

**USACHPPM**  
**HEALTH INFORMATION OPERATIONS (HIO) UPDATE**

07 November 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 TOPICS

### Aspirin Withdrawal May Pose Risk to Coronary Patients

29 October – Patients with [coronary artery disease](#) who stop taking aspirin may be at risk for developing withdrawal-related coronary events, says a new study. The study found that previously stable coronary patients experienced coronary events, including unstable angina and myocardial infarction (heart attack), within one week of aspirin withdrawal. Researchers from University Hospital Pasteur reviewed the cases of 1,236 patients hospitalized for coronary syndromes to determine which patients were hospitalized due to treatment withdrawal. Of those hospitalized, 51 patients experienced acute coronary events, including unstable angina, stent thrombosis, and heart attacks, less than one week after aspirin withdrawal. Prior to hospitalization, patients had been taking aspirin for at least three months. Although patients had a history of heart attacks and stable angina, none had an unstable coronary event prior to aspirin withdrawal. Reasons for aspirin withdrawal included minor surgery, dental treatment, and non-compliance. Aspirin therapy is standard in patients with coronary artery disease because of its ability to thin the blood and reduce the risk of developing acute blockage in the coronary arteries. [View Article](#)

### Cats, Ferrets Can Carry SARS Virus

30 October – The Washington Post reported cats and ferrets can carry the [SARS](#) virus, raising the possibility that the pets could play a role in any new outbreaks of the deadly disease, researchers reported. Scientists infected cats and ferrets in laboratory experiments and showed that animals could pass the virus to others, researchers reported in the journal Nature. The cats remained healthy, but some of the ferrets got sick. While the findings suggest that the animals could play a role in spreading the virus, there is no evidence to date that the animals can pass the virus to people, the researchers stressed. "You cannot completely exclude that possibility. If you have close contact, it theoretically could be transmitted," Albert D.M.E. Osterhaus of the Erasmus Medical Center in Rotterdam, who led the research, said in a telephone interview. But it is unlikely "from an epidemiological point of view" that cats would play a significant role in spreading the disease. Cats and ferrets appear to excrete the virus for only a relatively short time, he said. [View Article](#)

### Cheap Test Monitors HIV Drugs

31 October – The Nature journal reported spots of dried blood could help to monitor the success of [HIV](#) drugs in the developing world, say disease researchers. A cheap test is vital now that anti-AIDS medications are increasingly available to poor nations, thanks to charitable subsidies and cheaper, generic versions. In a trial on 42 Zambian patients, Zumla's team has shown that cell counts obtained

using dried blood spots are largely comparable to those from hi-tech monitoring. In Western clinics, doctors probe fresh blood samples by mixing them with fluorescent antibodies that latch onto critical immune cells called CD4+ lymphocytes. The fluorescent cells are sorted and counted in a machine. The procedure costs up to \$40 a go. In Zumla's test, (cost, \$USD1.00) blood spots on filter paper are allowed to dry, then ferried to a central clinic without refrigeration. This is vital in developing countries, where many rural patients live far from urban clinics. Technicians analyze the blood spots using a simple, commercially available test involving antibodies that latch onto CD4+ lymphocytes. The bound antibodies cause a color change in a solution made from the dried blood: a deeper color equals a higher cell count. [View Article](#)

## Depression, Trauma Stress Linked to Physical Complaints

03 November – Doctor's Guide reported trauma victims who showed immediate signs of both [depression](#) and [post-traumatic stress disorder](#) are more likely to have psychosomatic ailments a year later, according to a new study. The combination of both afflictions increases the incidence of [somatic complaints](#), although this is not the case for either condition standing alone, say Douglas F. Zatzick, M.D., and colleagues from the University of Washington School of Medicine. The research findings appear in the November-December issue of the journal *Psychosomatics*. [View Report](#)

## Dietary Ginger May Work Against Cancer Growth

29 October – Science Daily reported the substance that gives ginger its flavor appears to inhibit the growth of human [colorectal cancer](#) cells, according to research at the University of Minnesota's Hormel Institute in Austin, Minn. Working with mice that lack an immune system, researchers found slower rates of cancer growth in mice given thrice-weekly feedings of [6]-gingerol--the main active component of ginger. The researchers tested [6]-gingerol's powers by feeding a half milligram to 20 mice three times a week before and after injecting human colorectal tumor cells into their flanks. Control mice were treated the same, except their food contained no [6]-gingerol. Tumors were allowed to grow until they reached a size of one cubic centimeter (0.06 cubic inch), after which the mice were euthanized. The first tumors appeared 15 days after the cells were injected. As of the 49th day following injection, all control mice had been euthanized due to tumor sizes of one cubic centimeter. In contrast, 12 of the 20 [6]-gingerol mice were still alive on that day, and their average tumor size was about 0.5 cubic centimeter, or half the maximum allowable size. [View Article](#)

