

USACHPPM
HEALTH INFORMATION OPERATIONS (HIO) UPDATE

21 February 2003

The HIO Update provides information regarding global medical and veterinary issues of interest to the United States (US) Army. The 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 Update should provide an increased awareness of current and emerging health-related issues.

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HOT ISSUES

Arthritis Linked to Heart disease

17 February – MSNBC News reported women suffering from rheumatoid arthritis may face up to double the heart attack risks of women without the condition, according to a study released Monday. Researchers at the Brigham and Women’s Hospital analyzed health conditions of more than 114,000 people in a 20-year study, including 527 arthritis sufferers. Their findings, point to a possible correlation between rates of arthritis and heart attack risks in women. “Our study, the largest of its kind to date, illustrates the importance of considering more aggressive cardiac preventive measures in arthritic patients,” Daniel Solomon said. [View Article](#)

Biologists Undertake Bioterror Surveillance

16 February – Nature reported biologists should shoulder responsibility for censoring research that bioterrorists could misuse, a group of scientists and journal editors declared this weekend. The declaration was drawn up in response to fears that some biomedical research could become dangerous if made available to terrorists. Concern has been mounting since the US anthrax attacks in autumn 2001. The group effectively undertakes to screen and reject work during the peer-review process, if they deem that the risk of misuse outweighs its potential benefit. "It's getting as close to censorship as we can go," says one of the declaration's signatories Ronald Atlas, president of the Association for Microbiology. But Atlas and others have struggled to define the kind of research that would qualify as dangerous. As an example, he suggests a study that tinkers with a pathogen such as anthrax to make it more deadly. By

moving to self-regulate, the scientific community hopes to avert heavy-handed governmental control, which could stifle its freedom to carry out research. [View Article](#)

Bioterror Detectives Need New Tools.

18 February - Nature reported tough new forensics standards are needed before the perpetrators of anthrax, smallpox or other bioterror attack can be prosecuted in court, scientists and government officials warned this week at the American Association for the Advancement of Sciences meeting. Scientific assays that identify the source of a virus or bacteria may have to be devised from scratch and rigorously tested, said Bruce Budowle of the F.B.I. laboratory in Washington, D.C. Budowle is calling for the establishment of a national strain repository of bacteria and viruses that might be used in an attack. These would serve as 'control' samples, to show that microbial tests are valid, he said. Scientists also recommended construction of a DNA database of pathogens and their different strains from around the world. These would be used to trace the origin of an attack strain. [View Article](#)

B Vitamin Derivative May Fight Diabetic Eye Damage

17 February – Reuters reported a compound derived from the B vitamin thiamine has shown early promise in preventing diabetic retinopathy, a potentially blinding complication of diabetes. In experiments with diabetic rats, scientists found that the drug, called benfotiamine, completely prevented the blood vessel damage that marks retinopathy. Benfotiamine is a synthetic derivative of thiamine (vitamin B1) that has been prescribed in Europe for more than a decade for various conditions, including diabetes-related nerve damage. But the drug has never been formally tested in rigorous clinical trials. Now the new study provides a molecular mechanism by which benfotiamine might prevent diabetic retinopathy, and possibly other complications of the disease, according to lead author Dr. Michael Brownlee of Albert Einstein College of Medicine in New York. And what's "very exciting," he told Reuters Health, is that because people have already used the drug safely for years, its journey to clinical trials--and, if all goes well, to diabetics--could be a relatively quick one. The findings are being published Tuesday in Nature Medicine's advance online edition. [View Article](#)

Emergency Preparedness for Business

February – The CDC reported a comprehensive plan for dealing with terrorism-related events should include specific instructions to building occupants, actions to be taken by facility management, and first responder notification procedures. The suggested links should assist in the development of these plans. [View Article](#)

FDA Clears New Lab Test to Help Rule Out Heart Attack

14 February - The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) cleared a new laboratory blood test for marketing that will significantly increase the ability of doctors to rule out a heart attack when a person shows up at an emergency room with severe chest pains. The test is the first new blood test for evaluation of heart attacks since the introduction of the blood test for troponin, a protein present in the blood after a heart attack, in 1994. The test, the Albumin Cobalt Binding (ACB) Test, manufactured by Ischemia Technologies, Inc., works by measuring how much cobalt is bound to the blood protein albumin. Changes in the structure of albumin occur in several illnesses, including heart attacks. The ACB test is not a stand-alone heart attack test but must

be used together with an electrocardiogram (ECG) and a blood test for troponin. A normal ACB test with a normal ECG and normal troponin gives doctors increased confidence that patients can go home because they did not have a heart attack. [View Article](#)

