

USACHPPM
DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF FOR OPERATIONS
HEALTH INFORMATION OPERATIONS (HIO)
WEEKLY UPDATE

23 January 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

Afghanistan Medical Support – Multinational Coalition

On 18 January, the [AFPS](#) reported that several coalition members are providing medical assets and support for Afghanistan. Jordan established a state-of-the-art hospital in Mazar-e Sharif with more than 20 surgeons and a full medical capacity. The hospital has treated more than 8,000 Afghans since 8 January. Russia has also established a hospital, and Spain and South Korea are preparing to send medical assets to the theater.

Afghanistan Reconstruction – Multinational Conference

A multinational conference convened 18-19 January to discuss Afghanistan reconstruction. The conference was led by the US with representatives from the European Union, Saudi Arabia, and Japan. The representatives pledged over one billion dollars to rebuild Afghanistan to include health care infrastructure. A report is at <http://www.cnn.com/2002/WORLD/asiapcf/east/01/21/afghan.donors.0445/index.html>.

Afghanistan Refugees – Update

On 18 January, the [AFPS](#) reported that 35,000 refugees have returned to their homes. Millions of Afghans remain in refugee and [IDP](#) camps. One of the largest concerns regarding repatriation is the presence of landmines. Afghanistan is believed to have one of the world's largest concentrations of land mines in the world with between 10 and 11 million mines planted throughout the country. As of 18 January, the [UN](#) has 4,400 deminers operating in the country.

Al Qaeda and Taliban Detainees – [ICRC](#) Report

On 18 January, the [ICRC](#) reported that the nearly 200 Al Qaeda and Taliban detainees being held at Camp X-Ray in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, are being registered and evaluated for the following: access to clean water, medical care, and a proper diet. The four-person [ICRC](#) team will also inspect the holding facilities to make certain that conditions are sanitary and that detainees have access to good hygiene. The organization will then report to the leadership, making recommendations if necessary. The ICRC will not publicly comment on the treatment of detainees or on conditions of detention. The report is at <http://www.redcross.org/news/in/intllaw/020118detainees.html>.

Al Qaeda [WMD](#) Search – Afghanistan

On 16 and 18 January, the [AFPS](#) reported that USCENTCOM troops have searched 45 to 50 suspected [WMD](#) facilities in Afghanistan and have found neither WMD nor the potential to make them. The troops did find evidence supporting the desire to make WMD. The results of chemical analyses of materials found in these areas are not complete and some sites have not yet been searched. The reports are at http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Jan2002/n01162002_200201164.html and http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Jan2002/n01182002_200201184.html.

Anthrax Decontamination – Senate Hart Building

On 22 January, the US Senate Hart building reopened after EPA results indicated that anthrax decontamination efforts were successful. A report is at <http://usinfo.state.gov/topical/pol/terror/02012204.htm>.

Anthrax Genetic Fingerprint – Institute for Genomic Research

On 22 January, the *New York Times* reported that scientists have discovered genetic fingerprints that may indicate which of many laboratories is the likely source of the anthrax microbe used in recent attacks in the United States. Further information is at <http://abcnews.go.com/sections/us/DailyNews/anthrax020122.html>.

Anthrax Scares – Australia

The [VOA](#) reported this week that hundreds of McDonald's restaurants across Australia were on a terrorism alert after suspicious envelopes – some containing white powder – were sent to more than 30 stores. The mail, addressed to branch managers, prompted the American-owned chain to temporarily close several affected outlets.

Anthrax Veterinary Alert – [CDC](#)

On 15 January, the CDC and the USDA issued a notice for veterinarians to be on alert for anthrax, particularly in cities where people have contracted the disease. If new attacks were detected in animals first, then health officials could rush antimicrobials to potentially exposed humans. The sign and symptoms of anthrax in animals is at www.aphis.usda.gov/oa/pubs/anthrax.html and the press release is at <http://www.avma.org/onlnews/javma/jan02/s011502.asp>.

Bioterrorism Website Updated – [CDC](#)

On 18 January, the [CDC](#) announced a redesigned Website with new and updated bioterrorism resources. The redesigned site is the official federal site for medical, laboratory, and public health professionals to reference when providing information to the public and for updates on protocols related to health threats such as anthrax. The new site offers easy-to-use categories requested by key audiences, including clinicians. The [CDC](#) was the most visited federal government Web site in the nation in October, registering more than 9.1 million unique visits. The site is at <http://www.bt.cdc.gov>.

Eye Protection System – Army Soldier Systems Center

On 22 January, the [AFPS](#) announced that the Army Soldier Systems Center in Natick, Massachusetts had completed development of the Military Eye Protection System (MEPS). The MEPS increases protection and works with half the number of interchangeable lenses of previous equipment. The MEPS expands peripheral protection and can protect against a .15 caliber, 5.7-grain fragment, which simulates a projectile traveling at 640-660 feet per second. The MEPS can also protect from laser range finders and target designators. More information and photos are at http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Jan2002/n01222002_200201221.html.