## Drug Appears to Unclog Arteries - Study

04 November – Reuters reported an experimental drug developed by Esperion Therapeutics Inc. appears capable of clearing clogged arteries of the plaque that causes [heart attack](#) and [stroke](#), according to a study. The drug, ETC-216, is believed to mimic the effects of high-density lipoprotein, or HDL, the so-called "good" cholesterol believed to help strip fatty buildups from artery walls. In the study, which ran from November 2001 to March 2003, some of the test subjects received either low-dose or high-dose weekly injections of the drug for five weeks, while others were given an inert saline injection. The absolute reduction in fatty artery deposits was 4.2 percent among those who received the drug, while those who did not showed basically no change. It was the first time any drug had significantly "reversed" atherosclerosis, although drugs in earlier studies have reduced plaque by far less than 1 percent. [View Article](#)

## Heart Attack Warning Signs in Women are Studied

04 November – Newsday reported unusual fatigue and sleeplessness might be early warning signs of a [heart attack](#) in women, a study suggests. The study, published Monday in the American Heart

Association journal *Circulation*, surveyed 515 women who had heart attacks and found that 95 percent had such symptoms as much as a month before they were stricken. Chest pains can be early indicator of a heart attack, but 43 percent of the women in the study said they never experienced chest discomfort, said researcher Jean C. McSweeney. The study is the first time researchers have identified fatigue and sleeplessness as possible early warning signs of a heart attack in women. The researchers said they do not know whether the findings also apply to men, who tend to have somewhat different symptoms when a heart attack strikes. [View Article](#)

## Study: Forgive for Good Health

29 October – Reuters reported the results of a new study suggest that people with forgiving natures may have lower blood pressure than less forgiving folks. Hostility and anger have been linked with poor health and heart disease, but the relationship between forgiveness and health has not been studied as much. The study included 108 college students who were interviewed about specific situations in which they had felt betrayed by someone else. Researchers also interviewed the students to judge whether or not they had a generally forgiving nature. During and after the interviews, researchers monitored several vital signs in the students, including blood pressure and heart rate. Whether a student was a forgiving type was directly related to blood pressure. "Young adults who are less forgiving in general have higher blood pressure levels, even when resting, than more forgiving individuals," Lawler said. She noted that resting diastolic blood pressure, the lower number in a blood pressure reading, is a strong risk factor for high blood pressure. This suggests that having a more forgiving attitude toward others may be beneficial to health, Lawler said. [View Article](#)

## WHO Assails Wealthy Nations on Bioterror

05 November – The Washington Post reported a severe lack of funding for surveillance and front-line defenses has left the World Health Organization unprepared to deal with a global [bioterrorist](#) attack involving an agent such as [smallpox](#), according to a senior official who monitors disease outbreaks for the agency. The concerns were underscored by a recent exercise involving a simulated bioterrorist attack in which WHO observers unexpectedly had to be called in to broker breakdowns in coordination among the eight nations taking part. Several WHO officials also said they believe that U.S. bioterrorism defenses that mainly focus on domestic preparations could be ineffective against an attack involving a pathogen that emerges, or is released, in a remote part of the world and spreads internationally. More than 100 nations have no surveillance capabilities to detect such an outbreak, several WHO officials said. [View Article](#)

## Wound Healing Gel Wins Medical Futures Award

03 November – Eurekalert reported a bio-active gel developed by University College London scientists that is capable of healing wounds in half the time it takes currently, won the award for the Best Biotechnology Start-Up at the Medical Futures Innovation Awards in London. Nexagon works by speeding up the rate of wound closure and reducing inflammation, and the UCL team believes that the gel has a wide range of potential applications, including cosmetic surgery and chronic wounds, as well as a possible application in reducing the spread of damage following spinal cord injury. It is anticipated that the gel's potential impact on treatment and recovery times could reduce length of hospital stays and result in substantial savings to health services. [View Report](#)

# USEUCOM

## Armenia: Dysentery Outbreak in Capital

04 November – ProMed reported at least 118 people in Erevan, capital of Armenia have acquired [dysentery](#). 84 of them were children. According to ArmlInfo, it happened because of water pipe damage. Drinking water contamination has happened in the center of the city, but the exact place of the accident has not been identified. According to the chief physician of infectious diseases of Erevan, patients are being admitted from 2 districts of the city -- Central and Abakirskiy. The agency "Rosbalt" reports that the Ministry of Health of Armenia says the number of new cases of dysentery is dropping every day. [View Report](#)