Germs Growing More Resistant to Cipro

18 February – CNN News reported the antibiotic Cipro is becoming increasingly ineffective against other dangerous germs because of overuse, a study found. The researchers examined data on infections in hospitalized patients in 43 states and Washington, D.C., from 1994 to 2000. Ailments included respiratory and urinary infections caused by a variety of bacteria. Many germs had grown resistant to fluoroquinolones, a class of antibiotics that includes ciprofloxacin (Cipro). In 1994, Cipro was effective against 86 percent of the bacteria samples analyzed, but that dropped to 76 percent by 2000, researchers found. The anthrax bacterium was not studied, and the researchers said their findings do not mean that Cipro is becoming less effective against anthrax, which rarely affects humans. The study is in the Journal of the American Medical Association. [View Article](#)

High-fat Diet Related to Alzheimer's

17 February – MSNBC News reported a diet high in unsaturated, unhydrogenated fats such as vegetable products and some oils may help lower the risk of Alzheimer's disease, but antioxidant vitamins have no such protective effect, according to two separate studies published Monday. Doctors at Rush-Presbyterian-St. Luke's Medical Center in Chicago said they reached their conclusions after examining 815 people aged 65 and older who did not have Alzheimer's at the start of a nearly four-year study. Those in the study were asked to recall their dietary habits during a more than two-year period before the study began. At the end of the study the researchers found that 131 people had developed Alzheimer's, the debilitating disease that leads to memory loss and eventual physical incapacity. People who consumed the most saturated fat had 2.3 times the risk of developing Alzheimer's compared with those who consumed the lowest amount of saturated fats, the researchers said. [View Article](#)

Humidity Test May Unmask Anthrax Spores

12 February – Health Scout News reported scientists who launched a research project on a lark may have stumbled upon a test to quickly detect signs of possible anthrax contamination. Spores in the family of bacteria that includes anthrax plump up immediately when they're exposed to humid air, says Buford Price, co-author of a new study. A positive humidity test could be the "first step" in warning about potential danger on the battlefield or in a post office, he says. [View Article](#)

Myocarditis Case Among Few Reactions in DoD Smallpox Shot Program

13 February - CIDRAP News reported two men have had encephalitis and one contracted myocarditis after getting smallpox shots in the US military vaccination program, but all three have recovered, a Department of Defense (DoD) vaccine expert said. In addition, seven cases of generalized vaccinia have occurred among the more than 100,000 service members vaccinated so far, said Col John Grabenstein, RPh, PhD, deputy director for military vaccines in the Army Surgeon General's Office. "The key point is that even our most severe cases have had full recoveries and are back to work," Grabenstein said. The DoD revealed Jan 31 that one

solider had contracted encephalitis after being vaccinated. "This is the first public announcement of the second case," Grabenstein said. [View Article](#)

Questions Outnumber Answers on P.S.A. Test

18 February – The New York Times reported many women have hesitated to get mammograms because they know the unpleasant realities they face if anything suspicious appears, especially since there are no guarantees that treatments will be lifesaving or even necessary. Now men middle-aged and older face a similar dilemma with the P.S.A. blood test for prostate cancer, but with far greater uncertainty as to benefits versus risks. Many men who otherwise are careful about their health and have regular checkups are now hesitating to avail themselves of the P.S.A. test. Although the American Cancer Society, among others, recommends an annual P.S.A. for all men over 50 and even earlier for men with a family history of prostate cancer, some physicians and medical experts have advised against it. Citing inadequate data, the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force has no recommendation, either for or against the testing. [View Article](#)

Stomach Bugs Kill More Than Estimated

15 February - The British Medical Journal published a study where it was found that people who have foodborne bacterial infections have an increased risk of death for up to one year. Researchers used data from Danish registries to compare mortality in people infected with *Salmonella*, *Campylobacter*, *Yersinia enterocolitica*, and *Shigella spp* with mortality in the general population. After adjustment for coexisting illness, all four bacterial species were associated with increased mortality in the first 30 days after infection. *Salmonella*, *Campylobacter*, and *Yersinia* infections were associated with increased long-term mortality. The authors conclude that the effect of gastrointestinal infections on public health in industrialized countries is underestimated. [View Article](#)

