

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

06 February 2004

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

### Antidepressant Use by Moms-To-Be May Affect Baby

02 February – Reuters reported certain antidepressants taken by mothers during pregnancy can lead to disturbed behavior in their offspring, according to the results of a small study. Antidepressants like Prozac or Paxil, known as selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs), have previously been shown not to cause birth defects, the authors explain in the medical journal Pediatrics. However, only a few studies have looked at the potential neurobehavioral effects of these medications on newborns. Dr. Philip Sanford Zeskind and Laura E. Stephens from the Carolinas Medical Center in Charlotte, North Carolina, examined the neurobehavior of 34 newborn infants. Seventeen of the mothers used SSRIs during pregnancy, while the other 17 mothers did not. SSRI-exposed infants had significantly more tremors. These infants also had fewer changes in behavioral state and had fewer different behavioral states during the hour-long observation than did nonexposed infants, the authors report. Infants of mothers who took SSRIs also had more active sleep, which was characterized by fewer contiguous periods of REM sleep that were longer-lasting and by more spontaneous startles or arousals, compared with nonexposed infants. "At this point," the investigators say, "it is unclear whether these outcomes are transient or provide the basis for subsequent neurobehavioral problems that may be detected with sensitive measures of neurobehavioral development at a later age." [View Article](#)

### Eye Disease Blamed for Sleepiness

02 February – Ivanhoe Newswire reported researchers say people who have optic nerve damage are at increased risk for sleep disorder. The study, published in this month's Ophthalmology, shows inner retinal and optic nerve disease could be behind pathological sleepiness in some individuals. The study involved 25 people with visual impairment. The participants had their sleep-wakefulness cycles followed for 14 days, and their results were compared with those of 12 young subjects with normal sight. Researchers discovered those with optic nerve disease were 20-times more likely to have daytime sleepiness than those with normal sight. Additionally, the people with optic nerve damage were nine-times more likely to suffer sleepiness than even those were blind due to non-optic nerve disease. [View Article](#)

### Low Risk of Vaccinia Transfer after Smallpox Immunization

29 January – Science Blog reported the threat of bioterrorism has led to the recommendation to vaccinate health care workers and other first responders, but some worry about the side effects of [smallpox](#) vaccination, which can harm children, pregnant women and people with immune disorders or certain skin conditions. According to a new study, people vaccinated against smallpox pose a low risk of accidentally inoculating others if they follow proper bandaging and hand-washing procedures. [View Article](#)

## New Marker May Help Identify Heart Risks

27 January – MSNBC News reported doctors might be able to gauge heart patients' risk of death or [heart attack](#) by measuring levels of a growth factor protein in their blood, a German study suggests. The report adds the protein to a growing list of biomarkers for inflammation that could help predict a person's risk of heart disease and can be detected through a simple blood test. The newly recognized marker, called placental growth factor protein, or PIGF, has been shown to contribute to inflammation in the arteries. Animal research has shown that blocking its effects suppresses growth of fatty plaques in the arteries. The latest findings, which appear in Wednesday's Journal of the American Medical Association, suggest that testing for PIGF might be more effective at predicting patients' risks than measuring some other inflammation markers, including C-reactive protein, or CRP. A study involved 1,173 patients, mostly men, with either severe chest pain or mild heart attacks. Blood tests showed high PIGF levels in more than 300 patients. Those patients were about three times more likely than those with low levels to die or have heart attacks within 30 days of their first symptoms. [View Article](#)

## Prevention: Harder Water and Longer Lives

27 January – The New York Times reported drinking water rich in minerals, or hard water, may play a role in reducing heart disease, Finnish researchers say. The findings came as the researchers were looking for an explanation for longstanding differences in heart attack rates in different regions of Finland. The study, led by Dr. Anne Kousa of the Geological Survey of Finland, appears in The Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health. The study looked at heart attacks that occurred in almost 18,946 men, ages 35 to 74, in three different years. The researchers correlated the incidence of [heart attack](#) with the level of water hardness in their communities. The study found that the degree of water hardness as measured by mineral presence correlated directly with a lowered risk of heart attacks. They also found that the presence of fluoride in the water might also reduce the risk, but that the presence of copper and iron might increase it. [View Article](#)