## Mali: Tuberculosis Makes Comeback as Patients Fail to Seek Treatment

23 October – IRIN News reported [tuberculosis](#) is making a comeback in Mali, partly as a result of HIV/AIDS patients falling prey to the disease, but also because the respiratory disease is considered shameful and patients are reluctant to seek treatment, government officials said. Diallo Alima Nacko, coordinator of the National Campaign Against Tuberculosis, told PlusNews that the number of reported cases had increased 46 percent over the past seven years from 1,886 in 1995 to 2,757 in 2002. She pointed out that it was prevalent among the rising number of HIV/AIDS sufferers in Mali, where according to UNAIDS, about two percent of the adult population is infected with the virus. Tuberculosis was also considered socially shameful, so it was often difficult to track down sufferers and persuade them to come forward for treatment. [View Article](#)

## Nigeria to Test Polio Vaccines for HIV

30 October – ABC News reported Nigerian authorities said [polio vaccines](#) recently administered in a nationwide campaign will undergo laboratory testing to calm fears about [AIDS](#). Vice President Abubakar Atiku ordered testing on the vaccines for agents that could spread HIV or sterility, Nigeria's state television reported. An official in Atiku's office, speaking on condition of anonymity, confirmed the order. Health workers on Friday launched a drive to immunize 15 million African children at immediate risk of contracting polio an effort hampered in Nigeria by an assertion by Islamic radicals the vaccination drive is part of a U.S. plan to decimate the Muslim population by spreading AIDS and infertility. U.N. officials involved in the vaccination campaign say proof that the vaccines are safe has been repeatedly supplied. Caroline Akosile, a U.N. Children's Fund official said last week that the polio vaccines had been repeatedly certified in Nigeria and abroad. [View Article](#)

## Poliomyelitis in Chad

29 October – WHO reported two cases of paralytic [poliomyelitis](#) due to type 1 poliovirus, with onset of paralysis on August 2 and 27, 2003 have been confirmed in the Mayo-Kebbi and Logone Orientale provinces of southern Chad, near the Nigerian, Cameroon and Central African Republic borders. Chad has not reported polio cases since June 2000. The viruses detected in Chad are genetically close to viruses circulating in north-eastern Nigeria in 2002 and 2003. The cases in Chad follow the reporting of paralytic polio due to type 1 poliovirus from Burkina Faso, Togo and Ghana earlier this year. Viruses found in these three countries, which also had not reported wild poliovirus for more than two years, are genetically related to type 1 virus circulating in northern Nigeria and southern Niger in 2002 and 2003. Nigeria is one of the three remaining poliovirus reservoirs in the world and poses a high risk of re-infecting polio-free areas in the entire west and central Africa. [View Report](#)

## Russia, Baltic States Get Help with Health Problems

27 October – The Globe reported health ministers and top international officials from Canada and a number of mostly northern European countries formed a partnership to help Russia and the Baltic states tackle severe health problems such as [HIV](#) and [tuberculosis](#). The one-day meeting of health ministers from 15 countries, the World Health Organization and other groups created what the ministers called the “Northern Dimension Partnership in Public Health and Social Well-being.” In the partnership, richer western countries intend to help those to the east deal with health problems that remain more than a decade after the 1991 collapse of the Soviet Union. The partnership includes Canada, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Iceland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Russia, Spain and Sweden. [View Article](#)

## Russia: *Opisthorchis* in Irtysh and Ob Rivers

04 November – ProMed reported [Opisthorchis](#) species have been discovered by veterinary and sanitary physicians examining river water passing through the city of Murom in the Vladimir region. Opisthorchiasis in humans may affect the liver, pancreas, and gall bladder. In the past 6 years 23 human cases of opisthorchiasis have been registered in the region. If not treated in the early stages, opisthorchiasis may cause liver cirrhosis and increased risk of liver cancer, but may be silent in children. According to the state TV company "Vladimir," *Opisthorchis* is widespread in pools of the Irtysh and Ob rivers, from which people eat raw fish. In Tomsk, for example, 30 people out of every 100,000 are infected with *Opisthorchis*. In order to prevent infection with *Opisthorchis*, fish should be boiled for at least 20 minutes or should be salt-cured. [View Report](#)

## Tanzania: Six in Hospital over Suspected Anthrax

28 October – The Guardian reported six people, residents of Kinondoni and Mbezi Beach in Dar es Salaam, were admitted to Mwananyamala Hospital in the City, suffering from [anthrax](#). The Dar es Salaam City Doctor, Dr. Deo Mtasiwa, confirmed the existence of the illness, caused by eating infected meat. He traced the source of the disease to cows belonging to a resident of Mbezi Beach. He said those hospitalized have shown signs of having anthrax and had admitted having eaten the suspected meat. [View Article](#)