Use Cool Head To Keep Warm

18 February – CBS News reported snowstorms and blizzards can be more than just a winter inconvenience; they can be deadly. Every year, dozens of deaths can be attributed to the weather, according to Dr. Emily Senay. Many injuries stem from people trying to stay warm in frigid weather. Among suggested actions are: don't use a gas oven if the heat goes out, prevent buildup of carbon monoxide inside your home, safety tips for using kerosene heaters and symptoms of frostbite. [View Article](#)

USEUCOM

Africa: Cholera Outbreaks Continue

18 February – ProMed reported outbreaks of cholera in a number of African Nations. The outbreak of cholera in Mbuji-Mayi in the province of Kasai-Oriental in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) "remains alarming", and the disease continues to spread, according to the International Federation of the Red Cross. In Uganda, cholera has persisted in the 6 districts of Bundibugyo, Kasese, Hoima, Masindi and Nebbi. The district of Kampala also reported more cholera cases, but all of them originating from Wakiso district. The Ministry of Health is working

with the affected districts to control the situation. In Mozambique, cholera has claimed 33 lives since the first case of the present outbreak was diagnosed in the northern province of Niassa in September 2002. The outbreak is now affecting 5 provinces, namely Niassa, Cabo Delgado, and Nampula in the northern region, and Sofala and Manica in the center. Of these, Sofala is the worst hit, with 715 cases diagnosed. Health authorities are also paying special attention to the situation in Zambezia and Maputo provinces, where there has been a growing number of cases of acute diarrhea, raising fears of a cholera outbreak at any time. [View Report](#)

Algeria: Epidemic Affecting the Population of Mekhatria (North of Ain Defla)

18 February – ProMed reported one person died 13 Feb 2003 as a result of complications of an unknown illness currently threatening the lives of approximately 50 families in the municipality of Mekhatria, located north of the city of Ain Defla. No medical team has been sent to the scene to report the effects of this epidemic. Worried citizens have asked for a medical team as soon as possible. [View Report](#)

Andorra: Independent Outbreaks of Gastroenteritis at Hotels and a School

14 February – ProMed reported close to 300 students in one school and 173 tourists staying in 7 hotels in the Principality of Andorra have been affected by outbreaks of gastroenteritis that, according to local authorities, are not related to each other. The results of the microbiological tests of the food and water served in the school dining room are pending, but the minister has indicated that the probable cause of the outbreak is the fact that water pitchers were filled with hoses directly from the faucet. The government is also investigating the cause of the hotel outbreaks and has indicated that an anomaly in the system that supplies water to the hotels was detected, requiring a process of chlorination, which has not been carried out due to the heavy snowfall of the past few days. The suspicion that defective water supplies may be responsible for all of these independent outbreaks suggests that the etiologic agent may be an enterovirus, hepatitis A virus, or non-viral, rather than one of the noroviruses associated with sudden-onset viral gastroenteritis. [View Report](#)

Explosive Increase of Salmonella Java in Poultry in the Netherlands

February – Eurosurveillance Monthly reported *Salmonella enterica* Paratyphi B variant Java increased in poultry from less than 2% of all isolates before 1996 to 60% in 2002. Despite the fact that exposure to contaminated meat is high, human patients with Java infection are rare (0.3% of all isolates). However, 50% of the human isolates showed PFGE profiles identical to the poultry clone. Resistance to flumequin in *S. Java* increased from 3% between 1996-2000 to 19% in 2001, and 39% in 2002, while that of other serotypes in poultry remained at about 7%. *S. Java* is also fast becoming less sensitive to ciprofloxacin. *Salmonella enterica* Paratyphi B variation Java, or simply Java, began to increase alarmingly among chickens and in chicken products in the Netherlands in 2000. This causes gastro-enteritis in humans through the consumption of contaminated food, but it can also be invasive, producing typhus-like clinical symptoms, and lead to outbreaks. This article discusses the potential threat to public health associated with the increase of Java among poultry in the Netherlands. [View Article](#)