## Researchers Discover Virus Can Naturally Target and Kill Tumors

30 January – Science Blog reported mosquitoes are notorious for their ability to spread disease, but in some cases they may prove to be a boon instead of a bane. In a recent study, researchers at New York University School of Medicine found that one mosquito-borne virus automatically targets and kills tumor cells in mice. Most importantly, it does so while leaving healthy cells alone, a feature that may make it a promising treatment for some forms of cancer. According to the study, published in the January 2004 issue of the journal Nature Biotechnology, the Sindbis virus is effective at killing tumors in mice at every location tested--whether the growths occur under the skin, in the pancreas, in the main body cavity, or in the lungs. The amount of time and the number of injections needed to cause tumor remission varied, depending on the type of cancer, but in general mice were given injections of the virus daily. Within a month to two months later, many tumors disappeared completely. [View Article](#)

## Researchers identify a SARS antibody

03 February – The Boston Globe reported researchers at the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute in Boston announced yesterday that they have identified a human antibody that powerfully blocks infection by the [SARS](#) virus. The discovery could lead to a new treatment for the potentially deadly disease that could be tested on humans in as little as a year. Isolation of the 80R antibody, one of the proteins in the bloodstream that fights off bacteria and viruses, continues an extraordinary run of breakthroughs in understanding and combating a virus blamed for killing nearly 800 people last year, mainly in Asia. In less than a year, researchers worldwide have completed SARS's genetic blueprint and identified potential ways to prevent or treat it. Researchers found that 80R prevented the virus from entering

healthy cells in the first place, by gumming up the machinery SARS uses to penetrate cell walls. A lab at the Dana-Farber Institute already started animal testing of 80R's effectiveness, and it is predicted it will take up to a year to settle basic questions such as whether 80R works as a vaccine or only as after-the-fact treatment. [View Report](#)

## Strontium Drug Slows Osteoporosis

28 January – Reuters reported a drug based on the element strontium slows the development of brittle bone disease and cuts the risk of spine fractures in half among high-risk patients, researchers said. The drug, strontium ranelate, appears to have a unique way of slowing the natural process of bone destruction and rejuvenating the process of bone rebuilding. In [osteoporosis](#), the destruction process is faster than the renewal process, which in turn weakens the bones and often leads to breaks. A new study of 1,649 women who showed clear evidence of osteoporosis found strontium ranelate reduced the risk of spine fractures by 49 percent the first year and by 41 percent over a three-year period. The study was published in this week's edition of The New England Journal of Medicine, [View Article](#)

## West 'Facing Asbestos Epidemic'

30 January – BBC News reported the UK and many other developed countries are on the verge of an [asbestos](#) disease epidemic, say doctors. Writing in the British Medical Journal, they said 100,000 people who are alive now will die from mesothelioma. The cancer, which can take as long as 50 years to develop, is caused by the inhalation of asbestos. The disease claims the lives of 1,800 people in the UK each year. However, doctors believe death rates will rocket in the years ahead. Thousands of people were exposed to asbestos in the 1950s, 60s and 70s. The material was widely used as an insulator in buildings and industry until its health risks became known. Builders, plumbers and shipyard workers are most likely to have been exposed to it. [View Article](#)

# Focus on Epidemiology

## Scientists Track SARS' Genetic Evolution

30 January – CNN News reported Chinese scientists have traced how the [SARS](#) virus genetically evolved during last year's massive outbreak, fine-tuning itself in ways that may have spurred the spread of the deadly respiratory illness. The work provides more evidence that SARS jumps from animals to humans, possibly frequently. And it suggests that prompt control of new cases is crucial, before viral strains have much time to adapt to people. "If there's any lesson from this, it's stop it early before they know how to spread in humans," said evolution specialist Chung-I Wu of the University of Chicago, who helped China's SARS Epidemiology Consortium analyze the findings. The consortium's research, which genetically fingerprinted virus samples from several dozen infected people and animals from China and Hong Kong, is being published in Friday's edition of the journal Science. [View Article](#)

## DoD-GEIS Update

DoD-GEIS (<http://www.geis.ha.osd.mil>) is closely monitoring influenza worldwide and assisting global partners in dealing with the avian influenza outbreak in Asia, which could produce a pandemic influenza strain. Avian influenza A(H5N1) is widespread and officially reported in many Asian countries (<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/avian/index.htm>). In response to WHO and Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network (GOARN) requests for assistance, DoD-GEIS is sending to Asia a representative from its Central Hub at WRAIR who has expertise in veterinary disease surveillance (<http://www.geis.ha.osd.mil>). Naval Medical Research Unit