Global Outbreak and Response Network – [WHO](#)

The 17 January edition of Eurosurveillance Weekly has further details on the second meeting of the [WHO's](#) Global Outbreak and Response Network (GOARN), which was held on 29-30 November. The meeting highlights included recognition that in 2000 the perception of a growing threat from infectious diseases broadened to include global social, economic, political, and security implications. The best defense was purported to be good global medical intelligence. The GOARN uses a semi-automated electronic system that continuously scours world communications for rumors of unusual disease events. The 17 January edition of Eurosurveillance has further information, which is at <http://www.eurosurveillance.org/eurosurv/index.htm>.

Influenza Surveillance – [DoD](#)

The [DoD](#) Worldwide Influenza Surveillance Program is a laboratory-based influenza surveillance program managed by the Air Force. As of 17 January, 95 (7.4%) of 1,281 submitted specimens have been identified as positive for influenza since the start of the influenza season. Of the 95 isolates, 36 (38%) have been subtyped, and all were influenza A (H3N2), with the exception of one influenza A (H1N1) from Osan Air Base, Korea. Alaska and Hawaii, with 64 positive samples continue to account for the majority (67%) of positive samples reported. Further information, 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 last [CDC](#) weekly update posted on the web is for the week ending 5 January, which was reported in last week's HIO Weekly Update. The [CDC](#) conducts surveillance for influenza in the US each year from October through mid-May. Further information is at <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/diseases/flu/weekly.htm>.

Terrorist and Missile Threat Report – [CIA](#)

On 10 January, the US [DOS](#) reported that the [CIA](#) had recently released the report *Foreign Missile Developments and the Ballistic Missile Threat Through 2015*. According to the report the US is more likely to be attacked by a [WMD](#) from a terrorist group using conventional means such as a truck, ship, or airplane than a long-range ICBM, according to a recently released [CIA](#) report. The report goes on to say that the most likely ballistic missile threats in the next 15 years to the US are from North Korea and Iran, with Iraq a less likely source. Other likely threats are from the strategic forces of Russia and China. The unclassified summary of the [CIA](#) report is at http://www.cia.gov/nc/pubs/other_products/Unclassifiedballisticmissilefinal.htm and the press release is at <http://usinfo.state.gov/topical/pol/terror/02011103.htm>.

UN Security Council Resolution – Al Qaeda and Taliban

On 16 January, the UN Security Council voted to expand and focus the sanctions against Osama bin Laden, al Qaeda, and the Taliban. The resolution requires UN states to expand financial sanctions or to impose asset freezes, and to impose a travel restriction and an arms embargo.

Vaccine Deferral – Pregnant Servicewomen

On 16 January, the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs issued policy guidance that reiterated and strengthened the long-standing DoD policy to defer immunization of servicewomen during pregnancy. The policy comes after preliminary study results from a non-peer reviewed Naval Health Research Center study of women who received the anthrax vaccine. The study identified a possible relationship between maternal anthrax vaccination in the first trimester and “a higher odds” of birth defects. The study is being revalidated because a number of women appear to have received the anthrax vaccine beyond the first trimester. The final report is expected to be available in several months, but the CDC will publish a report in next week that will provide further details of the study. The DoD press release is at http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Jan2002/b01162002_bt026-02.html.

USCENTCOM

Earthquake Destruction – Tajikistan

Last week’s HIO Weekly Update reported an earthquake in Tajikistan that registered 5.3 on the Richter scale, which according to the UN is the measurement reported by the World Data Center for Seismology in Denver, Colorado. However, the UN reports that an initial report by the Ministry of Emergency Situations in Tajikistan reported a force of 7.0 on the Richter scale. The UN report is at http://www.irinnews.org/report.asp?ReportID=18775&SelectRegion=Central_Asia&SelectCountry=TAJIKISTAN.

Leishmaniasis – Pakistan

On 16 January, the WHO reported that 289 cured cases and 738 active cases of cutaneous leishmaniasis were present during a rapid survey in the northwestern Kurram Agency of Pakistan. On average these cases have had onset of disease within the last six months. The majority of cases are in children under 15 years of age in the local population. These cases are in addition to the 1,500 cases reported in Afghan refugee camps in Pakistan. The WHO is coordinating treatment and prevention efforts. The report is at <http://www.who.int/disease-outbreak-news/n2002/january/16january2001.html>.

Meningococcal Disease – Hajj

On 17 January, the [CDR](#) reported that the 2002 Hajj is expected to take place in the last week of February or early March. Saudi Arabian officials now require proof of vaccination with the quadrivalent meningococcal vaccine when a visa for Hajj is issued. The proof of vaccination is good for only three years. This requirement is in response to multinational outbreaks of meningococcal disease that occurred in 2000 with serogroup W135 and in 1987 with serogroup A. The quadrivalent vaccine provides protection for serogroup A, C, W135 and Y. There is currently no vaccine for serogroup B. The [CDR](#) report is at <http://www.phls.co.uk/publications/CDR%20Weekly/index.html>.