Gradual Increase in Influenza Activity in Europe

09 February - The Weekly Electronic Bulletin reported influenza activity in 20 European countries that are members of the European Influenza Surveillance Scheme (EISS). In week 06/2003, six networks reported regional activity (Belgium, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Spain and Switzerland) and eight networks reported sporadic activity to EISS in week 06/2003. Only five networks in Europe (Lithuania, the Netherlands, Northern Ireland, Poland and Slovenia) reported no influenza activity (i.e. the overall level of clinical activity was at baseline levels). The intensity of clinical morbidity was medium in four networks (the Czech Republic, France, Germany and Spain) and low in fifteen networks. Eight networks reported that clinical morbidity rates were increasing in week 06/2003. [View Article](#)

Mass Disease Triggers Inspections of Russia's North Caucasus Military Garrisons

12 February – ProMed reported prosecutors are inspecting all 28 garrisons of the North Caucasus military district following numerous cases of pneumonia at a local military training center in Rostov and the death of one soldier. At this point a total of 275 military have been taken ill: 87 have pneumonia and 89 others acute respiratory viral infection. 12 cadets are in intensive care, but out of danger. The inspections are expected to help find an answer to what caused the disease -- bad conditions, infected food, or sloppy medical service. [View Report](#)

Meningococcal Disease Outbreaks in USEUCOM Countries

12 February – ProMed reported on a number of Meningococcus outbreaks in Europe and Africa. At least 200 people have died in a meningitis epidemic in the Nigerian state of Zamfara in the past 3 days. Women, children, and middle-aged men are the groups most affected by the epidemic. During 1-26 Jan 2003, the Ministry of Health of Burkina Faso reported 980 cases and 196 deaths (case-fatality rate, 20 percent) in the country. On 26 Jan 2003, 4 districts, Batie, Kossodo, Manga, and Tenkodogo, were in the alert phase, although none had crossed the epidemic threshold. But in the week of 26 Jan-2 Feb 2003, the Ministry of Health of Burkina Faso reported 369 cases and 58 deaths in the country. Of the 53 districts in Burkina Faso, 4 districts reached the epidemic threshold: Batie, Leo, Sapone, and Manga (in alert phase but neighboring a district in the epidemic phase); and 7 districts are in the alert phase: Dande, Nanoro, Reo, Titao, Zabre, and Zorgho. Several people are reported dead in the Sawla-Kalba area of the Bole District in the Northern Region of Ghana following an outbreak of cerebrospinal meningitis (CSM) in the area. Since the beginning of January 2003 when the outbreak was reported, 3 people die almost every day, while many of the victims were hospitalized. A meningococcal meningitis outbreak is going on in Nebbi district of Uganda. The district reported 32 cases with one death in the week, compared to 9 cases reported in the previous week. A total of 18 other districts reported sporadic cases of suspected meningitis. Last week, the World Health Organisation (WHO) announced that millions of people across Africa are to be vaccinated against the new and old strains of meningitis. Cases of meningitis are declining fast in South Devon and Ireland as a new vaccine begins to take effect. The meningitis C vaccine [the newer conjugated serotype C vaccine - Mod.LL] was introduced just over 3 years ago. The vaccination program is now available to everyone under the age of 24, and is routinely given to babies. [View Report](#)

Uganda: Anthrax Hits Hoima

18 February – ProMed reported anthrax has hit Hoima district, killing 23 head of cattle in just one week. The highly infectious disease, which causes sudden death in animals and humans, has been reported in Buhanka and Kitoba sub-counties. Officials are worried that the disease will strike a family and kill everybody there. The district has petitioned the Commissioner for Veterinary Services, Dr. Kauta, for action. [View Report](#)

Uganda Tests Trial AIDS Vaccine

11 February - VOA News reported Ugandan AIDS researchers have started injecting volunteers with a test vaccine targeting the strain of the virus that ravages east Africa. The first phase of the trial involves about 50 uninfected volunteers. They are being given the vaccine to see whether it is safe and whether it creates immunity. Researchers say the vaccine cannot cause infection. It is the only one being tested on humans that is tailored to the virus common in east Africa, HIV subtype A. Uganda's government and the International Aids Vaccine Initiative are conducting the trial. Uganda has aggressively fought AIDS with commercial partnerships to lower the cost of medication and an education program that advocates safe sex. [View Article](#)