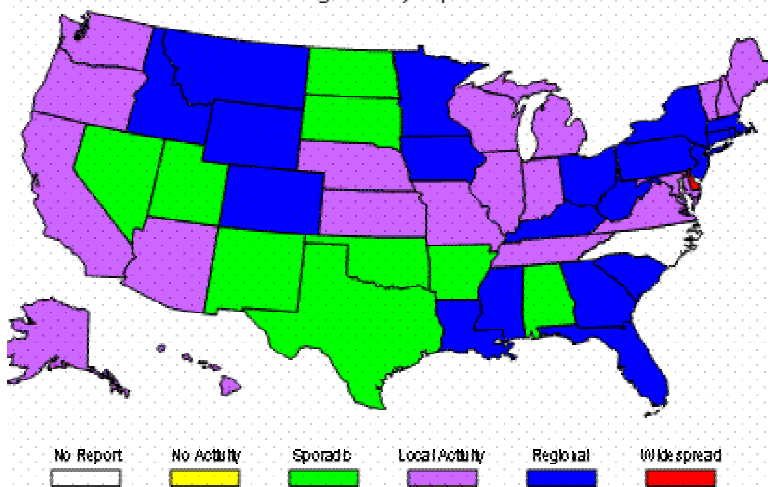
2, Jakarta, Indonesia, has a team in Vietnam, by invitation from Vietnam's Pasteur Institute, to assist that Nation in its response. AFRIMS is also providing assistance. Influenza activity has diminished in the US (<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly>) but the Asian avian outbreak, with human deaths, demands continuing laboratory surveillance of US forces and other DoD beneficiaries, especially those who may have contact with the geographic area of concern or people who have traveled from that area (<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/avian/index.htm>). SARS in Asia is a complicating factor (<http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/sars/han/sarsfluhanjan1404.htm>). There is potential for the clinical presentations and travel histories of persons with either SARS or influenza A(H5N1) to overlap. Clinicians should follow their respective service's policies for influenza (<http://www.geis.ha.osd.mil/GEIS/SurveillanceActivities/Influenza/fluPolicy03to04.asp>). Laboratories should immediately notify The DoD Worldwide, Laboratory-based, Influenza Surveillance Program, a DoD-GEIS initiative, if any influenza A virus cannot be subtyped. The point of contact is the Virology Laboratory, Air Force Institute for Operation Health, Brooks City-Base, TX, (Telephone 210-536-1679/8383, Email [influenza@brooks.af.mil](mailto:influenza@brooks.af.mil), <https://gumbo.brooks.af.mil/pestilence/Influenza/>). This program is a critical component of the WHO-CDC global network to detect respiratory disease outbreaks, identify emerging influenza viruses and capture candidate viruses for possible inclusion in the next year's vaccine. The experts operating this DoD initiative are prepared to assist Military Health System laboratorians, preventive medicine personnel and clinicians globally to initiate laboratory-based surveillance for respiratory diseases or to improve their current efforts.

## Influenza Update

### CDC Update

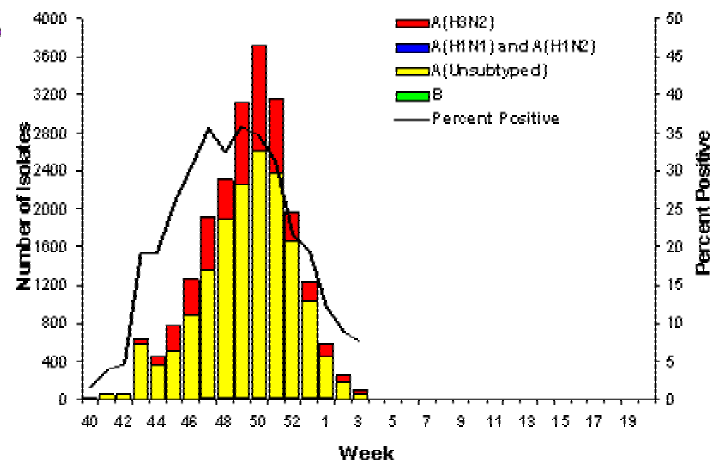
#### Weekly Influenza Activity Estimates Reported by State & Territorial Epidemiologists