Meningococcal Disease – Somalia

On 18 January, the [WHO](#) reported that as of 16 January, a total of 144 cases including 33 deaths have been reported since the outbreak began in early October in the Hargersa town area of northwestern Somalia. The [WHO](#) has laboratory confirmation of serogroup A in 64 cases. The [WHO](#) is coordinating a crisis committee that began mass vaccination on 19 January. The surveillance system has been strengthened and a mass media campaign is underway. The report is at <http://www.who.int/disease-outbreak-news/n2001/december/7december2001.html>.

USEUCOM

Influenza Surveillance – Europe

For week 7 – 13 January, the [EISS](#) reported widespread with rates above the baseline thresholds with a medium intensity in Belgium, France and Spain. Other central and northern European countries remained at low levels with no activity, sporadic, or local activity. Isolations indicate a co-circulation of influenza A (H3N2) and B viruses, with A (H3N2) dominant in most countries. Influenza A (H1N1) was isolated sporadically. The isolated viruses are all similar to the vaccine strains. The report is at http://www.eiss.org/cqi-files/bulletin_v2.cqi?display=1&code=51&bulletin=51.

International Outbreak – *Salmonella oranienburg*

On 17 January the [CDR](#) reported an international outbreak of *S. oranienbrug* infection originating from chocolate produced in Germany. The chocolate producer identified the pathogen in an in-house sample taken from a batch due for export to the US. The contaminated batch was reportedly destroyed and potentially contaminated product was recalled on 18 December. As of 14 January, the following cases were reported: 373 in Germany; 16 in Denmark; 18 in Sweden; and six in the Netherlands. Suspect cases are being investigated in Austria, Belgium, Croatia, and Finland. The product was imported into Canada, but no cases have yet been reported. The [CDR](#) reports that *Salmonella* infections from contaminated chocolate are rare due to the low moisture and high sugar content of the product; however, the high fat content is protective against stomach acid and is believed to be responsible for a low infective dose. The international [Enter-net](#)

network for the surveillance and rapid reporting of *Salmonella* outbreaks was instrumental in the early recognition of this outbreak. The [CDR](http://www.phls.co.uk/publications/CDR%20Weekly/index.html) report is at <http://www.phls.co.uk/publications/CDR%20Weekly/index.html> and the Eurosurveillance weekly report (17 January edition) is at <http://www.eurosurveillance.org/eurosurv/index.htm>.

Tularemia Outbreak – Kosovo

On 17 January, the [WHO](http://www.who.int) reported that as of 17 January, 282 suspected cases of tularemia have occurred since the outbreak began on 1 November. The Institute of Public Health, Pristina, reports laboratory confirmation for 59 cases and no deaths to date. The majority of the cases were detected in rural areas, mainly in the Lipjlan, Ferijaz, and Pristine municipalities. The age range of the patients is 16-44 years of age. The outbreak investigation is ongoing and involves case management, environmental controls, and health education. The report is at <http://www.who.int/disease-outbreak-news/n2002/january/17january2002.html>.

vCJD Second Case – Northern Ireland

On 21 January, the BBC reported the second case of vCJD to occur in Northern Ireland. The patient, a male, is reportedly in stable condition. The report is at http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/english/uk/northern_ireland/newsid_1772000/1772737.stm.

Volcano Eruption – Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)

On 17 January, the [ICRC](http://www.icrc.org) reported that Mount Nyiragongo erupted destroying large sections of the town of Goma, in the eastern part of the DRC. Most residents fled the city taking refuge across the border in Gisenyi, Rwanda. On 20 January, residents began returning to Goma despite the continuing threat that the volcano poses in the region. The [ICRC](http://www.icrc.org) prioritized access to safe drinking water as one of the top health threats and on 20 January supplied chlorine tablets, a water purification unit, three tanker trucks, six water storage tanks, and 1,000 jerrycans. The General Hospital in Goma was left largely undamaged and hospital staff members have reported for work. One health center east of the Goma airport was functional. The reports are at <http://www.icrc.org/icrceng.nsf/c1256212004ce24e4125621200524882/c16f5d0b766c617fc1256b48005c1759?OpenDocument> and <http://www.icrc.org/icrceng.nsf/c1256212004ce24e4125621200524882/aa3c1fd879942cc0c1256b48005bb636?OpenDocument>.

Yellow Fever – Senegal

On 21 January, the [WHO](http://www.who.int) reported that as of 18 January, 18 cases of yellow fever were reported in the Diourbel and Ziguinchor regions of Senegal. The [WHO](http://www.who.int) is coordinating a mass vaccination campaign in the affected regions, and the Senegalese medical

authorities are reinforcing surveillance. The report is at <http://www.who.int/disease-outbreak-news/n2002/january/21january2002.html>.

USJFCOM

2002 Childhood Immunization Schedule – [CDC](#)

On 18 January, the CDC released the 2002 Childhood Immunization Schedule, which remains the same in content as January 2001 but has an updated format to emphasize catch-up vaccinations, pre-adolescent assessment, the preference for administering the first hepatitis B vaccine at birth, and three vaccines for selected at-risk groups. The report is at <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5102a4.htm>. Vaccine deferral guidelines for PCV and Td or DTaP remain the same and are at (<http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5050a4.htm>) for PCV and (<http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5051a3.htm>) for Td and DTaP.

