

DOE – Medical and Infectious Disease Update – Wednesday, March 31, 2004

DOE weekly updates on Bird Flu, Human Influenza, West Nile Virus, or other illnesses and medical issues will continue as appropriate or as requested. The following information is current as of Thursday, April 1, 2004, 0700 hours, EST. Information presented is routinely taken from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), <http://www.cdc.gov/>, The World Health Organization (WHO), <http://www.who.int/en/>, the Department of Defense Global Emerging Infections Surveillance and Response System site, (DoD-GEIS) - <http://www.geis.ha.osd.mil/>, and other creditable sources.

Recent News

ALLERGY-The Accuweather page provides current air quality information with specific charts for **Grass Pollen**, **Overall Pollen**, **Ragweed Pollen**, and **Tree Pollen** ...
http://www.accuweather.com/adcbn/public/maps_index.asp?type=airq.

The Limits of Medicine - 31March2004, *By Phillip Longman*, The Washington Post -- Faith in medicine runs deep in America. We spend more per person on health care than any other nation. Most of us are confident that we will live longer, more active lives than our parents. Whether we eat too much or exercise too little, whether we're turning gray or feeling blue, we increasingly look to some pill or procedure to make us better. No one likes to hear official projections such as those that came out last week about Medicare, which show that the program will be running multitrillion-dollar annual deficits just when baby boomers need it. But a common response is: What's a more important priority for society's resources? ... Today the United States spends more than \$4,500 per person per year on health care. Costa Rica spends less than \$300, and has half as many doctors per capita. Yet life expectancy at birth is nearly identical in both countries ... <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A37701-2004Mar30.html>.

Researchers Show Chronic Sinusitis Is Immune Disorder; Antifungal Medicine Effective Treatment – 30March2004, *ScienceDaily* -- BUFFALO, N.Y. -- Researchers at the University at Buffalo and the Mayo Clinic have shown that chronic sinusitis is an immune disorder caused by fungus, opening up a promising new avenue for treating this ubiquitous and debilitating condition, for which there is no FDA-approved therapy. Results of their research suggest that common airborne fungi lodge in the mucus lining of the sinuses in most people, but initiate an immune response only in individuals prone to chronic sinusitis. The immune response causes the fungi to be attacked, which leads to damage of the sinus membranes, resulting in full-blown symptoms ... <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2004/03/040324072619.htm>.

Tougher Bugs, Few New Drugs: Dearth of New Antibiotics Threatens Public Health - 30March2004, *By Roxanne Nelson*, Special to The Washington Post --It was 1969 and the battle against germs, it seemed, had been all but won. An impressive array of vaccines and antibiotics were rapidly turning deadly diseases such as smallpox, rheumatic fever, diphtheria and polio into distant memories. The growing armamentarium of powerful drugs appeared capable of besting any bacterial infection that dared cross its path. That year, then-Surgeon General William H. Stewart confidently testified before Congress that "it was time to close the book on infectious disease" ... Unfortunately, his pronouncement proved a bit premature ... Some 30-odd new diseases have emerged over the past 20 years -- including AIDS, SARS and Ebola. And old scourges once thought to be under control, such as tuberculosis, syphilis and gonorrhea, are reemerging with a vengeance ... Meanwhile, the once-robust pipeline of new antibiotics is running dry. Some large pharmaceutical companies are either sharply curtailing their antibacterial research and development programs or pulling out of the market altogether ... <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A34467-2004Mar29.html>.

Vitamin E May Curb Cancer Risk – 28March2004, Associated Press, ORLANDO -- Getting plenty of vitamin E by eating such foods as nuts and olive oil appears to cut in half people's risk of bladder cancer, the fourth leading cancer killer among men, a study says ... Whether vitamin E does anything to stop cancer is far from proven, but some think the vitamin may be helpful, perhaps by warding off the damaging effects of oxygen ... <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A31771-2004Mar28.html>.

Early Vitamin E Supplements Stem Development Of Hallmark Alzheimer's Symptoms In Mice – 26March2004, ScienceDaily --(Philadelphia, PA) - Vitamin E, a well-known antioxidant, has been used to treat Alzheimer's disease, but with mixed results, especially in patients with advanced symptoms. A risk factor for Alzheimer's is oxidative stress, a clinical condition characterized by an excessive production of reactive chemicals in the brain, which can damage important regions of this organ ... They found that vitamin E given to young transgenic mice before the formation of telltale plaques reduces by up to half the levels of amyloid deposited in the brain over time compared to aged mice on the same regimen. This study appears in the February edition of The FASEB Journal ... <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2004/03/040326074557.htm>.

Bird Flu 2003-2004: Doe Special Medical Update – With information from WHO and the CDC, this update also explains the concepts of viral infection, viral replication, antigenic “drift”, and antigenic “shift” ... http://www.eh.doe.gov/health/news/BIRDFLU2003-2004_DOESPECIALUPDATE_B200402091.pdf (PDF) or for a choice of PDF or Word format, <http://www.eh.doe.gov/health/index.html>, and scroll down under "News and Features".