# USCENTCOM

## 11 Die after Grasshoppers Swarm in Sudan

01 November – Reuters reported eleven people died and thousands were taken to hospital with breathing difficulties after a swarm of grasshoppers invaded a town in central Sudan. The paper cited health authorities in Wad Medani, capital of the central al-Jezira state, as saying an epidemic of what they considered to be [asthma](#) had afflicted 1,685 people since October 22, all of whom had since been cured. The authorities also said 11 people had died from the breathing difficulties. "The appearance of the epidemic is linked to the unprecedented increase in the grasshopper insects," the daily quoted the health authorities as saying. The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization said on October 21 that swarms of locusts were threatening crops in northeastern Sudan, Mauritania and northern Niger, but it was not clear if it was the same species that was affecting Wad Medani in central Sudan. [View Article](#)

## Israel: Influenza A Virus Outbreaks Affecting Israel Defense Force Personnel

29 October – ProMed reported on three [Influenza](#) outbreaks affecting Israel defense force personnel. The first outbreak was identified on 19 Oct 2003, and as of 28 Oct 2003 has involved at least 12 cases of acute upper respiratory illness with fever over 37.7 deg C. The onset of illness in the index case was on 17 Oct 2003. All patients serve on the same military base. Nasopharyngeal swabs were collected from 3 patients early in the outbreak, and 2 were found to be positive for influenza A virus. Viral typing showed the virus to be an H3N2 strain. A second outbreak occurred concurrently on a separate military base located in a geographic area distant from that of outbreak 1. Outbreak 2 involved at least 38 patients, 29 of whom serve in a single company numbering some 200 soldiers. The onset of illness in the index case was on 15 Oct 2003, with most cases presenting at the base clinic over a 3-day period between 21 Oct 2003 to 23 Oct 2003. The clinical presentation was the same as in outbreak 1. 7 of 11 clinical samples collected in outbreak 4 were positive for influenza A. Viral typing showed the virus to be an H3N2 strain. Outbreak 3, identified in a small military outpost, was reported on 23 Oct 2003. Outbreak 3 involved 10 patients among a unit of approximately 50 soldiers. Epidemiologic investigation has traced the onset of illness in the index case to 15 Oct 2003. PCR performed on a nasopharyngeal swab collected from the hospitalized patient showed the same strain as in outbreaks 1 and 2. These are the 1st influenza outbreaks to be reported in Israel this season. To date, the Epidemiology Department of the Ministry of Health has reported no outbreaks of influenza in the civilian sector, although influenza A (H3N2) virus has been isolated from clinical specimens collected from sporadic cases of influenza-like illness in the cities of Elad and Jerusalem. [View report](#)

## Kyrgyzstan: 24 Cases of Typhoid Registered in Batken

31 October – ProMed reported according to the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan and Sobirjon Abdukarimov, who is a general director of Sanitary Epidemiological Surveillance center, as of Wed 29 Oct 2003, 24 cases of [typhoid](#) were registered in Batken oblast. 3 more people were hospitalized with the presumptive diagnosis of typhoid in Batken oblast hospital. The hospitalized were from 16 villages of Batken oblast, on the border with Tajikistan, where there has been a recent sharp increase in cases of typhoid. Epidemiologists are investigating the focus of the typhoid outbreak. [View Report](#)

## Tajikistan: Hepatitis A and B Reported in Kulob Area of Khatlon Province

29 October – ProMed reported physicians in the area are seriously concerned over an increase in the number of cases of [hepatitis B](#) in Kulob. 5 of 7 cases of hepatitis B have been reported in the Farkhor District, one case has been reported in Kulob, and one in the Muminobod District. In addition, since the beginning of 2003, 145 cases of [hepatitis A](#) have been recorded in the Kulob area of Khatlon province, 91 cases fewer than for the same period of 2002. The source also stated that, although the hepatitis A situation in Baljuvon, Shurobod, Khovaling, and Sovet Districts has been normalized, the worst-hit areas areas of the city are Kulob and the Districts of Danghara, Vose, and Muminobod. [View Report](#)

## USNORTHCOM

### Canada: Antigenic Identity of Influenza Virus Isolated in Edmonton

30 October – ProMed reported 4 of the 5 strains of [influenza](#) virus isolated in the Edmonton site of the Alberta Provincial Laboratory that were sent to the National Microbiology Laboratory in Winnipeg for

typing have come back as A/Panama/2007/99-like. A/Panama/2007/99-like is the H3N2 component of the 2002/2003 vaccine. Only one isolate was very difficult to grow to the high titres required for the hemagglutination-inhibition test. The H3N2 typing in that strain was performed by molecular assay, and it appears to be A/Panama/2007/99-like. [View Report](#)

