmic.detrick.army.mil/>. The information in the HIO Weekly Update should provide an increased awareness of current and emerging health-related issues.

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HOT ISSUES

Bioterrorism Detection and Decontamination - [EPA](#)

On 28 March, the EPA posted a solicitation for three environmental bioterrorism needs in its initial focus in the response to bioterrorism: (1) decontamination technologies and systems for high-value and special materials typically found in museums, historic homes, Government buildings, and important civilian buildings, e.g., fibrous tapestries, art, historic documents, electrical equipment, etc., (2) special decontamination technologies and sampling systems for [HVAC](#) systems in smaller buildings such as homes and apartments (of special interest are robots, and the use of environmental friendly decontamination systems such as ultraviolet, ozone, or sonic cleaning systems), and (3) field-portable, pretreatment kits that minimize interference with [PCR](#) instruments for use at smaller drinking water system laboratories. The solicitation specifies the bioterrorism agents of concern as *Bacillus anthracis* (anthrax), *Francisella tularensis* (tularemia), and *Yersinia pestis* (plague). The report is at <http://es.epa.gov/ncer/rfa/sbir2002.html#environmental>.

Biowarfare Research - Germany

On 5 April, *ABC News* posted a *Reuters Health* report that stated the German Army intended to triple the staff of the Munich-based Medical Academy's Institute from 20 to 60, which would allow a focus on developing diagnostic techniques, antibiotics, and vaccination for a wide range of pathogens that could be used as biological weapons. According to the report, plans were underway to establish a center for biowarfare protection that would be formed from the current institutions for radiobiology, microbiology, and chemo-toxicology. The Berlin-based Robert Koch Institute also announced that civilian vaccination programs for bioterrorism response were being developed independently of the German Army. The report is at http://abcnews.go.com/wire/Living/reuters20020405_263.html.

Cervical Cancer Linked to Oral Contraceptives - [WHO](#)

On 6 April, the [BMJ](#) reviewed a study carried out by WHO and published in *Lancet* (2002;359:1085-92), which found that prolonged use (10 years or more) of the oral contraceptive pill increased the risk of cervical cancer up to fourfold in women who were

infected with the human papilloma virus (HPV). HPV is generally believed to be a prerequisite for development of the disease. A study by the same team of researchers also found that multiple pregnancies are another risk factor for cervical cancer (*Lancet* 2002;359:1093-101). The report is at <http://bmj.com/cgi/content/full/324/7341/808/a>.

Response to ChemBio Attack - Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory (LBNL)

The LBNL recently developed a website: Advice for Safeguarding Buildings Against Chemical or Biological Attack. The website is intended for emergency personnel and for building operators and offers advice for dealing with a biological or chemical release in a building. The advice on this site is appropriate for small and medium-sized releases such as those that would be expected from a terrorist attack, not for industrial-scale releases such as those at Bhopal, India or Chernobyl, Ukraine. The website is at <http://securebuildings.lbl.gov/secure.html>.

Cutaneous Anthrax - Laboratory Worker, Texas

On 5 April, the [CDC](#) reported that a suspect case of anthrax in a provisionally approved Laboratory Response Network level B laboratory was believed to be linked to exposure to the surfaces of vials containing *Bacillus anthracis* isolates that the worker placed in a freezer on 1 March. The day prior to the exposure, the lab worker had received a cut during shaving that was itchy, and the lab worker did not wear gloves when the vials were moved. The laboratory was also using 70% isopropyl alcohol to decontaminate surfaces rather than a 10% bleach solution because bleach was causing labels on the vials to become dislodged. The lab was processing environmental samples in support of the CDC investigation of the bioterrorist attacks in the US last fall. Neither the affected lab worker nor about 40 other employees of the lab had received the anthrax vaccine. The lab is now using 10% bleach solution and is strictly adhering to [PPE](#) requirements. This case is classified as a suspect case pending serological confirmation as the culture results were obtained in the same laboratory where the suspect exposure occurred, which introduces the possibility of specimen contamination. The report is at <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5113a4.htm>.