Week ending January 24, 2004 - Week 3



[View Source](#)

### WHO/NREVSS Collaborating Laboratories National Summary, 2003-04



### WHO Update

To date, Thailand has reported 4 laboratory confirmed cases of H5N1 in humans. All have died. The number of laboratory confirmed H5N1 cases in Viet Nam has increased to 13. Of these, nine have died, two remain hospitalized, and two have recovered. WHO has investigated a cluster of respiratory illness in members of a family from Thai Binh province, Viet Nam. The cluster involves a 31-year-old man, his two sisters, aged 23 and 30 years, and his 28-year-old wife. Both the man and his two sisters have died. The wife has fully recovered. Laboratory tests received over the weekend have confirmed H5N1 infection in the sisters. Neither the man nor his wife was tested. In the absence of evidence of direct exposure to poultry in these two cases, WHO epidemiologists are considering various alternative explanations. Both sisters are known to have provided health care for their brother, prior to his hospitalization, and would thus have had opportunities for close exposure. Direct human-to-human transmission following this close exposure is thus one possible explanation. However, contact with an infected bird, or some other environmental source of the virus, is another possible route of infection that has not been ruled out. Outbreaks of H5N1 in poultry are widespread in Viet Nam. Large amounts of the virus are

excreted in bird droppings, and can survive for some time in the environment. WHO stresses the need to continue to investigate each human case of H5N1 in order to identify the source of infection. Authorities in Viet Nam have reported that 52 of the country's 64 provinces have now detected outbreaks of highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza in poultry. In China, confirmed or suspected outbreaks of highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza have been reported at poultry farms in 12 of the country's 31 provinces, autonomous regions, and municipalities. The outbreak of suspected avian influenza in poultry, previously announced by Indonesian authorities, has now been confirmed as caused by the H5N1 strain. To date, outbreaks in poultry caused by the H5N1 strain have been confirmed in the following countries (listed in order of reporting):

Republic of Korea (12 December 2003 – first outbreak of this disease ever reported)

Viet Nam (8 January 2004 – first outbreak of this disease ever reported)

Japan (12 January 2004 – first outbreak of this disease since 1925)

Thailand (23 January 2004 – first outbreak of this disease ever reported)

Cambodia (24 January 2004)

China (27 January 2004)

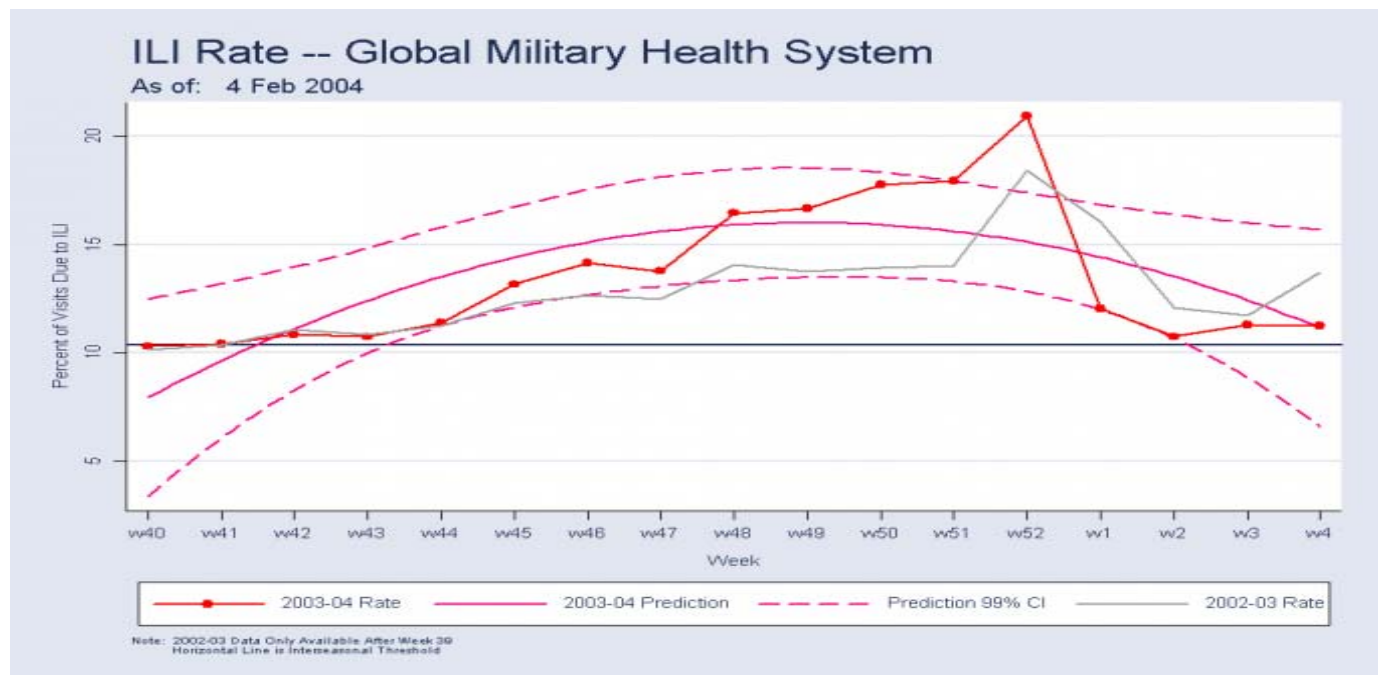
Laos (27 January 2004 – H5 confirmed, testing for H5N1 under way)