UK: Confirmed Case of Lassa fever

13 February - The Public Health Laboratory Service (PHLS) reported a case of Lassa fever in a soldier returning from West Africa. The man is being cared for at a high security infectious diseases unit at Coppelts Wood Hospital in London and is in stable condition. The PHLS has been working closely with other public health and infectious disease colleagues both at Coppelts Wood and also at Birmingham Heartlands hospital where the patient was originally admitted on arrival into the country. The diagnosis of Lassa fever was confirmed through laboratory tests carried out at the PHLS Central Public Health Laboratory. Lassa Fever is a viral hemorrhagic fever (VHF) and is caused by the Lassa virus, a virus from the Arenaviruses family. Lassa virus lives naturally in wild rodents in certain parts of the world, especially in West Africa, and can be transmitted to humans through exposure to the urine and feces of infected animals. No case of indigenously acquired infection has occurred outside West Africa. [View Article](#)

USCENTCOM

New Project to De-mine Tajikistan

18 February – BBC News reported Tajik authorities have welcomed new efforts to help them rid their country of an estimated 16,000 landmines and unexploded ordnance. The European Security Organisation, the OSCE, is preparing a project to de-mine Tajikistan. Last year alone, 60 Tajiks were reported injured or killed by mines. The mines are costing lives and having an economic impact. Tajikistan was the only Asian state to descend into civil war when the former Soviet Union collapsed. Although the fighting is over, the legacy of those years remains. Landmines and unexploded ordnance litter the mountains and plains where clashes took place. There are mines along the Tajik-Afghan border and also along the Tajik-Uzbek border. Local engineers say they have destroyed over 3,000 mines, but it is a massive task. [View Article](#)

Pakistan Floods Leave Many Dead

18 February – BBC News reported torrential rains in Pakistan followed by flash floods have killed more than 25 people since Sunday. More than 100 people have been injured and thousands have been made homeless as rains have continued in most parts of the country for a third day. The BBC's Zaffar Abbas in Islamabad says it is the season's heaviest downpour, ending the dry spell of the last five years. Bad weather has also caused deaths in India and Afghanistan. In the southern Pakistani city of Hyderabad a 30-year record has been broken with 105 millimeters of rain in 12 hours. The head of Pakistan's meteorology office, Qamaruz Zaman, says reports of heavy downpours have also been received from several other parts of the country. He says more rain is expected in the country's northern region in the next couple of days. While the rain has brought relief to farmers in most parts of the country, the continuous downpour has also caused widespread death and destruction. Most of the deaths and injuries have been in the provinces of Sindh and Balochistan. [View Article](#)

Pakistan's Victory Over Rinderpest

18 February - The UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) announced Pakistan has declared itself "provisionally free" from the deadly cattle plague rinderpest. For a country to declare itself provisionally free from rinderpest, it must prove that there has been no outbreak for at least two years, that it has stopped vaccination and that a surveillance system is in place, according to the rules overseen by the Office International des Epizooties in Paris. The last cases of rinderpest, a highly infectious viral disease that can destroy entire populations of cattle and buffaloes, were detected in October 2000 in a buffalo farm near Karachi, FAO said. "Recent massive movements of buffaloes and some cattle from Pakistan to Afghanistan, with some onward trade to Iran, have not been accompanied by rinderpest," Roeder said. "This adds strength to our understanding that Pakistan is now free." [View Article](#)

Race on To Halt Fresh Locust Plagues in Afghanistan

16 February – Relief Web reported emergency work to halt a potential locust plague which could threaten the bulk of poverty-stricken Afghanistan's wheat harvest is underway in the country's north, UN officials said. Andrew Harvey, a doctor working for the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), said as the onset of spring brings rising temperatures, millions of insect eggs lying dormant in the ground would begin to hatch. He said nine Afghan provinces, known collectively as the country's "bread basket", were under threat from Moroccan locusts that swarm through wheat crops destroying everything in their wake. "There were eggs laid last summer, these eggs survived the winter in the ground. As the spring comes and the ground warms, these eggs will hatch," Harvey said. "They simply march along the ground and just eat everything." Harvey said work was currently underway to identify and destroy fields of locust eggs that threaten an estimated 429,000 hectares of wheat crop in areas already hit by sustained drought and years of conflict. [View Article](#)

U.N. Begins Iraq Polio Drive

18 February – CNN reported despite the threat of a U.S.-led war, 14,000 health workers will spread out across Iraq next week to immunize more than four million children against polio, the U.N. Children's Fund said Tuesday. "No matter what the global situation, we cannot shrink from the ongoing work of reaching out to help them," said UNICEF Executive Director Carol Bellamy.