Dry Decontamination Device - Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL)

The LANL recently announced the development of a dry-decontamination device as an alternative to liquid agents and chlorine dioxide gas, which can be corrosive. The device generates a highly reactive form of oxygen by ionizing a mixture of helium and oxygen between two electrodes. The reactive oxygen or plasma looks like fire but is cooler than a hair drier's exhaust. In experiments, the plasma neutralized an anthrax surrogate in a two-liter decontamination chamber. Future testing includes testing in a chamber large enough to hold computer equipment and potentially a chamber large enough to test decontamination of an airplane. The report is at <http://www.technologyreview.com/articles/prototype70102.asp>.

Genetically Modified Anthrax Strain - Russia

On 8 April, the *New York Times* reported that the White House had notified Russia of its intention to curtail many new disarmament projects because Russia has not shown compliance with (1) sharing of a bio-engineered strain of anthrax developed by scientists that seemed to defeat Russia's anthrax vaccine in hamsters, and (2) providing a complete history of the decades of secret work on biological and chemical weapons to possibly include work on "fourth generation" chemical weapons agents, which are many times more lethal than the most advanced nerve agents the US produced. The disarmament projects include programs that reduce the threat of weapons of mass destruction leaking out of Russia. The report (requires free registration) is at <http://www.nytimes.com/2002/04/08/international/08RUSS.html?todyasheadlines>.

Updated Fact Sheets - [WHO](#)

During April, the WHO updated two facts sheets: (1) diabetes mellitus and (2) dengue and dengue hemorrhagic fever (DHF). Diabetes mellitus is expected to double by 2025 with much of the increase in developing countries. In 2025, most diabetic people in developed countries would be 65 years of age or older, but most diabetic people in developing countries would be in the 45-64-age bracket, which would affect the most productive years. Large population-based studies in China, Finland, and the US have demonstrated more than 50% reduction in the incidence of diabetes in overweight subjects with mild glucose intolerance through moderate reductions in weight and 30 minutes of walking daily. The fact sheet is at <http://www.who.int/inf-fs/en/fact138.html>.

Two-fifths of the Earth's population are now at risk from dengue. Dengue is endemic in more than 100 countries in Africa, the Americas, the Eastern Mediterranean, Southeast Asia, and the Western Pacific. Southeast Asia and the Western Pacific are the more seriously affected. Before 1970 only nine countries had experienced DHF epidemics, but by 1995 this number had increased more than fourfold. The only control/preventive measure currently available is combating the vector mosquitoes. The fact sheet is at <http://www.who.int/inf-fs/en/fact117.html>.

Smallpox Updates - Johns Hopkins

On 1 April, Johns Hopkins posted a review on the status of smallpox research as described in: Enserink M and Stone R. Dead virus walking. *Science* 2002;295:2001. (1) Known supplies of smallpox virus are retained at the [CDC](#) in Atlanta and at Vector, which is just outside of Novosibirsk, the largest city in Siberia. The [WHO](#) decision regarding continued retention is expected at the end of 2002, but a vote for destruction is unlikely. (2) The CDC has sequenced the entire 186,000 based-pair genome of the strain Bangladesh-1975, the Russians have sequenced India-1967, and both groups are working on a third strain from Brazil. (3) The CDC has 461 strains and is currently working with 45 of these to develop diagnostic tests including PCR tests. (4) Investigators from [USAMRIID](#) developed an animal model, *Cynomolgus* monkeys, the potential utility of which "appears controversial" because the exposure route was

artificial and the course of disease was too short. (5) A Stanford University scientist is using DNA microarrays to study 15,000 genes from infected monkeys. (6) Some scientists express concern that other poxviruses, especially monkeypox, could mutate to a more virulent form. Despite these concerns, monkeypox has not migrated out of central and western Africa. (7) Major efforts are underway to develop an improved vaccine. A US-British company, Acambis, now manufactures the current vaccine, which is considered crude and likely to cause severe side effects including death. (8) Plans are underway to test several new antiviral agents for effectiveness against other poxviruses in animals. Cidofovir has shown promise. (9) Researchers from Vector have been unable to substantiate a thesis that viable smallpox virus can be retrieved from smallpox victims maintained in a frozen state above the Arctic Circle. http://hopkins-abxguide.org/show_pages.cfm?content=news_content.html#4 Apr

USCENTCOM

Cholera - Somalia

On 5 April, the [UN](#) posted a report by Agence France-Presse, which stated that at least 30 people had died from diarrhea and 90 others had been hospitalized in the past three days with symptoms suggestive of cholera in the Beletwein district of central Somalia's Hiran region. The report is at <http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/19411db6091f2e8cc1256b92005cf446?OpenDocument>.