Indonesia (2 February 2004 – first outbreak of this disease ever reported)

Two other areas (Taiwan, China and Pakistan) have reported outbreaks of avian influenza in poultry. However, tests have confirmed that these outbreaks are not caused by the H5N1 strain. In addition, authorities in Hong Kong SAR have reported H5N1 in a single peregrine falcon found dead on 19 January. In Hong Kong, monitoring of diseases in both wild and domestic birds is systematic and efficient. No other cases of H5N1 infection have been detected. [View Source](#)

#### DoD Global Influenza and Other Respiratory Viral Pathogens Surveillance Weekly Update Week 4 (25 Jan – 31 Jan)

Since the start of the influenza surveillance season (Week 40: 28 Sep to 4 Oct 03), the Epidemiological Surveillance Division (AFIOH/SDE) has received 2541 throat swab specimens as part of the influenza surveillance program. 2,433 (96%) of the specimens have been processed to date. Of those processed, 887 (36%) were positive for Influenza A virus and 4 were positive for Influenza B virus.



[View Source](#)

## Other Reports

29 January – Health Day News reported the wave of [influenza](#) that had been characterized last month as an epidemic across the United States has waned considerably, with only one state now reporting significant case numbers. Only Delaware reported widespread flu activity -- with "widespread" being defined as confirmed flu cases in at least half the regions of a state -- for the week ending Jan. 24, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports in the Jan. 30 issue of its publication Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. That's down from 38 states reporting widespread flu activity three weeks ago, and 45 states in mid-December. In its weekly report, the CDC also said it received reports of 121 deaths associated with flu among children under 18 -- 72 of them under 5 years old and 33 under 2. Of these, the report said, 26 children, or about 21 percent, had had medical conditions that put them at increased risk for complications from the flu. [View Article](#) [CDC Flu Web Site](#)

## USEUCOM

### Cameroon: Cholera Outbreak in Douala

29 January – AllAfrica.com reported official sources in the Ministry of Public Health have confirmed the [cholera](#) outbreak in the city of Douala. "Cameroon Tribune" reporter in Douala says eight out of 96 persons infected have already died. The reporter says the disease which manifests in the form of severe diarrhea is highly concentrated in the Bepanda neighborhood. [View Article](#)

### Mozambique Cholera Outbreak Infects 2,900

28 January – The Washington Post reported a [cholera](#) outbreak has hospitalized more than 2,900 people and killed 26 in this impoverished southern African country, health officials said. Maputo's Mavalane General Hospital received 218 new cases in one day alone, the highest number of admissions since the outbreak started in December, City Health Director Olivia Ferreira said. The World Health Organization, the Mozambican Health Ministry and others are planning to vaccinate 50,000 people this month in Beira, the second-largest city. [View Article](#)

### Russia: Anthrax in Pigs

30 January – ProMed reported [Anthrax](#) was discovered in a backyard in the City of Sengiley in Ulyanovsk. This information was provided by the Ministry of Emergency Situations of the Privoljsko-Uralsk regional center. The dangerous disease bacilli were found on Wednesday in a 7-month-old pig. 4 people who were in contact with the pig were hospitalized. The data on the animal infection was confirmed by the veterinary administration of Ulyanovsk oblast. [View Report](#)