The polio program, led by the Iraqi Ministry of Health, will run February 23-27. UNICEF also is supporting a program to speed up vaccinations against measles, which kills more children than any other disease in Iraq. Although there was a major outbreak of polio in Iraq in 1999, increased vaccination has resulted in no cases since January 2000. The agency estimates that nearly 500,000 children under the age of five have not been vaccinated. [View Article](#)

USNORTHCOM

A New, Rapid Laboratory Test for Avian Influenza in the Live Bird Market

18 February - The Agricultural Research Service (ARS) reported a strain of avian influenza that has been endemic in live bird markets can now be detected quickly using a new laboratory test. ARS veterinary medical officer David Suarez developed the test to quickly identify birds infected with the avian influenza strain H7N2, which has been found among birds in northeastern U.S. markets since 1994. Live bird markets in New York City and other areas sell a broad variety of poultry. The laboratory test, called the real-time reverse transcriptase-polymerase chain reaction test (RT-PCR), uses a fluorescent probe and produces results in less than 3 hours. [View Article](#)

Increase in Coccidioidomycosis -- Arizona, 1998-2001

14 February - The CDC reported health-care providers should be aware that peak periods of coccidioidomycosis occur during the winter in Arizona. Arizona has experienced a substantial increase in incidence of coccidioidomycosis (Valley Fever), a fungal disease caused by inhalation of soil-based spores present in the southwestern US. Clinical manifestations range from an influenza-like illness, to severe pneumonia, and rarely, extrapulmonary disseminated disease. This investigation found that the increase is due to large outbreak seasons that occur in the winter (November- February). Exceptionally dry, hot, and dusty conditions are highly associated with the seasonal outbreaks in Arizona. These conditions have been recently observed in the region, suggesting this winter's outbreak season may be large. [View Article](#)

Leprosy, a Synonym for a Stigma, Returns

18 February – The New York Times reported in the United States, leprosy is usually regarded as a plague of the past, a disease relegated to biblical times or, perhaps, to poor and distant countries. But, in fact, as cases of leprosy have been declining worldwide in recent years, the infection has actually been on the rise in the United States. While there were some 900 recorded cases in the United States 40 years ago, today more than 7,000 people have leprosy, or Hansen's disease, as it is now called. "And those are the ones we know about," said Dr. William Levis, attending physician at Bellevue Hospital's Hansen's Disease Clinic. "There are probably many, many more." [View Article](#)

Newly Trained Radiologists Fare Best on Mammograms

18 February – CBS News reported a new study casts doubt on the belief that doctors who read the most mammograms each year are the most proficient. Instead, the research found the most recently trained radiologists did best in a test of cancer-detection accuracy. Other factors that

may give a more reliable mammogram: using a center that requires two radiologists to read each X-ray, and that performs more sophisticated breast-imaging procedures as well as routine mammograms, concludes the study published in the Journal of the National Cancer Institute. Indeed, the study is surprising and conflicts with other research, cautioned Dr. Joann Elmore of the University of Washington, in an accompanying editorial. Mammograms are considered the best tool available for spotting breast cancer early, when it's most treatable. But they're not perfect. One reason is that they require someone to decide that an often blurry spot on the X-ray is suspicious enough to biopsy — without subjecting too many women to unnecessary false alarms. Federal regulations require that U.S. radiologists read 480 mammograms a year for certification — although many read many more. [View Article](#)

Mexico: Epidemiological Alert in the State of Morelos

17 February – ProMed reported Antonio Campos Rendon, Health Secretary of the state of Morelos, announced that an epidemiological alert had been issued on Thu 13 Feb 2003 for the whole state and neighboring areas. The measure was taken after 2 cases of dengue hemorrhagic fever [DHF] were confirmed in the municipality of Jiutepec. During a press conference, the official stated that the cooperation of the federal health department has been requested to address this suspected outbreak, given that the contagion occurred in an unexpected manner, that is, during an atypical time of year. Since the detection of the 2 cases, approximately 17 persons have been examined and are currently under observation. Campos Rendon said that it is expected that this year there may be an increase in the number of cases, since specialized research indicates that every 5 years or so, time and the use of pesticides make the vector stronger. [View Report](#)