Bioethics – President’s Council on Bioethics

On 16 January, President Bush announced the names of 18 members appointed to the President’s Council on Bioethics, which held its first meeting 17-18 January. The Council is composed of scientists, physicians, ethicists, social scientists, lawyers, and theologians. The Council will consider a range of bioethical matters and advise the President of the complex and often competing moral positions associated with biomedical innovation. Some of the first issues to be considered by the Council include: (1) embryo and stem cell research; (2) assisted reproduction; (3) cloning; (4) uses of knowledge and techniques derived from human genetics or the neurosciences; and (5) end of life issues. The Council may also study broader issues as well, such as the protection of human subjects in research and the appropriate uses of biomedical technologies. New policies in this area could be formulated as early as this calendar year. The report is at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/01/20020116-9.html>.

[BSE Measures](#) – [FSIS](#)

On 17 January, the [FSIS](#) published its current thinking paper on possible actions to minimize human exposure to meat food products from cattle that could contain the infective agent that causes [BSE](#) in the *Federal Register*. The measures that [FSIS](#) will evaluate with assistance from Harvard University include: (1) prohibiting the use of bovine intestine for human food; (2) prohibiting the use of vertebral column as a source material in meat or meat food products from cattle older than 24 months; (3) prohibiting bone-in-beef for human food from cattle older than 24 months; (4) prohibiting the use of brain and spinal cord for human food; (5) prohibiting the use of the head, except the tongue, for human food; (6) prohibiting the slaughter of cattle older than 24 months of age. The report is at http://www.fsis.usda.gov/oa/topics/BSE_thinking.htm.

FDA Approval – Parkinson’s Disease Brain Implant

On 14 January, the [FDA](#) approved an expanded use of a brain implant to help control symptoms of advanced Parkinson’s disease. The [FDA](#) initially approved the device, a deep brain stimulator, in 1997 for use in one side of the brain to help control tremors on one side of the body. The device is now approved for use in both sides of the brain to help reduce symptoms of advanced Parkinson’s that cannot be adequately controlled with medication. The press release is at <http://www.fda.gov/bbs/topics/ANSWERS/2002/ANS01130.html>.

FDA Approval – Pocket-size ECG Machine

On 3 January, the [FDA](#) approved a pocket-sized [ECG](#) monitor that is able to forward [ECG](#) data by mobile phone, wireless network, or the Internet to specialists anywhere in the world. The company’s press release is at http://www.micromed.com.au/29_news/30_newsreleases/releases/20020108.htm.

Food Security Guidance – FDA

On 9 January, the FDA announced the availability of two guidance documents related to food security guidance for industry. The Food Producers, Processors, Transporters, and Retailers: Food Security Preventive Measures Guidance is at <http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/secguid.html> and the Importers and Filers: Food Security Preventive Measures Guidance is at <http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/secguid2.html>.

FMD Restrictions Lifted – Netherlands, Northern Ireland, and Japan

On 9 January, the [USDA APHIS](#) announced that it added the Netherlands, Northern Ireland, and Japan to the list of countries considered to be free of rinderpest and [FMD](#). The press release is at <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/lpa/press/2002/01/fmdrest.txt>.

Gastrointestinal Outbreaks – DoD

On 21 January, the [DoD-GEIS ESSENCE](#) detected an unusual incidence of apparent gastrointestinal disease outbreaks involving at least eight [CONUS](#) installations over the last 10 days. The largest of these has been at the Marine Corps Recruit Depot (MCRD) in San Diego (estimated 136+ separate cases since 11 January). The other larger outbreak sites include Fort Monmouth and Fort Knox. Training settings seem to be particularly affected, possibly reflecting the effects of more extensive post-holiday leave introductions of agents into densely populated barracks and work settings. A GEIS epidemiologist is deploying to San Diego to assist with outbreak characterization at the MCRD. Stool and blood specimens for definitive evaluations are being collected at several of the affected installations. Initial viral lab work-ups will take place using [GEIS](#)-funded enteric virus capabilities at NEPMU-5 in San Diego. Initial diagnostic and epidemiological impressions point to non-bacterial, self-limited illnesses of relatively

short duration characterized by nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea consistent with person-to-person transmission of Norwalk-like virus infections in densely populated settings (the so-called "winter vomiting disease"). POC: Col Patrick W. Kelley at [DoD-GEIS](#). On 21 January, the BBC reported that "winter-vomiting virus" had closed a ward at a Birmingham hospital and an infirmary in Glasgow, England. The report is at http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/uk/england/newsid_1773000/1773558.stm.