Flooding - Afghanistan

On 5 April, the [UN](#) posted a report by the Agence France-Presse of heavy rains and flooding in the Faryab Province of northern Afghanistan that led to the death of 39 persons and more than 2,000 livestock, displacement of 845 families, destruction of 323 homes, and inundation of several thousand meters of land when the Maimana River overflowed. The affected areas included Deh Miran, Qal'a-i-Turdi, and Ghulbian. Infrastructure damage coupled with isolation and extreme poverty could lead to an increase in infectious diseases. The report is at <http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/480fa8736b88bbc3c12564f6004c8ad5/a6838707c8a56e5085256b920073c497?OpenDocument>.

Health Concerns - West Bank

On 8 April, the [UN](#) posted a report by the Agence France -Presse (AFP) that the health situation in the West Bank had become critical with concerns about measles and cholera increasing as 24 hospitals were nearly out of water, oxygen, blood, sterile syringes, as well as gasoline to run generators. On 5 April, the AFP reported that Israel had hit 138 ambulances since the offensive began last week. Israel has accused the Palestinians of using ambulances to carry "terrorists" in and out of refugee camps in the West Bank. On 5 April the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) issued orders to restrict movement of staff and vehicles in the West Bank to a strict minimum

after reports of (1) ICRC staff in Bethlehem threatened at gunpoint, (2) warning shots fired at ICRC vehicles in Nablus and Ramallah, (3) two ICRC vehicles damaged by Israeli Defense Forces tanks in Tulkarem, and (4) ICRC premises in Tulkarem vandalized. The reports are at <http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/480fa8736b88bbc3c12564f6004c8ad5/44d3537ca21434eec1256b95005b4442?OpenDocument> and <http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/480fa8736b88bbc3c12564f6004c8ad5/687c013d4d21e300c1256b920050566c?OpenDocument> and <http://www.icrc.org/icrceng.nsf/Index/437EE7BB00589FE0C1256B92004CD82F?OpenDocument>.

Meningococcal Meningitis Surveillance - Hajj Pilgrimage 2002

On 4 April, the Eurosurveillance Weekly published an update on the Rapid Reporting EU Surveillance System for Meningitis W135: 2a: P1.2,5. Several European countries established surveillance for this phenotype or compatible strains after an epidemic of disease caused by *Neisseria meningitidis* serogroup W135 in travelers returning from the Hajj pilgrimage to Mecca in 2000. Data is summarized in the table below for the timeframe 29 December 2001 thru 22 February 2002. The Hajj Pilgrimage in 2002 was from 21-25 February. This year all pilgrims were officially required to receive a dose of quadrivalent vaccine (A, C, W135 and Y) before a visa was issued. Few or no cases are expected in pilgrims. The risk for contacts of Hajj pilgrims will depend on whether the vaccine protects against carriage as well as against disease.

Country	Number of cases	Association with any Hajj Pilgrimage
France	11	No
Germany	1	Unknown
Netherlands	1	No
UK	5	One - household contact of pilgrim to Hajj 2002

Summary data from the Sentinel Surveillance System for confirmed cases of *N. meningitidis* W135: 2A: P1.2, 5 from 29 December 01 thru 22 February 02.

Meningococcal Meningitis, Suspected - Afghanistan

On 29 March, the [USAID](http://www.usaid.gov) reported that a suspected meningitis outbreak in the Waras District of southern Bamiyan Province had killed 82 people. The [WHO](http://www.who.int) is investigating, but has not confirmed the cases are meningitis. The report is at http://www.usaid.gov/ofda/centralasia_sr26_fy02.html.

Pharmaceuticals - Iraq

On 7 April, the [UN](http://www.un.org) posted a report by the Agence France-Presse, in which Iraq stated it had received only 48% of the pharmaceutical products that were ordered through the "oil-for-food" program. Iraq accused Washington and London of blocking the contracts. The pharmaceuticals were reportedly needed to buy medicines for use in treating increased cancer cases caused by depleted uranium (DU), which Iraq claims were

caused by the more than 940,000 armor-piercing DU projectiles fired during the Gulf War. On 8 April, the UN confirmed that Iraq had suspended petroleum exports, which are used to fund the "oil-for-food" relief operation in the country. The report is at <http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/f9eb4a179e3079a3c1256b950056d095?OpenDocument> and <http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/cc8e1539483174e385256b95007443bf?OpenDocument>.