Michigan: Bovine Tuberculosis in Another NE Michigan Herd

17 February – ProMed reported state officials confirmed the presence of bovine tuberculosis (TB) in another northeast Michigan cattle herd. Dr. Joan Arnoldi, state Veterinarian and Animal Industry Division Director told the commission a cow from a small beef herd in Oscoda County tested positive for the infectious disease. Oscoda County was designated a high-risk area in July 2002. As a result, routine annual testing and testing for movement off the farm led to the discovery of TB in the herd. Hundreds of beef and dairy cattle in 5 northeast counties have been destroyed due to bovine TB outbreaks. The state said 77 animals from 29 herds have tested positive for the disease, which has severely restricted state ranchers' ability to export cattle and products to other states. TB has been detected in Alcona, Alpena, Emmet, Oscoda, and Presque Isle counties since testing began in 1995. [View Report](#)

USPACOM

Dhaka Mosquitoes Face Airforce

19 February – BBC News reported the Bangladesh Prime Minister, Khaleda Zia, has for the first time authorized the air force to be deployed in the fight against the mosquito menace in the capital, Dhaka. It is estimated there are around 20 million mosquitoes in the city. Their population has spiraled as the cash-strapped city corporation is unable to afford private contractors to carry out aerial spraying. Critics say the latest scheme is doomed to failure. The declaration of war by the Bangladesh Government on Dhaka's huge mosquito population is

likely to be welcomed by most of the city's hard-pressed residents. The insects are found everywhere, from the homes of the wealthiest industrialists to the lowliest slum dweller. Although Dhaka is not an area where malaria is common, mosquitoes are responsible for frequent outbreaks of dengue fever. [View Article](#)

Flooding Hits Jakarta

14 February – Relief Web reported about 40,000 residents were forced to evacuate their homes after 8-10 hours of continuous rain left floodwaters more than one-meter high in Indonesia's capital, Jakarta. There were no immediate reports of injuries or deaths from the city. Last year, flooding in Jakarta killed at least 34 people and caused widespread damage. Some 300,000 residents had to abandon their homes and schools were forced to close for weeks. Indonesian weather experts say that heavy rains would continue in Jakarta and other islands in the coming days because of a tropical storm in the region. [View Article](#)

Indonesia: Chikungunya Outbreaks in West Java

17 February – ProMed reported a mosquito-borne disease, locally known as chikungunya, has spread further in West Java, with more than 70 people in Cirebon regency infected since last week. Jarnadi Kusmayadi, a senior official with the city's health office said that the disease had attacked 66 people in the villages of Bojong Lor and Wetan, Klangeran sub-district, and 7 others in Sedong Kidul and Karangwuni villages, Sedong sub-district. Jarnadi said the local administration had been taking measures to prevent the disease from spreading to other villages in Cirebon and neighboring towns. The sub-district administrations have provided medicine to chikungunya sufferers in their respective regions to try and stop the disease from spreading, Jarnadi said. He acknowledged that chikungunya had spread quickly to a number of other villages, but could not say how many additional patients were infected, as his office was still collecting data. [View Report](#)

Influenza A (H5N1) in Hong Kong

19 February – ProMed reported results from two laboratories have confirmed the presence of an avian influenza virus in a child in Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (SAR). This is the same virus that has warranted the killing of infected chickens. Tests conducted in two samples from this single patient have identified the virus as the strain of influenza A (H5N1). In the current outbreak, a 9-year-old boy who traveled to Fujian Province (China) in January with his mother and his two sisters became ill on February 9 and was admitted to a Hong Kong hospital on February 12. He has recovered and is in a stable condition. Other members of his family presented with a similar illness. The child's sister and father have died. The boy's mother was ill but has recovered. The World Health Organization is collaborating closely with health authorities in Hong Kong SAR and China in investigating the outbreak. The WHO Global Influenza Surveillance network has been alerted. [View Report](#)

Lab Identifies Guangdong Pneumonia Virus

18 February – ProMed reported chlamydia has been identified as the cause of a pneumonia outbreak that hit 6 cities in south China's Guangdong province recently, experts said. Center experts said chlamydia could spread through secretions from the respiratory tract, aerosols, or exposure to patients and birds infected with the pneumonia. Guangdong provincial government

officials said that by 12 Feb, a total of 305 patients had been infected with the atypical pneumonia, with 5 deaths reported. They said the epidemic has been brought under control, with no cases reported since last Mon, 10 Feb. [View Report](#)