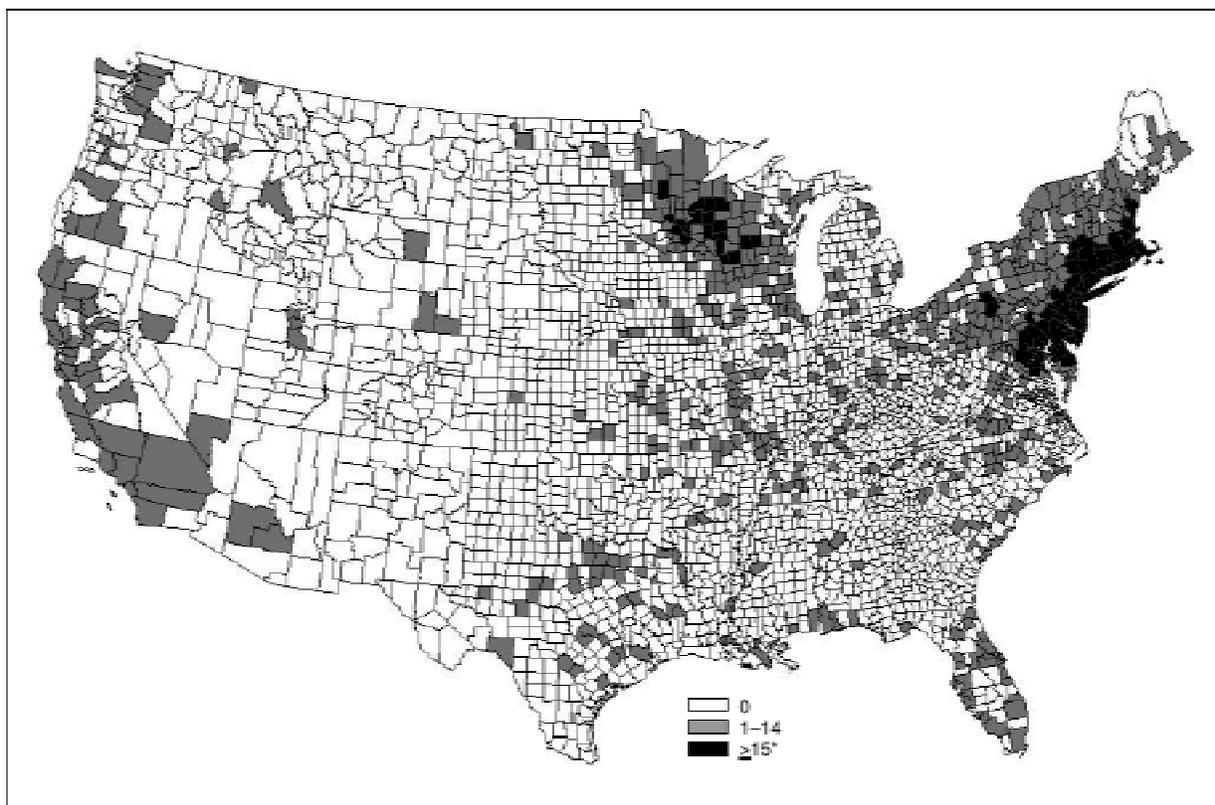
Human Reproductive Cloning – [NAS](#)

On 18 January, the [NAS](#) released a report that recommended a legally enforceable ban on human reproductive cloning (HRC). Based on animal reproductive cloning in five mammalian species (sheep, cattle, pigs, goats, and mice), the study panel concluded that HRC would be dangerous for the woman, fetus, and newborn, and is likely to fail. The panel recommended a review of these findings in five years to reconsider the ban if at least two conditions are met: (1) a new scientific and medical review indicates that the procedures are likely to be safe and effective and (2) a broad national dialogue on the societal, religious, and ethical issues suggests reconsideration of the ban. The panel supported an earlier NAS report, which recommended biomedical research using nuclear transplantation to produce stem cells be permitted based on the potential for developing new medical therapies to treat life-threatening diseases. The full report is at http://www.nap.edu/catalog/10285.html?onpi_topnews_011802.

Lyme Disease Annual Report – [CDC](#)

On 18 January, the [CDC](#) reported the annual summary for Lyme disease in the US calendar year 2000. The [CDC](#) received reports for 17,730 cases of Lyme disease during 2000, which is an eight percent increase over the 1999 reported cases (16,273) and a five percent increase over the 1998 reported cases (16,801). During 1991-2000, the reported incidence of Lyme disease nearly doubled. Most cases continue to be in the northeast, mid-Atlantic, and north-central states. Twelve states accounted for 95 percent (16,877) of the reported cases, which is depicted in the figure below. Age distribution continued to be bimodal with a median age of 39 years (range: <1 – 98 years of age). The highest reported incidence occurred among children 5-9 years of age (9.3 per 100,000) and adults 50-59 years of age (8.2 per 100,000). The month of illness onset was most frequent for June (27.3%) and July (29.9%), which reflects the seasonal peak of the host-seeking activities of infective nymphal-stage vector ticks during May and June in areas where Lyme disease is endemic. The report is at <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5102a3.htm>.

FIGURE 2. Number of cases of Lyme disease, by county — United States, 2000



* Total number of cases from these counties represented 90% of all 2000 cases.

Picture courtesy of CDC at <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5102a3.htm>.