Physician Killings - Pakistan

On 6 April, the [BMJ](#) reported that the Pakistan Medical Association had called for a countrywide hunger strike on 8 April to protest the lack of adequate security for physicians. Thus far in 2002, 13 physicians, most of them belonging to the Shiite sect of Islam, were killed in Karachi, while 270 physicians have been killed countrywide since 1997. Most victims were in Karachi. Physicians and police believe that the attacks on physicians are part of a campaign by religious extremists of the Sunni sect, most likely the banned Sipah-e-Sahaba, who wish to wreak revenge on Pakistan's president for his recent attempts to crack down on militant Muslim groups. The report is at <http://bmj.com/cgi/content/full/324/7341/805>.

Pseudorinderpest - Saudi Arabia

On 5 April, the [OIE](#) reported that as of 1 April, 27 cases and five deaths in ovine and caprine species had occurred due to pseudorinderpest (peste des petits ruminants) in Abu Arish and Bish of the Jazan region in the southwestern part of the country. Pseudorinderpest is not zoonotic, but the report stated that the whole of the Jazan region remains under strict quarantine with no animal movement permitted due to the outbreak of Rift Valley fever in 2000 suggesting this zoonotic disease remains a threat in this location. The report is at http://www.oie.int/eng/info/hebdo/a_current.htm.

USEUCOM

[HIV/AIDS](#) Awareness Program - Angola

On 4 April, the [VOA](#) reported that the US military's HIV prevention program would be used as "leverage" to forge a new defense relationship with Angola, the first country to receive this benefit. A total of 19 countries in Africa have been approached with the program - Nigeria and South Africa were specifically mentioned. Pentagon officials conceded that use of the word "leverage" might be an unfortunate choice for what is essentially a humanitarian assistance program. Angola is an oil-rich country that has recently achieved a ceasefire following the death of the rebel leader. The US offer of assistance originated in December 2000. In April 2001 the US provided audio-visual and computer equipment to the Angolan army for HIV/AIDS education efforts. The Pentagon plans to expand training programs to later include infectious disease treatment and laboratory procedures.

HIV/AIDS Prophylaxis - South Africa

On 4 April, the [VOA](#) reported that a South African court mandated the temporary distribution of nevirapine to HIV positive pregnant women at public hospitals and wherever authorities have the resources and supplies. The South African Health Ministry opposed the widespread distribution of nevirapine saying the drug was costly and could prove dangerous for HIV-positive pregnant women. On 6 April, the [BMJ](#) reported that the German pharmaceutical manufacturer Boehringer Ingelheim had announced it would withdraw its application to the [FDA](#) for nevirapine to be registered in the US for use in preventing HIV transmission from mother to child. The FDA has not given clear reasons as yet for the hesitancy in registration, but researchers at [NIH](#), who did the original research, say the concerns are over documentation. The drug is purported to reduce the rate of HIV transmission from mothers to babies by 50 percent. An estimated one in four South African adults carries the HIV virus. The BMJ report is at <http://bmj.com/cgi/content/full/324/7341/807/a>.

Influenza Surveillance – Europe

For week 13, 25-31 March, the [EISS](#) reported declining or unchanged low levels of influenza activity in all reporting countries. The Netherlands reported their first influenza A (H1), which was detected in a 13-year-old boy during week 10. The report is at http://www.eiss.org/cgi-files/bulletin_v2.cgi?display=1&code=62&bulletin=62.

Measles - Italy

On 4 April, the Eurosurveillance Weekly reported that a large pool of measles-susceptible individuals has accumulated in many areas of Italy, and the potential for an epidemic was high. Measles vaccination has been recommended since 1979 and national guidelines were published in 1999, but the vaccine is not mandatory nationally. Adherence to the recommendations has not been universal. The report recommended a coordinated effort of regional health authorities to improve the routine offer of childhood immunization and to ensure the organization of catch-up campaigns aimed at reducing the size of the susceptible population. The report is at http://www.eurosurv.org/2002/pfp/020404_pfp.htm.