## CDC Chief: Obesity Top Health Threat

29 October – CNN reported obesity is the No. 1 health threat in the United States today, the head of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said. While much of her time is spent preparing to fight anthrax, smallpox, and biological threats, and diseases like SARS and West Nile virus, the CDC's Dr. Julie Gerberding said Americans are much more likely to die from cancer, heart disease, and diabetes caused by smoking, eating too much and exercising too little. Unfortunately, poor diet and a lack of exercise have almost caught up with tobacco as being the leading cause of death in the United States," Gerberding on Tuesday told a meeting of the National Health Council, which groups companies and non-profit health advocacy organizations. She cited statistics that show 65 percent of U.S. adults are either [overweight or obese](#). In 2000, 38.8 million American adults were classified as obese, meaning their health is seriously at risk. [View Article](#)

## Doctors No Longer Back Anti-Poison Remedy

03 November – Reuters reported syrup of ipecac, long recommended as a vomit inducer for children who have swallowed poison, may not work, can be misused and no longer needs to be kept around the house, doctors said. Instead, the first step a parent or caregiver should take is to call a poison control center to determine if the child can be treated on the spot or needs a trip to the emergency room for a dose of stomach-emptying activated charcoal, they said. That advice is part of a new policy statement from the American Academy of Pediatrics, which represents child specialists in the United States and Canada. It reverses a recommendation going back to 1983 that a 1-ounce (30 ml) bottle of the plant root syrup be kept in the home for emergencies. The statement, published in the group's monthly journal "Pediatrics," said there have long been questions about how much poison the syrup removes and fears it may be used when not necessary. [View Article](#)

## Expert Offers Plan to Make Federal Biodefense Program More Coherent

29 October – CIDRAP News reported to bring coherence to a poorly coordinated national effort, the United States should focus its current [bioterrorism](#) preparedness program on four specific threat scenarios involving [anthrax](#), [smallpox](#), [botulinum toxin](#), and [foot-and-mouth disease \(FMD\)](#), according to a report by defense consultant and former Navy Secretary Richard Danzig. Danzig asserts that current biodefense efforts are muddled because the many agencies and groups involved lack a common understanding of the threat. To remedy that, he recommends that current planning focus on four specific hypothetical cases: an airborne anthrax attack, an airborne smallpox attack, dissemination of botulinum toxin in cold drinks, and dissemination of FMD among cattle, sheep, and pigs. Danzig takes a stab at launching this planning strategy himself by analyzing the anthrax and smallpox scenarios and making several specific recommendations pertaining to warning systems and medical countermeasures. For example, he calls for the improvement of warning systems so that airborne anthrax spores could be detected and an alert issued within 8 to 10 hours after their release. The report, titled "Catastrophic Bioterrorism—What Is to Be Done?" was published recently by the Center for Technology and National Security Policy at the National Defense University in Washington, DC. [View Article](#)

## Fall is Prime Lyme Disease Time

01 November – Health Day News reported an autumn tick and [Lyme disease](#) warning from the American Lyme Disease Foundation. "In the spring and summer months, humans and animals are threatened by the nymphal stage of black-legged (or deer) ticks infected with Lyme disease. But it's the adult stage of these ticks that's active from October through May -- any time the temperature rises above 30 degrees," David Weld, executive director of the foundation, says in a prepared statement. He notes the percentage of infected adult deer ticks at this time of year is twice that of spring and summer tick nymphs. In the northeast United States, that means that 50 percent to 60 percent of adult deer ticks may be infected with Lyme disease. "Adults, especially the females, are mighty hungry. Fall is the time of year they're looking for meals to feed their eggs. They're sitting on vegetation 10 inches to 2 feet off the ground, waiting for a good host to walk by. Deer and dogs are favorite targets," Weld says. The majority of Lyme disease cases in the United States have occurred in the northeast, mid-Atlantic and north-central states. But it's also an emerging threat to people and pets in many other areas of the country. [View Article](#)