### Russia: Cases of Rabies Increase

01 February – ProMed reported [Rabies](#) is spreading intensively in Chelyabinskaya oblast among wild foxes. During the last 3 weeks alone, rabid foxes were discovered in 7 populated locations. During the last year, rabies was detected in 30 localities within the region. During January 2004 so far, 4 people have been bitten by wild foxes, and timely treated by post-exposure vaccinations. According to press information, wild foxes have become unafraid to approach people, a behavior not seen previously. This behavior increases the risk of infection spread by attacking domestic animals or even people. 6 Rabies cases were also registered in domestic animals in 2 regions of the Republic of Udmurtskaya. In one of the regions, a rabid dog bit a child. According to the chief of the Department of Veterinary Management,

the reason that rabies has spread among domestic animals is the migration of rabid foxes from the neighboring regions of Tatarstan and Bashkortostan. [View Report](#)

## South Africa (North West): Crimean-Congo Hemorrhagic Fever

01 February – ProMed reported a North West province man was diagnosed with [Crimean-Congo Hemorrhagic Fever \(CCHF\)](#) over last weekend and is being monitored by infectious disease specialists. The disease, which is transmitted by ticks, has struck at least 12 people over the last 18 months. As an added precaution, the health department had sent a team out to Lichtenburg to trace people who may have been bitten by ticks in the same locality. [View Report](#)

## Zambia: Lusaka Records 2,482 Cases of Cholera

29 January – AllAfrica.com reported Parliament heard that Lusaka alone has recorded 2,482 cases of [cholera](#) from November last year of which 110 people have so far died. Health Minister Brian Chituwo said in Parliament that 80 patients died at treatment centers and 30 were taken already dead. Dr Chituwo told the House that Government was concerned about the situation and both short and long term measures were being put in place. [View Article](#)

# USCENTCOM

## Food Insecurity in Afghanistan Remains High

29 January – Relief Web reported food insecurity in Afghanistan remains high despite improved agricultural output. The US Agency for International Development (USAID)-funded Famine and Early Warning System Network (FEWS NET) is saying that despite improved precipitation in most of the country, nearly one quarter of Afghanistan's some 16 million people are unable to meet their daily minimum food needs. The findings of a survey was carried out by the National Risk and Vulnerability Assessment (NRVA) last year (2003) and revealed that some 3.86 million people were unable to meet 100% of their daily food needs. Of these, some 3.2 million people could not meet even 80% of their daily food needs. According to FEWS Net most of the food-insecure population is in the eastern and southern provinces that are seeing a slow recovery from a four-year severe drought spell preceding 2002. [View Article](#)

## Nuclear 'Black Market' Alarms UN

30 January 2004 – BBC News reported the UN's nuclear agency has voiced concern at recent revelations about a sophisticated international illegal trade in nuclear technology. IAEA inspectors are now in Libya checking details of the nuclear weapons program it recently acknowledged. An IAEA spokesman said the black market had aided Libya in its program. The inspectors are making an inventory of all materials connected with the program, said agency spokesman Mark Gwozdecky in Vienna. IAEA teams are in charge of sealing sensitive material, including nuclear bomb designs, turned over by Libyan scientists. Access to items placed under the agency's seal, said the spokesman, was dependent on the IAEA's agreement. Mr Gwozdecky described the nuclear black market as a "real eye-opener". He added that the IAEA's inspectors were working closely with US and British officials despite recent strains in their relations over the role the agency should play in Libya's disarmament. [View Article](#)



## Iran: Focus on Bam Survivors

26 January – IRIN News reported one month after the devastating earthquake that hit the Iranian city of Bam on 26 December, claiming the life of at least 42,000, most survivors are still living in tents close to their former houses, reluctant to move to emergency camps rapidly established with foreign assistance. A combination of a well-organized local response and speedy deployment of international resources and know-how has meant no reported outbreaks of communicable diseases, and fairly equitable emergency food distribution among the estimated 100,000 survivors. Sanitation and hygiene shortages remain. [View Article](#)