Meningococcal Meningitis - Burkina Faso

On 4 April the [WHO](#) reported that as of 3 April a total of 6,145 cases including 813 deaths (case fatality ratio 13%) had occurred in the country since 1 January 2002. This is an increase of 1,387 cases and 141 deaths since the [UN](#) report of 1 April. *Neisseria meningitidis* serogroup W135 has been laboratory confirmed. The epidemic has now spread to 26 districts, "affecting" a population of about six million people. There is insufficient tetravalent vaccine for the population at risk. The WHO has provided 47,000 vials of oily chloramphenicol and is working to identify additional sources. The report is at <http://www.who.int/disease-outbreak-news/n2002/april/4april2002.html>.

[vCJD - UK](#)

On 2 April, the UK Department of Health released the latest monthly [vCJD](#) statistics, which revealed that as of 28 March, six cases of vCJD had been confirmed in the UK for calendar year 2002. This brings the total number of definite or probable vCJD cases to 117 out of which seven people remain alive (case fatality rate 94%). The report is at <http://www.doh.gov.uk/cjd/stats/apr02.htm>.

USJFCOM

Avian influenza and Biosecurity - Virginia (VA)

On 5 April, the VA Department of Agriculture (DOA) cautioned all citizens doing business with poultry farms to be aware of and practice biosecurity measures after an outbreak of avian influenza (H7N2) began in mid-March in a flock of turkeys. As of 3 April more than 23 flocks of turkeys and chickens have been slaughtered to halt the spread of the outbreak, which was reported as a low pathogenic strain that poses no risk to humans. The *Washington Post* reported that the outbreak, involving about 300,000 turkeys and chickens, began in Rockingham County but quickly spread to neighboring Augusta, Page and Shenandoah counties. Japan has placed an embargo on poultry from Virginia, and the Philippines is reportedly considering a ban. Most slaughtered poultry will be transported to specific sanitary landfills in leak proof, bio-safe containers under the supervision of state officials. The state is expected to test an alternative portable burner system on an appropriate flock to determine if incineration is an effective and environmentally responsible disposal option. The *Washington Post* report is at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A58277-2002Apr3.html> and the VA DOA reports are at <http://www.vdacs.state.va.us/news/releases-a/040302deq.html> and <http://www.vdacs.state.va.us/news/releases-a/040502bio.html>.

Chernobyl Legacy - Ukraine, Belarus, and Russia

On 8 April, the [VOA](#) reported that a [UN](#) team of experts had just returned from the Ukraine, Belarus, and Russia and would propose a long-term program of research managed by an international research board that includes leading scientists from the three affected countries as well as internationally to examine the long-term health effects of the Chernobyl nuclear accident that occurred 16 years ago. The UN is proposing a 10-year strategy for tackling and reversing the health, social, and economic problems of this region. No specific health effects were mentioned in the report. The report is at <http://www.voanews.com/article.cfm?objectID=AEA43029-9EF2-40C4-972BF02852BE3B9A&Title=UN%3A%20Millions%20Suffer%20from%20Chernobyl%20Disaster>.

Coastal Water Pollution - National Academy of Sciences (NAS)

On 4 April, the NAS released a study, which found 44 out of 139 US coastal areas assessed were severely affected by high levels of nitrogen and phosphorus. Problems

were particularly severe along the mid-Atlantic coast and the Gulf of Mexico, where a "dead zone" forms along the Louisiana and Texas coasts each spring. An excess of nitrogen is responsible for a chain of ecological events resulting in harmful algal blooms such as red tides, contaminated shellfish, and other environmental problems. According to the report, nitrogen in coastal waters originates from the atmosphere and upstream watersheds, via rivers that are polluted by agricultural runoff, wastewater treatment plants, and the burning of fossil fuels. The study advocates standards for different types of regional watersheds and incentives for farmers and industries to control or reduce nutrient releases. The report is at <http://www.nap.edu/books/0309069483/html/>

Dengue, Imported - US

On 5 April, the [CDC](#) reported that 34 states and the District of Columbia submitted 216 serum samples for suspect dengue in the US during 1999-2000. From these samples 41 (19%) were laboratory confirmed, 112 (52%) were negative, and 63 (29%) were indeterminate because convalescent samples were not available. The most commonly reported symptoms were fever (100%), headache (64%), rash (54%), and myalgia (39%). At least three patients were hospitalized and one died (41 year old male returning from Bangladesh). Travel histories within the two weeks before illness were available for 33 persons and indicated that infections were probably acquired in Asia (13 cases), the Caribbean islands (12), Central America (seven), South America (one), and Africa (one). One patient reported travel to both the Caribbean and South America. The report is at <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5113a5.htm>.