## Florida: Palm Beach County Seeks State Help in Rabies Fight

04 November – The Sun-Sentinel reported with eastern Palm Beach County under a [rabies](#) alert since July and experiencing its highest number of cases since 1953, county Health Department Director Jean Malecki told Deputy State Health Officer Bonita J. Sorensen in a letter last week she needs "resources and technical assistance" for "a potential public health emergency." That could include guidance on whether to deploy matchbox-size baits made with fish meal to immunize and protect healthy wild animals. She painted a picture of the county's expanding rabies threat and said current controls are failing to contain the problem. She laid out the statistics: 34 rabid animals so far this year, 14 people exposed to rabies, seven of them encountering animals "in the furious stages" of rabies that included attacks on people. She noted the rabies-affected areas have grown in size and merged into the entire, heavily populated eastern portion of the county. Despite intensified rabies controls, the problem mounts, she said. The state is responding. Acting State Veterinarian Carina Blackmore is looking into possible sources of state or federal assistance, said Florida Health Department spokeswoman Lindsay Hodges. [View Article](#)

## Paratroopers at Risk for Head Injury: Study

03 November – Reuters reported Army soldiers who parachute are at increased risk of brain injury, according to a new study. Fortunately, in most cases the head injuries are mild, researchers report in the Journal of Trauma. But since moderate to severe brain injuries can have serious long-term consequences and the lasting effects of mild injuries is uncertain, the study's authors call for more research on brain injuries among paratroopers. The study included more than 2,300 active-duty soldiers stationed at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. About four out of five of the soldiers were paratroopers. Among the entire group, about 23 percent of the soldiers reported that they had experienced a traumatic brain injury while serving in the Army. Most of the injuries were mild, with only two percent of soldiers reporting that they had lost consciousness for more than 20 minutes. And only 12 percent to 14 percent of the soldiers had been hospitalized for their injuries. [View Article](#)

## PA: Hepatitis Outbreak among Restaurant Patrons

05 November – The Post-Gazette reported 34 patrons of a Chi-Chi's restaurant in the Beaver Valley Mall in Center have lab-confirmed cases of [hepatitis A](#). The department advised people who had eaten at the Beaver County restaurant from Oct. 22 to Sunday to get an injection of immune globulin

as a precaution. According to spokeswoman Jessica Seiders, 30 of the patients are from Pennsylvania, three are from Ohio and one is from West Virginia. [View Report](#)

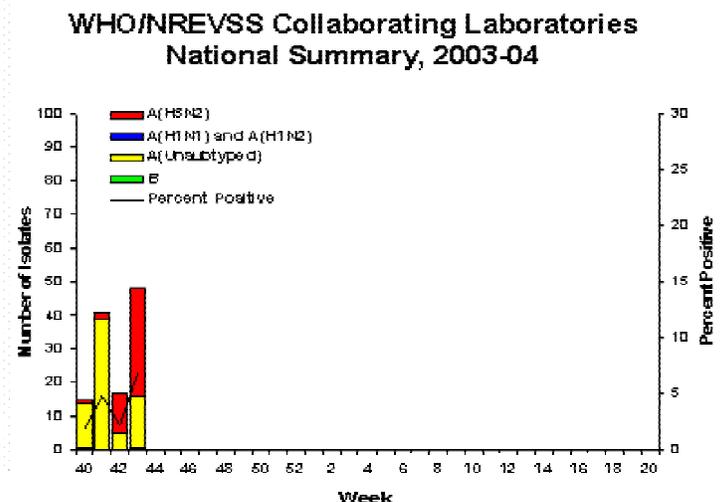
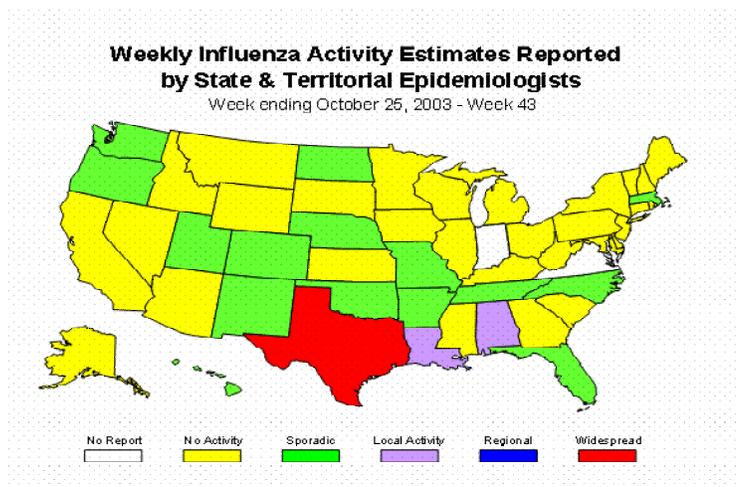
## Rules to Stop Monkeypox Spread in U.S. Finalized