WHO: Avian influenza-fact sheet – 5January2004-Avian influenza (“bird flu”) and the significance of its transmission to humans ... http://www.who.int/csr/don/2004_01_15/en/.

CDC West Nile Virus Home - <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/index.htm>

Links to State and Local Government West Nile Virus Web Sites

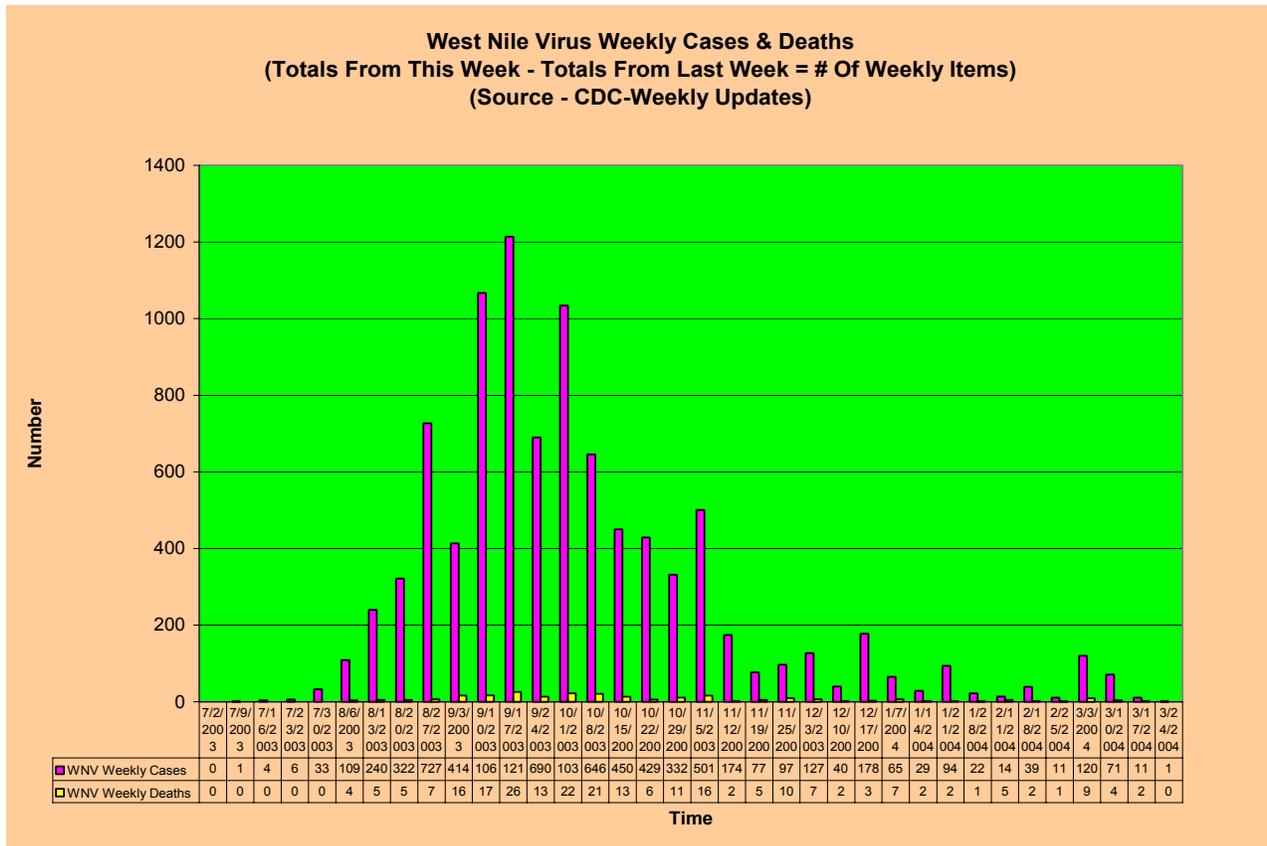
Click on a state to link directly to their West Nile virus Web page. See the list below for additional city-level and main State Health Department Web sites ... http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/city_states.htm.



West Nile Virus Interactive Map – If you go to this map , each State will be ‘HOT’, and clicking your mouse on a State will link you to its Health Department’s West Nile web site and bring up other information. Whereas the CDC map and case summary is a lagging indicator, this map,

linked to each State's Health Department, provides real-time information for those states which update regularly, such as PA and CO ... http://www.mosquitoczar.com/west_nile_virus.

CDC West Nile Virus Case Count - [Maps](#) reporting WNV activity and [human disease cases](#) reported to CDC were updated on March 26, 2004 and provide weekly information thru March 24, 2004. See the chart below. Total cases and deaths from 46 states stand at 9389 and 246, respectively. Since last week, there has been one new case and no deaths ... <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dybid/westnile/surv&controlCaseCount03.htm>.



George R. Gebus, MD, MPH, Editor
 US Department of Energy
 Office of Occupational Health, EH-53/270CC
 19901 Germantown Road
 Germantown, MD 20874-1290
 Phone: 301-903-2876
 Fax: 301-903-5072
 Email: george.gebus@eh.doe.gov
<http://www.eh.doe.gov/index.html>