Ergonomics Guidelines - [OSHA](#)

On 5 April, OSHA announced it would begin work on developing industry and task-specific guidelines to reduce and prevent ergonomic injuries that occur in the workplace. OSHA expects to begin releasing guidelines ready for application in selected industries this year. OSHA will also encourage other businesses and industries to immediately develop additional guidelines of their own. The new plan was announced barely a year after Republicans and Democrats in Congress rejected the previous Administration's rule, which was developed over a period of eight years and was broadly denounced as being excessively burdensome and complicated. The report is at <http://www.osha.gov/media/oshnews/apr02/national-20020405.html>.

Food Insecurity - Mongolia

On 3 April, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies reported that food insecurity would likely be a problem in the western and southwestern provinces of Uvs, Bayan Olgii, Khovd, Gobi Altai, Bayanhongor, and Uverkhangai. Severe winter storms with temperatures reaching -4 degrees F and snow, dust, and winds gusting to 89 miles/hour have resulted in the death of 2.5 million animals countrywide with 5,200 families losing all animals, which are a key component of the herders food supply. Two more severe months lie ahead. In an attempt to transition to

a market economy, herders have increased livestock population as insurance for the future, which has resulted in over-grazing and trampling, and ultimately to a decreasing natural resource/fodder base and reduced resilience of the natural environment against the harsh climatic conditions. The report is at http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf_appeals.pl?rpts02/Monsnow3.pdf.

Influenza Surveillance – [DoD](#)

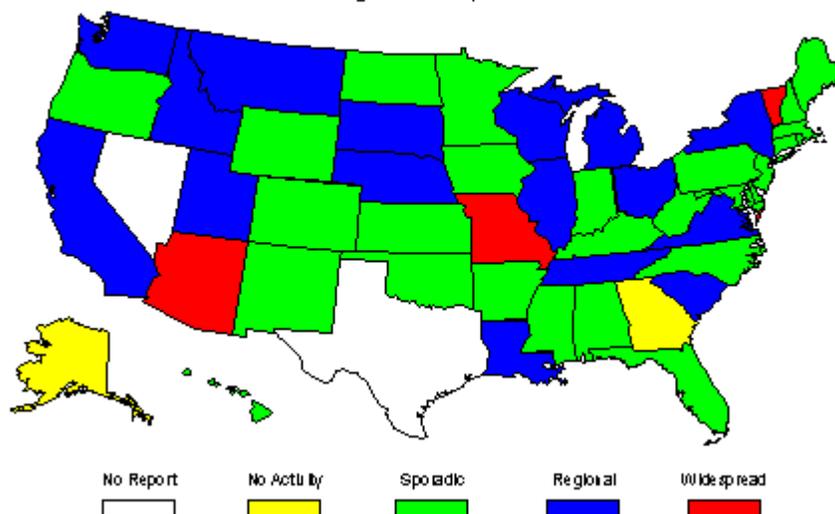
The [DoD](#) Worldwide Influenza Surveillance Program is a laboratory-based influenza surveillance program managed by the Air Force. As of 4 April, 525 (19%) of 2,725 submitted specimens have been identified as positive for influenza since the start of the influenza season (29 September). Of the 525 isolates, 493 (94%) were influenza A viruses and 32 (6%) were influenza B viruses. Nine of the 14 isolates identified during the past week were from Little Creek Naval Air Base in Virginia, and all nine were influenza B viruses. Further info, including data from the CDC and international sites, are available at: <https://pestilence.brooks.af.mil/Influenza/>. Note: Some users may experience difficulty accessing this link directly from this document; if this occurs, copy and paste the hyperlink in your browser address bar.

Influenza Surveillance – US

The report for the week ending 23 March (week 12) indicated that during this week overall national visits to physicians for influenza-like illness were 1.7%, which is below the national baseline of 1.9%. Deaths attributed to pneumonia and influenza were 8.8%, which is above the epidemic threshold of 8.2% for this week. For week 12, laboratory reports indicated 211 (19.9%) of 1,058 respiratory specimens were positive for influenza: 35 influenza A (H3N2), 57 influenza B, and 119 influenza A viruses with unspecified subtype. The percentage of influenza isolates that are influenza type B has increased from 3% for the week ending 23 February to 27% for the week ending 23 March. Of the influenza B isolates reported this season, 33% were identified in the Mid-Atlantic region. Since 30 September, 12,017 (16.5%) of 72,877 submitted specimens were positive for influenza: 11,599 (97%) were influenza A and 418 (3%) were influenza B. Of the 11,599 influenza A viruses, 3,479 (30%) were subtyped with the following results: 3,426 (98%) were influenza A (H3) and 53 (2%) were influenza A (H1) viruses. The [CDC](#) classified influenza during week 12 of the 2002 influenza season as in the map below. The report is at <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/diseases/flu/weekly.htm>.