## USNORTHCOM

### Canada: Anthrax Found on Saskatchewan Farm

29 January – Promed reported a farm in western Saskatchewan has been quarantined after [Anthrax](#) was discovered in a cattle herd. 10 cows have died from the disease, said Dr. Jim McLane, district veterinarian with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency. The remaining animals in the 250-head herd will be vaccinated when the weather warms up. In rare cases anthrax can be spread to humans, so the family that lives on the farm and the veterinarian who performed the autopsies on the dead animals have been given antibiotics, McLane said. Detailed history from the producer strongly suggests that the source of the infection was one of the main feed supplies. The deaths stopped on the farm since the producer switched feeds. The herd is under quarantine, and once the herd is vaccinated properly the feed should no longer be a risk. A total of 10 head have died on the farm from this outbreak. [View Report](#) [View Report 2](#)

### Injuries Prompt Bowflex Recall

29 January – CBS News reported hundreds of thousands of popular Bowflex fitness machines are being recalled because of safety problems that have resulted in more than 70 injuries, the government said. The voluntary recall affects about 420,000 Bowflex Power Pro XL, XTL, and XTLU systems distributed by Nautilus Direct of Vancouver, Wash. The Consumer Product Safety Commission says the machine's backboard bench can unexpectedly collapse when being used in the incline position. There also are problems with the "Lat Tower," which attaches to the back of the bench and has a metal bar that the user can pull down to strengthen the upper body. Nautilus Direct says the frame of the tower can weaken over time, twist forward and fall — hitting the user in the back, head or shoulder. Of the reports received, 59 people suffered injuries when the backboard collapsed. Another 14 were injured by the "Lat Tower." [View Article](#)

### New Virus a Major Cause of Infection in Children

28 January – Reuters reported human metapneumovirus -- a pathogen first identified in 2001 -- is responsible for 12 percent of lower respiratory tract infections that occur in young children, according to a report published in this week's New England Journal of Medicine. The findings indicate that "metapneumovirus infection accounts for a substantial proportion of respiratory tract illnesses that were previously undiagnosed," Dr. Kenneth McIntosh, co-author of an accompanying editorial, told Reuters Health. "There are still some undiagnosed cases, but this fills in a lot of the gap." In the study, Dr. James E. Crowe and colleagues, from Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee, tested for metapneumovirus in nasal-wash specimens obtained from children with acute respiratory tract illness

over a 25-year period. During this period, 321 children were diagnosed with a lower respiratory tract infection of unknown cause. Nasal-wash specimens were available from 248 of these children. Testing of these specimens revealed evidence of metapneumovirus in 49 (20 percent) of the subjects, the authors note. Applied to the entire pediatric population, metapneumovirus infection accounted for 12 percent of all lower respiratory tract infections. [View Article](#)

## Letter to Senate Leader Holds a Poison

03 February – ProMed reported a suspicious substance was found in the mail room of the Senate office of the majority leader, Senator Bill Frist, on Monday afternoon, and officials said repeated tests indicated the presence of the poison [ricin](#). The Capitol Police said they received the report of the material in a room of the Dirksen Senate Office Building adjacent to the Capitol about 3 p.m. and conducted initial tests that came back positive for ricin. About 16 workers, who were on the fourth floor, were evacuated, and aides said the material was sent away for testing. Two of these 3 tests were positive, Police Chief Terrance Gainer said. Officials said that the ventilation system had been shut down and that the mail room workers had been moved elsewhere in the building for medical supervision and decontamination. No one has shown sign of illness. An official with the Federal Bureau of Investigation said Monday night that if the case appeared to be a criminal or terrorist act against a member of Congress, the bureau was prepared to begin an investigation. [View Report](#)

## Smoking Highest among Indians, CDC Says

29 January – MSNBC News reported American Indians and Alaska natives are more likely to smoke than any other group in the United States, with 40 percent of adults defined as smokers, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said. People of Chinese descent were the least likely to smoke, with just 12 percent admitting to having smoked a cigarette in the past month, the CDC survey showed. The survey of 74,000 youths aged 12 to 17 and 133,000 adults is the CDC's first detailed statistical breakdown by ethnicity of who smokes and who does not, said CDC spokesman Joel London. [View Article](#)

## Top U.S. Health Official Says 'Vast Majority' of States Ready for Smallpox"

30 January – Global Security Newswire reported U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Tommy Thompson said the 'vast majority' of states are now prepared to immunize all their residents in 10 days if there were a [smallpox](#) bioterrorism attack. Julie Gerberding, director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, set the 10-day immunization goal as a measure of preparedness. Thompson's comments represent perhaps the most optimistic assessment to date of the nation's ability to withstand a smallpox attack. [View Article](#)