03 November – Reuters reported U.S. health officials finalized rules to prevent future outbreaks of monkeypox by strictly limiting the transportation of certain animals, including prairie dogs and rodents from Africa. [Monkeypox](#) is a disease related to [smallpox](#) but much less deadly. It is mostly seen in central and western Africa but there was an outbreak earlier this year in the United States that was traced to a shipment from Ghana. The Food and Drug Administration and Centers for Disease Control in June banned the import and transportation of prairie dogs, and several rodents from Africa, including tree squirrels, rope squirrels, dormice, Gambian pouched rats, brush-tailed porcupines, and striped mice. The new rules further restrict the movement of the animals within U.S. states and across state lines, as well as bar the capture and distribution of the animals to prevent further transmission of the disease. The rules did provide for some exceptions to these restrictions, mainly for research purposes or if someone owned a prairie dog and was moving. A health official said that the agency could ease the movement restrictions if no more infection cases are detected for six straight months. The last known infected animal was seen July 20. [View Report](#)

## USA: Risk of Resurgence of Measles

04 November – ProMed reported as the United Kingdom braces for an impending [measles](#) outbreak this winter due to low vaccination rates, United States health experts say this raises concerns the disease could spread to the US, particularly as immunization rates in some states have fallen to dangerously low levels. The drop in measles vaccinations also heightens fears of outbreaks of 2 other diseases: rubella and mumps. This is because the measles vaccine generally is administered in conjunction with mumps and rubella vaccines in a single shot known as MMR. So a drop in measles protection is a drop in rubella and mumps protection as well. In addition to the expected UK measles rise, health officials also are worried about the ongoing outbreak in the Marshall Islands and recent epidemics in Asia and Italy. The possible importation of measles is concerning because vaccination rates in some states and cities have dropped to levels that would allow an outbreak of measles to be sustained if a case gets into the community. In an effort to reduce the threat posed to the US, CDC officials are collaborating with international authorities to keep measles in check in other countries as well as making efforts to keep vaccination rates high domestically. [View Report](#)

## USA: Weekly Influenza Activity



# USPACOM

## China: Outbreak of Hepatitis A in Guangdong Province

04 November – ProMed reported in recent days there has been an outbreak of [hepatitis A](#) in the town of Gongping, Haifeng County, Guangdong Province. The local government says that containment measures undertaken by all levels of administration in the province have controlled the outbreak and it has not spread to nearby rural areas. Currently, the township has definitively diagnosed 29 cases of hepatitis A with 31 other suspected cases. The infection rate among youth is reported to be relatively high in this outbreak, accounting for 23 cases. After initial analysis, experts suspect the source of infection is a cold drink known as "Qingwa Luan" ("frog egg.") [View Report](#)

## China Quarantined Too Many in SARS Outbreak -Study

30 October – Reuters reported China unnecessarily quarantined thousands of its residents earlier this year in an effort to contain an outbreak of the deadly [SARS](#) virus, according to a study by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Only about one-third of the estimated 30,000 people quarantined during an outbreak of the deadly respiratory disease in the Chinese capital Beijing needed to be isolated, according to the study by the Chinese equivalent of the CDC. "Focusing only on persons who had contact with an actively ill SARS patient would have reduced the number of persons quarantined by approximately 64 percent without compromising its effectiveness," the study's authors said. The findings dovetail with the current U.S. approach to containing SARS, which recommends quarantining only those who develop symptoms of the illness after direct contact with an infected person. [View Article](#)

## Dengue Fever Update for India

30 October – ProMed reported from 1 Jun to 28 Oct 2003, 1,723 laboratory confirmed cases of [dengue fever](#) have been reported in Delhi and surrounding areas. 4 deaths among laboratory confirmed cases have been reported on 28 Oct 2003. Additional information is being sought on possible cases of dengue hemorrhagic fever. Circulating dengue virus serotypes DEN-3 and 2 have been reported to be associated with this outbreak. WHO is working with the Ministry of Health, India to strengthen prevention and control activities. In Maharastra state this year as many as 1,398 cases of dengue fever have been reported with a death toll of 18. Pune has recorded the highest dengue suspected cases with as many as 376 dengue attacks of which 7 patients failed to respond to the medicines. Cases of dengue have been predominantly detected in Thane, Akola, Yavatmal, Nashik, Latur, Aurangabad, Solapur, & Sangli. [View Report](#)