Weekly Influenza Activity Estimates Reported by State & Territorial Epidemiologists

Week ending March 23, 2002 - Week 12



Picture courtesy of the CDC at <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/diseases/flu/weekly.htm>.

Nearly Lethal Suicide Attempts - [CDC](#)

On 3 April, the CDC reported that several non-traditional health risk factors for nearly lethal suicide attempts were identified in a recent case-control study that focused on 153 persons aged 13 to 34 years, who lived in Houston and survived nearly lethal suicide attempts: (1) drinking within three hours of the attempt was associated with a higher risk than alcoholism and binge drinking, (2) moving in the last 12 months was associated with an increased risk, but frequency of moving, distance moved, recentness of move, and difficulty staying in touch were all factors that increased risk, (3) nearly 1/4 reported that less than five minutes passed between their decision to attempt suicide and their actual attempts, indicating impulsive attempts, (4) young men with medical conditions were more than four times more likely to attempt suicide than those without such conditions, and (5) nearly-lethal suicide attempters more often sought help from family and friends than from professionals. In 1999, suicide was the third leading cause of death among teens and young adults. The press release and link to the abstract is at <http://www.cdc.gov/od/oc/media/pressrel/r020403.htm>.

Salmonellosis Outbreak - Texas

On 8 April, the Texas Department of Health (TDH) announced that federal, state, and local health authorities are investigating reports of illnesses in people from several states who attended meetings or conferences in Dallas from 17-24 March. Health authorities have confirmed Salmonellosis in 10 people and have reports of diarrheal illnesses in several others but say the number of illnesses could be much larger. Health authorities say the investigation is in the early stages and they are not releasing the names of conferences or meeting locations, pending more information. For more

information contact Doug McBride, TDH Press Officer, at (512) 458-7524 or pager 1-877-813-7943. The report is at http://www.tdh.state.tx.us/news/b_new407.htm.

Synthetic Secretin - [FDA](#) Approval

On 5 April, the FDA announced the approval of the first synthetic formulation of a naturally occurring porcine hormone, secretin. Secreflo™ for Injection is used as an aid in confirming the diagnosis of pancreatic dysfunction and the presence of a pancreatic tumor (gastrinoma) that could become cancerous. The report is at <http://www.fda.gov/bbs/topics/ANSWERS/2002/ANS01143.html>.

TCE Decontamination of Groundwater - [USDA](#)

On 9 April, the USDA Agricultural Research Service announced that scientists might have found an inexpensive but effective product to decontaminate TCE in groundwater: vegetable oil. TCE, a toxic liquid used as a solvent for dry cleaning and degreasing, has been found as a contaminant in groundwater on some military bases. Battelle, a nonprofit scientific company, recommends that the best way to get the oil into the water is by injecting the oil into the ground as an emulsion using high pressure to create a porous, oil-containing barrier across the contaminated aquifer. The oil, used in low concentrations, stimulates microorganisms naturally present in the aquifer to grow and accumulate in the barrier. These microorganisms degrade the TCE as contaminated groundwater flows through the barrier. Parsons Corporation is using this method on several Air Force and Navy bases to see determine the effectiveness of the vegetable oil. The report is at <http://www.ars.usda.gov/is/pr/thelatest.htm>.

USPACOM

Avian Influenza - Hong Kong

On 6 April, the [VOA](#) reported that Hong Kong began killing 30,000 chickens to prevent the spread of the latest strain of avian influenza. The infected birds were slaughtered on two farms in the Pak Sha district of Hong Kong's rural New Territories. Health officials will inoculate some 400,000 chickens at 21 nearby farms to prevent the spread of disease. The strain has not been specifically identified, but health officials state that it poses no threat to humans.