## USDA Issues Beef Warning after Salmonella Outbreak

30 January – Reuters reported the U.S. Agriculture Department has issued a public health warning about raw ground beef products after dozens of people in the Northeast became ill with [Salmonella](#) infections, a spokesman said. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is investigating a salmonella outbreak of at least 37 cases in Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York and Vermont. Health officials said many of the people who became ill reported eating ground beef, and some ate the meat raw. [View Article](#)

# USPACOM

## *Aedes aegypti* and *Aedes polynesiensis* in New Zealand

03 February – ProMed reported it appears that during insecticidal treatment on 28 Jan 2004 at sites in Auckland's Whangaparaoa Peninsular to control *Ochlerotatus camptorhynchus* (the southern saltmarsh mosquito), an Australian species that was discovered the previous week, larvae identified by New Zealand Biosecure taxonomists as *Aedes aegypti* and *Aedes polynesiensis* were discovered. During port inspections about 30 larvae were found in a used concrete mixer being transported by ship from Futuna Island via Auckland and Noumea to Suva. As pupal skins (denoting emergence of adult mosquitoes) and one live pupa were collected, it is possible that some adult mosquitoes may have emerged while the ship was berthed. Consequently the Auckland Regional Public Health Service staff has set traps in the hope of catching any adults, and in addition potential larval habitats have been chemically treated. Surveillance will continue for 3 weeks to detect any breeding by these 2 exotic mosquitoes. Both *Aedes aegypti* and *Aedes polynesiensis* had been declared "unwanted organisms" in New Zealand because of their vector potential. For example, *Aedes aegypti* is a vector of [yellow fever](#), [dengue](#), [Barmah Forest virus](#), and [Ross River virus](#), while *Aedes polynesiensis* is capable of transmitting [Bancroftian filariasis](#), [dengue](#), [Murray River virus](#), and [Ross River virus](#). [View Report](#)

## Tests Confirm Encephalitis Spread in Bangladesh

01 February – Reuters reported a mysterious disease that killed 23 people and infected 50 others in Bangladesh last month was encephalitis, a statement of the health ministry said Sunday. "The disease is caused by a virus closely related to [Nipah and Hendra viruses](#) that cause deadly encephalitis," it said. Bangladesh sent samples to the U.S. Center for Disease Control (CDC) in Atlanta for analysis after local laboratories failed to clearly identify the disease, which many suspected was bird flu. [View Article](#)

# USSOUTHCOM

## Chile: 5 Cases of Hantavirus Pulmonary Syndrome Registered in Region VIII

31 January – ProMed reported during the past few days, 5 cases of [Hantavirus Pulmonary Syndrome](#), 2 of them fatal, have been registered in Region VIII of the country. The victims are 3 males and 2 females, all of them from rural areas. The health authorities have increased preventive measures. [View Report](#)

## Dengue Fever Update

31 January – ProMed reported [Dengue fever](#) is spreading in parts of northern Peru and the country's Amazon areas bordering Brazil, afflicting a large number of people. The disease is most rampant in provinces of Lambayeque and Ucayali, with 517 and 113 patients respectively reported to have developed dengue fever since the health ministry sounded alarms about the disease's outbreak 2 weeks ago. Without effective control, the disease could spread further and cause a nationwide plague. Health workers have been mobilized to use insecticide to kill mosquitoes that carry the disease and to [eliminate mosquito breeding sites], as well as informing the public on how to prevent the disease. In Honduras, health authorities announced that they had registered 7 cases of hemorrhagic dengue fever so far in 2004. 6 of the cases were treated in the northern city of San Pedro Sula, and a 12-year-old girl was diagnosed in Tegucigalpa. In Brazil 338 cases of dengue fever were registered in the 1st 2 weeks

of January 2004 in Goias state. In Bolivia, at least 250 cases of dengue have been detected in Beni since the recent floods, and 200 suspected with 8 confirmed cases in Pando, both in the forested Amazonian region near the frontier with Brazil. The outbreak is due to an invasion of a large part of the Beni region -- particularly the regional capital, Trinidad -- by the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito, which transmits dengue. [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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