Microchip Implant – Traveling Pet Birds

On 14 January, the [USDA APHIS](http://www.usda.gov) announced a proposed rule, published in the January 11 *Federal Register*, to allow the use of microchip implants as an acceptable form of identification for pet birds of US origin returning to this country after traveling outside of the US. The regulations previously allowed for the use of leg bands or tattoos only. The press release is at <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/lpa/press/2002/01/chipimp.txt>.

Prescription Drug Discounts for Elderly – Pfizer

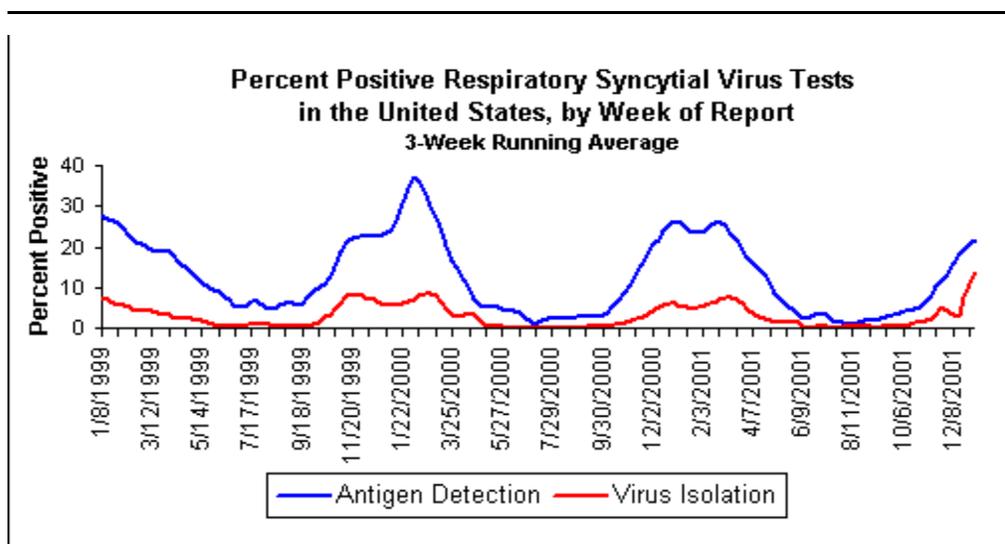
On 15 January, the [VOA](http://www.voa.com) reported the world's largest drug maker Pfizer will offer prescription drugs to some low-income elderly patients in the US at a discount of more than 75 percent beginning 1 March. Under the plan, low-income elderly will be able to buy a 30-day supply of most Pfizer medicines for \$15. Pfizer drugs include the cholesterol reduction drug Lipitor, anti-impotence drug Viagra, and anti-depressant Zoloft. Pfizer's discount offer follows similar offers by major drug companies such as British-based GlaxoSmithKline and Switzerland's Novartis. The discounts are provided

under the Medicare health insurance program for the elderly and disabled. Medicare does not reimburse the costs of prescription drugs unless patients are admitted to hospitals. Legislative efforts in Congress to include drugs in the Medicare insurance program for the elderly have stalled following the 11 September terrorist attacks.

<http://www.voanews.com/article.cfm?objectid=E476A676-C656-48AB-9DD21B19D35E56D3&Title=Pfizer%20to%20Offer%20Discount%20Medicines&CatOID=45C9C786-88AD-11D4-A57200A0CC5EE46C>

RSV Activity Annual Report - CDC

On 18 January, the [CDC](#) reported the annual summary for [RSV](#) activity in the US for the July 2000 – June 2001 season. Widespread [RSV](#) activity began the week of 11 November 2000 and continued for 24 weeks until 21 April 2001. Activity peaked in late December in the southern region of the US and in late February in all other regions. The median months of onset activity and regional trends were similar to trends reported during previous years. [RSV](#) primarily causes bronchiolitis and pneumonia in infants and young children, but because [RSV](#) infections confers only partial protection from subsequent infection, health care providers should consider [RSV](#) in the differential diagnosis of lower respiratory tract disease in persons of all ages. Rapid diagnostic techniques vary in sensitivity and specificity with some assays sensitive for diagnosis in infants and young children, but not in older children and adults. [PCR](#)-based assays are the most sensitive. No effective treatment for [RSV](#) infection exists. Ribavirin was initially reported to be an effective treatment, but subsequent trials could not substantiate a benefit from the drug. Contact isolation procedures are recommended for prevention and control of nosocomial transmission of [RSV](#). The [CDC](#) report is at <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5102a2.htm>. The incidence for [RSV](#) for the current season is provided below.



Picture courtesy of the CDC at <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvrd/revb/nrevss/trends.htm#rsvgraph>.

USPACOM

War on Terrorism – Philippines

On 16 and 20 January, the [AFPS](#) reported the Secretary of Defense announced that 240 to 250 US military forces were in the Philippines to provide training for the Philippine government to engage the Abu Sayyaf, a terrorist group that wants to establish an Islamic Republic on islands in the southern Philippines. The Philippine constitution does not allow foreign troops to conduct military operations in the country. The final number of American troops expected to join the training efforts is 600. The Al Qaeda was linked to terrorist activities in the Philippines. The reports are at http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Jan2002/n01202002_200201202.html and http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Jan2002/n01162002_200201164.html.