## Emerging Infectious Diseases in Mongolia

01 November – The CDC reported since 1990, Mongolia's health system has been in transition. Impressive gains have been accomplished through a national immunization program, which was instituted in 1991. Nevertheless, the country continues to confront four major chronic infections: [hepatitis B and C](#), [brucellosis](#), [tuberculosis](#), and [sexually transmitted diseases \(STDs\)](#). As of 2001, only two cases of HIV infections had been detected in Mongolia, but concern grows that the rate will increase along with the rising rates of STDs and increase in tourism. Other infectious diseases of importance in Mongolia include [echinococcus](#), [plague](#), [tularemia](#), [anthrax](#), [foot-and-mouth disease \(FMD\)](#), and [rabies](#). [View Article](#)

## Japan Confirms Ninth Mad Cow Case, Second in a Month

04 November – Reuters reported Japan said it had confirmed another case of [mad cow disease](#), the ninth since the brain-wasting illness was discovered in the country in September 2001 and the second in less than a month. Health Ministry officials said the disease, formally known as bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), was found in a 21-month-old Holstein bull in Hiroshima prefecture, western Japan. In early October, officials said an atypical case of BSE had been found in a 23-month-old Holstein bull. That case was the first since January. The new case involves an animal born in January 2002 in Hyogo prefecture, western Japan, and sent to Hiroshima a month later. They said the ninth case had a similar form to the first seven cases. It was the second case to be confirmed in Japan in an animal less than two years old, as the disease has a long incubation period of two to eight years. Although BSE has been discovered before in cows of under two years, many scientists believe young animals and boneless cuts are unlikely to contain the abnormal proteins. The first seven cows confirmed with the disease in Japan were all more than five years old. [View Article](#)

## Report: India Dumping Ground for Mercury

04 November – Reuters reported India, already saddled with high air and water pollution, is fast becoming the world's dumping ground for toxic [mercury](#), a leading environmental group said. While the developed world is phasing out mercury, Indian imports of recycled mercury and mercury compounds used mainly by the electrical industry have increased almost six fold in the past seven years. India, the world's largest recycler, is increasingly being confronted by the health risks of taking global waste -- from plastics to computer gear to steel -- and the dangerous ways it is recycled, often releasing poisons and heavy metals. Most of the mercury comes in recycled form from Spain, Britain, Russia, Italy and the United States because India lacks regulations. Activists say large amounts of mercury are already found in Indian groundwater. They say tests have also uncovered lethal pesticides, poisons, antibiotics, heavy metals, feces and adulterations such as iron filings and cow dung in the food and water consumed in the country. Some government tests have found at least 50 percent of food and drinks on sale is adulterated in one way or another and state and federal officials acknowledge that contamination is a public health crisis. But laws and, perhaps more importantly, policing remain lax. [View Article](#)

## South Australia Health Worried about Measles Outbreak

28 October – ABC News Online reported South Australian Health authorities are concerned that [measles](#) cases are continuing to multiply. There have now been 22 reported cases of the potentially fatal and highly contagious disease since it was brought into Adelaide by a traveler from New Zealand in August. The latest case involves a nine-month-old girl who was attending child care. Communicable diseases director Dr Rod Givney says. Measles is beginning to affect the children of 20 to 30 year olds, many of whom were not fully vaccinated as a result of a policy at the time of only partial immunization. Dr. Givney says the current measles outbreak is worsening and its highly infectious nature makes it difficult to manage through the tracking down and treating of contacts. [View Article](#)

# USSOUTHCOM

## Brazil to Offer Massive, Free AIDS Testing

30 October – Reuters reported Brazil will launch a massive, free [HIV](#) testing program to find and hopefully help hundreds of thousands of people unaware they have the virus, the health minister said, in the latest big step by an AIDS program that is a model for the developing world. The tests are meant to identify people who are HIV positive, many of whom do not know or ignore the fact that they have the virus that causes AIDS, Health Minister Humberto Costa said. "Some 400,000 people in Brazil don't know about their situation," said Costa. "As well as not treating themselves, they put other people's health at risk." Brazil is believed to have 600,000 people who have the AIDS virus. [View Article](#)

## USSOUTHCOM Dengue Fever Update

30 October – ProMed reported despite the efforts of the health authorities, new cases of [dengue fever](#) continue to be detected in El Salvador. According to sources from the ministry of health, during the past week, 518 new cases of dengue fever and 9 cases of dengue hemorrhagic fever were reported. The ministry's statistics indicate that, to date, 5564 suspected cases have been recorded, of which 2243 cases of classic dengue fever and 102 cases of dengue hemorrhagic fever have been confirmed; 6 children have died, and 10 more are hospitalized in the intensive care unit of the Benjamin Bloom Children's Hospital. In addition, as of 18 Oct 2003, regional health authorities had reported 12,885 cases of classic dengue fever in Costa Rica, 2500 in Honduras, 832 in Nicaragua, 350 in Panama, and 171 in Guatemala. [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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