Food Insecurity - North Korea

On 4 April, the [UN](#) posted a report from *JoongAng Ilbo*, which stated that North Korea's food production was 3.54 million metric tons, an increase of 38% from two years ago and the most since 1995. However, the nation is still expected to have a 1.47 million metric ton deficit. Experts point to a failed agriculture infrastructure and shortcomings of the collective farming system that has caused extreme food shortages since 1996. The government's lack of reform and the global focus on Afghanistan will likely complicate continued food relief, which could result in further instability, malnutrition, and increased

susceptibility to disease. The report is at <http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/s/EA244F4CBB9567CC49256B9200012926>.

Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) - Malaysia

On 7 April, the *New York Times* reported that Malaysian health officials had detected FMD in 30 cows in the rural district of Besut. Quarantine is in place in the northeastern state, and vaccination is underway in the affected areas. The FMD outbreak is first in Malaysia since 1995. The report (requires free registration) is at <http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/international/AP-Malaysia-Foot-and-Mouth.html>.

USSOUTHCOM

Dengue Fever - The Americas

On 27 March, the [PAHO](#) released the number of cases of dengue and dengue hemorrhagic fever in the Americas by country, island, and region. Countries and major islands with the highest incidence (per 100,000 population) were Barbados (105.60), Brazil (92.21), Venezuela (54.61), Costa Rica (40.92), and Puerto Rico (20.67). The report is at <http://www.paho.org/English/HCP/HCT/VBD/dengue-cases-2002.htm>.

Flooding - Ecuador

On 3 April, Disaster Relief reported that thousands were homeless after nearly two straight months of torrential rains in the coastal provinces of Manabi, El Oro, and Guayas in Ecuador. The high waters also triggered landslides that killed 13 people. Relief workers are distributing insect repellent in anticipation of increased vector-borne disease threats, especially malaria and dengue fever. More rain is predicted, as scientists from the [UN](#) are fearful that the onslaught of storms could be the result of another el Niño - a periodic warming of Pacific Ocean equatorial waters that disrupts weather patterns worldwide. The report is at <http://www.disasterrelief.org/Disasters/020403ecuador/>.

Please contact the below-listed POC for suggested improvements and/or comments regarding this report. This report is also available on the USACHPPM website at <http://chppm-www.apgea.army.mil/Hiouupdate/>.

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ACRONYMNS

ACIP - Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices
AFPS – American Forces Press Service
AIDS – Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
APHIS – Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
BMJ - British Medical Journal
BSE – Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy
CBRN – Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear
CDC – Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CDR – Communicable Disease Report (England)
CIA – Central Intelligence Agency
CME - Continuing Medical Education
CONUS – Continental United States
DARPA – Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, the central research and development organization for the Department of Defense
DHHS – Department of Health and Human Services
DOE – Department of Energy
DOS – Department of State
DOT – Department of Transportation
ECG - Electrocardiogram
EISS – European Influenza Surveillance Scheme
EPA – Environmental Protection Agency
ESSENCE – Electronic Surveillance System for the Early Notification of Community-Based Epidemics
EU- European Union
FBI – Federal Bureau of Investigation
FCC - Federal Communications Commission
FDA – Food and Drug Administration
FEMA – Federal Emergency Management Agency
FMD – Foot and Mouth Disease
FSIS – Food Safety Inspection Service
GAO – US General Accounting Office
GEIS – Global Emerging Infections System
HACCP – Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points
HIV/AIDS – Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
HVAC - Heating, Ventilation, and Air-Conditioning
IDP – Internally Displaced Persons
ICRC – International Committee of the Red Cross
IRCS – International Red Cross Society
NAS – National Academy of Sciences
NATO – North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NEJM – New England Journal of Medicine
NIH – National Institutes of Health
NIOSH – National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health
NRC – Nuclear Regulatory Commission
OIE – World Organisation [sic] for Animal Health
OSHA - Occupational Safety and Health Administration
PAHO - Pan American Health Organization
PCR – Polymerase Chain Reaction
PPE - Personal Protective Equipment
TB – Tuberculosis
UK – United Kingdom – England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales
UN – United Nations
UNHCR – United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
USAID - United States Agency for International Development
USAMRIID – United States Army Medical Research Institute for Infectious Diseases
USDA – United States Department of Agriculture
vCJD - variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease
VOA – Voice of America, an international multimedia broadcasting service funded by the US Government
WHO – World Health Organization