War on Terrorism – Philippines Health Threats

Health threats for the Philippines are in the Guide to Staying Healthy in the Philippines at <http://chppm-www.apgea.army.mil/deployment/StayingHealthyGuides.asp>.

Uranium Mine Leakage – Australia

On 13 January, the [VOA](#) reported that Beverly Uranium Mine in northern Australia was continuing to operate despite leaks of up to 60,000 liters of radioactive liquid. The leak resulted when salty ground water containing sulfuric acid and uranium gushed from a pipe on Friday, 11 January. Environmentalists and politicians called for the temporary shutdown of the mine, but the company stated that the spill was contained in a drain around the plant, and there was no danger to the environment or worker safety. The report is at <http://www.voanews.com/article.cfm?objectID=F3AEC778-AC86-431A-9454F8AE967EF3FF&Title=Leak%20Sparks%20Calls%20for%20Temporary%20Shutdown%20of%20Australian%20Uranium%20Mine&CatOID=45C9C786-88AD-11D4-A57200A0CC5EE46C>.

USSOCOM

Scientists Helping America – USSOCOM and DARPA

USSOCOM and [DARPA](#) will sponsor a Defense Department Conference called “Scientists Helping America” in Washington DC during 11-13 March. The conference comes in light of the defense authorization bill, which allocated \$25 million to the Army for establishment of a capital fund to support research in companies with promising military technologies. The March conference is limited to 200 invited selectees. A spokesperson for USSOCOM stated, “Twenty-first century warfare requires our agency and others in [DoD](#) to think out of the box to come up with solutions. We’re looking for the best scientists in America to help develop technology relevant to the mission of USSOCOM.” [DoD](#) is particularly interested in the nine technical areas listed below.

Advanced Training Systems	Batteries and fuel cells	Bioengineering and chemical/biological defense
Directed-energy weapons	Wide-bandwidth reach-back communication	Remote sensing
Signature reduction	Underwater communications	Unmanned systems

USSOUTHCOM

Dengue Fever – Brazil

On 22 January, PROMED reported that Brazilian public health officials had declared a state of alert in Rio de Janeiro due to the increased reported cases of dengue fever. Officials are reportedly expecting potentially epidemic levels. The report is at http://www.promedmail.org/pls/askus/f?p=2400:1001:74872::NO::F2400_P1001_B ACK_PAGE,F2400_P1001_PUB_MAIL_ID:1000,17352.

Dengue Fever – Cuba

On 23 January, Disaster Relief reported that an outbreak of dengue fever in Cuba was mostly concentrated in Havana, although cases have been reported throughout 95 of the Caribbean nation's 165 municipalities. For information regarding dengue fever at Guantanamo Bay Naval Station, see country specific information at <http://mic.afmic.detrick.army.mil/>. The Disaster Relief report is at <http://www.disasterrelief.org/Disasters/020123denque/>.

Joint Task Force-160 – Guantanamo Bay, Cuba

On 16 January, the [AFPS](#) reported that 30 more Al Qaeda and Taliban detainees were delivered on 16 January to the Guantanamo Bay Naval Base. This brings the total number of detainees in Cuba to 80. The report stated that 403 detainees remain under US control in Afghanistan, while 90 Pakistani detainees were returned to Pakistan. The report is at http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Jan2002/n01162002_200201164.html.

Glyphosate Exposure Claims – Colombia

The US Embassy in Colombia recently posted the final report, "A Study of the Health Complaints Related to Aerial Eradication in Colombia," which involved a case study conducted in response to a press claim in December 2000 that aerial spraying of illicit narcotic crops in Colombia with glyphosate had produced skin rashes and lesions in children. The press report and the study focused on the community of Aponte in the northwest Narino Department. The findings of the report were based on a medical record review of cases from July 2000 to February 2001. The case study concluded that in the majority of cases, aerial spraying did not cause the reported health problems because symptoms occurred prior to or well after spraying. Of the four cases that did occur during or shortly after spraying, two reflected endemic conditions common to the

area and two make no mention of pesticide exposure, but reflect altogether different diagnoses. Glyphosate is one of the most widely used pesticides by volume and is an active ingredient in several well-known pesticide products such as Roundup[®], Rodeo[®], Accord[®], and Touchdown[®]. Data from EPA indicate that glyphosate is categorized as low in toxicity regarding oral, ocular, inhalation, and dermal exposures. The case study is available at <http://usembassy.state.gov/posts/co1/wwwfapoe.pdf> and the [NPIC technical fact sheet](http://ace.orst.edu/info/npic/factsheets/glyphotech.pdf) is at <http://ace.orst.edu/info/npic/factsheets/glyphotech.pdf>.