Philippines: Increase in Dengue Cases in Zamboanga City

17 February – ProMed reported in January 20 cases of dengue fever were registered in the city health officer, Rodel Agbulos' office. The majority of the victims were children aged 3 to 4. He also said that for the first 5 days of February 2003, there were already 16 dengue fever cases registered from Barangays Upper Calarian, Baliwasan, Talon-Talon, and Canelar. Agbulos ordered a search-and-destroy operation of mosquito breeding sites because fumigation kills only the adult mosquitoes and not the larvae, which after 28 days would hatch into another batch of the dengue virus-carrying mosquitoes. [View Report](#)

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Bolivia: Dengue Outbreak

17 February – ProMed reported in 5 epidemiological weeks, Bolivia has reported 1300 cases of dengue, including 751 in Cochabamba. Suspected and confirmed cases of dengue are increasing at the rate of 17 per day in Chapare, the highest rate in the country. In Santa Cruz the rate is 15 per day and in Pando 5 per day. The zone of Eterazama has so far reported most cases of dengue (80) in the Cochabamba region. Samples from 2 fatal cases will be sent to Peru for confirmation of dengue or yellow fever. [View Report](#)

Chile: Cholera Alert

15 February – ProMed reported Chilean health authorities have declared a state of alert after the detection of cholera bacteria in the central coastal area of the country. The Ministry stated that it has urged all health services to activate cholera control measures. There have been no reports of illness, but recommendations have been issued for hygiene precautions as well as for special care in the preparation of foods, particularly vegetables and seafood. The reports indicate that cholera bacteria were detected between the localities of Tejas Verdes and Lolloe, in the estuary of the Maipo River, 62 miles west of Santiago. Chile has not had cases of cholera over the past 5 years, after controlling an outbreak that originated in neighboring Peru that affected approximately 150 persons between 1991 and 1994. [View Report](#)

Ecuador (Manabi): Leptospirosis Outbreak

14 February – ProMed reported an outbreak of 50 cases of leptospirosis is of concern to health authorities in the province of Manabi Olmedo. The authorities fear an increase in cases because heavy rains have increased the existence of standing water pools. Cattle drivers wade through standing waters during their activities. Children play and bathe in urine-contaminated water pools and canals. A resident indicated that the local population was not aware that the bacteria could be transmitted through cattle. After the cases became known to authorities (on 10 Feb 2003), a containment area was established and patients are being treated. In 2002 in the province, 180 cases of leptospirosis were reported. [View Report](#)

Ecuador: Medical Alert Becomes Health Emergency

17 February - In less than a week, a medical alert became a health emergency due to detection of 14 cases of dengue hemorrhagic fever (DHF), a number equal to the total of cases registered in 2002. Decree number 137, signed on 11 Feb 2003 by Vice-President Alfredo Palacio, was justified both by the increased prevalence of malaria (1500 cases per province in January) and the fact that DHF was present not only in Guayas, but also in Los Rios and in Manabi. The government, the Solidarity Trust and the Ministry of Health project for the modernization of health services (MODERSA) would provide millions of dollars for the implementation of emergency measures. [View Report](#)

Panama: Outbreak of Bovine Paralytic Rabies

15 February – ProMed reported the animal health coordinators from the Ministry of Agricultural Development (MIDA) confirmed that the samples taken from the area of Palma Real tested positive for the fatal bovine paralytic rabies. Enrique Moreno, Director General of MIDA in the province of Bocas del Toro, indicated that prevention measures have been implemented so that the disease is not disseminated to other farms. Such measures include the vaccination of all domestic and farm animals in a 6-mile radius from the affected farm. In addition, the tuberculosis program has been suspended so that this more urgent outbreak may be controlled. Moreno commented that since this virus may also affect humans, the Ministry of Health is coordinating the follow-up of all persons involved in the care of these animals. A case of a dead dog has been reported and the results of tests for the virus are pending. Carlos Flores, head of the Epidemiology Department of the Social Security Administration, reported that immunizing people who are not in contact with the animals is not necessary; therefore, vaccines were requested only for the 48 workers who will vaccinate the animals. [View Report](#)

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/Hiupdate/>.

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