USSTRATCOM

Final Environmental Impact Statement – [NRC](#)

On 16 January, the [NRC](#) announced completion of the Final Environmental Impact Statement on the application for Private Fuel Storage, Limited Liability Company for a license to construct and operate an independent spent nuclear fuel storage facility on the Goshute Indian Reservation near Tooele, Utah. Earlier in the month, the [NRC](#) issued a redacted version of the report, with some information removed, as a cautious measure to avoid possibly providing information that could be helpful to a potential terrorist. But after a further review and consideration, the agency decided that the complete document could be released without meaningful risk. The press release is at <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/news/archive/02-006.html>.

Nuclear Power Plant Security – [NRC](#)

On 17 January, the [NRC](#) released a transcript from the National Press Club Luncheon at which the Chairman of the [NRC](#) provided the following information regarding nuclear power plant security. The [NRC](#) requires that nuclear power plants demonstrate a high assurance that they can defend their facilities against a so-called design basis threat. This basically involves a commando attack with automatic weapons and hand-carried explosives and incapacitating agents. The adequacy of these defenses is subject to detailed inspection by the [NRC](#) including periodic force-on-force exercises designed to probe for weaknesses so that corrections can be made. The design basis threat does *not* include an aircraft attack. The [NRC](#) is currently performing a detailed engineering analysis of the consequences of a deliberate attack by a large airliner. The press conference proceedings are at <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/commission/tr/2002/20020117.html>.

Research

Anthrax Vaccine – [CDC](#)

The 18 January issue of *Science* (Vol 295, No. 5554, pp. 427-9) provides a synopsis of the [CDC](#) report to an oversight panel at the Institute of Medicine (IOM) last week. In 1999, Congress mandated that the [CDC](#), [DoD](#) and [NIH](#) study and respond to concerns about the safety and efficacy of the anthrax vaccine. The Committee to Review the [CDC](#) Anthrax Vaccine Safety and Efficacy Research Program is due to release its final

report in August 2002. The related [DoD](#)-sponsored IOM committee to assess the safety and efficacy of the anthrax vaccine is scheduled to release its report in June 2002. The notice is at <http://www.sciencemaq.org/cgi/content/summary/295/5554/427>.

Aspirin Therapy - [USPSTF](#)

On 14 January, the [USPSTF](#) announced new guidelines for the routine use of aspirin to prevent heart attacks or stroke in persons with no known cardiovascular disease but who have risk factors for disease. The Task Force found that aspirin can prevent heart attacks but increases the risk of gastrointestinal bleeding and appears to increase the risk of hemorrhagic stroke. The net benefit of aspirin chemoprevention increased with increasing cardiovascular risk. Although the benefits of aspirin chemoprevention were clearest for men in most studies, the [USPSTF](#) concluded that aspirin is also likely to be beneficial for women who are at increased risk for heart disease. A patient fact sheet and other resources including the article, which was published in the Annals of Internal Medicine, 15 January, are at <http://www.ahrq.gov/clinic/prevnew.htm>. [USPSTF](#), an independent advisory panel sponsored by [DHHS](#), conducts impartial assessments of scientific evidence. The recommendations and reports of the Task Force are not official statements or guidelines of the [PHS](#) or the [DHHS](#).

New USACHPPM Products

Medical Threat Briefings

Medical Threat Briefings for Operations Noble Eagle and Enduring Freedom were posted this week at <http://chppm-www.apgea.army.mil/mtb/>.

POC: Barbara E. Davis, DVM, MPH/MCHB-CS-OHD/584-7663
<mailto:Barbara.Davis1@APG.amedd.army.mil>

ACRONYMNS

AFPS – American Forces Press Service
APHIS – Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
BSE – Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy
CAMR – Center for Applied Microbiology and Research (England)
CDC – Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CDR – Communicable Disease Report (England)
CIA – Central Intelligence Agency
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
DoD – Department of Defense
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
FBI – Federal Bureau of Investigation
FDA – Food and Drug Administration
FEMA – Federal Emergency Management Agency
FMD – Foot and Mouth Disease
FSIS – Food Safety Inspection Service
GEIS – Global Emerging Infections System
ICBM – Intercontinental Ballistic Missile
IDP – Internally Displaced Persons
ILI – Influenza-Like Illness
ICRC – International Committee of the Red Cross
IRCS – International Red Cross Society
JCVI – Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation [sic] (England)
NAS – National Academy of Sciences
NFCI – National Focus for Chemical Incidents (England)
NIH – National Institutes of Health
NPIC – National Pesticide Information Center
NRC – Nuclear Regulatory Commission
NRPB – National Radiological Protection Board (England)
OIE – World Organisation [sic] for Animal Health
PCR – Polymerase Chain Reaction
PHS – Public Health Service
PHLS – Public Health Laboratory Service
RSV – Respiratory Syncytial Virus
TB – Tuberculosis

UN – United Nations

UNHCR – United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

USDA – United States Department of Agriculture

USPSTF – United States Preventive Services Task Force

VOA – Voice of America, an international multimedia broadcasting service funded by the US Government

WHO – World Health Organization

WMD – Weapons of Mass Destruction