**One Health News Bits**

2/28/12

[**Scientist discovers way to treat neurocysticercosis**](http://gizmodo.com/5883818/substance-p-the-cause-and-potential-cure-for-400000-seizures-per-year)

Neurocysticercosis, a nervous system illness of humans caused by the swine tapeworm Taenia solium, is the main cause of acquired epilepsy in many countries and is becoming more common in the U.S. Baylor College of Medicine professor Prema Robinson found Substance P, a neuropeptide associated with inflammation, was present in these tapeworm infections and when a drug blocked Substance P, the seizures stopped.  (2/9)

[**Soldier’s death from rabies helps raise awareness in Afghanistan**](http://www.stripes.com/news/us-assistance-likely-saved-life-of-afghan-man-bitten-by-dog-1.168264)

An Indian escort, a group of American medics, the U.S. military and fear itself helped an Afghan trash hauler avoid a possible death sentence from rabies recently, just a few months after an [American soldier infected with the disease died.](http://www.stripes.com/news/confusion-anger-surround-report-of-soldier-s-rabies-death-1.166967) For the Afghan, infection normally would have meant death, but the awareness created by the unusual death of the soldier may have helped save his life. (2/11)

[**U.S. researchers will receive assistance from Canadians in fungus study**](http://www.nanaimobulletin.com/news/139121404.html)

U.S. research efforts into Cryptococcus gattii will get a boost from Canadian scientists, who have been studying the fungus in Vancouver for a decade. The fungus, which causes respiratory symptoms and, if left untreated, paralysis or death in companion animals and humans, has more recently affected Oregon and Washington, though the strain found in the U.S. differs slightly from that found in Canada. (2/13)

[**Amphibians, Reptiles, and Salmonella**](http://www.avma.org/public_health/salmonella/amphibians.asp)

Many people are aware turtles and other reptiles can carry Salmonella bacteria, but not many know that amphibians can carry it, too. This doesn't mean amphibian and reptile owners should get rid of their pets. What it does mean is that amphibian and reptile handlers and owners should take precautions to protect themselves and their families. (2/13)

[**Individual prions capable of cell damage found**](http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/241635.php)

New research challenges the concept that prion diseases such as bovine spongiform encephalopathy are the result of prion aggregates, also called oligomers. Researchers found that a single prion protein, called a monomer, causes significant cell damage on its own. Since prion diseases are similar to conditions such as Alzheimer's and Parkinson's, the findings may help the study of these illnesses. (2/14)

[**Porcine parasite may alleviate human diseases**](http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052970204795304577220993641557460.html?mod=dist_smartbrief)

Swine whipworm eggs alleviate the immune inflammatory response that contributes to some human diseases and may be useful in treating conditions such as allergies, arthritis, autism and multiple sclerosis. Helminthic therapy, the practice of using parasites to treat human ailments, is garnering attention in light of evidence that certain diseases have increased in modernized cultures due to lack of exposure to pathogens. (2/14)

[**Pet oxygen masks make a difference in emergencies**](http://yourlife.usatoday.com/parenting-family/pets/story/2012-02-13/Pet-oxygen-masks-can-save-animals-lives-in-fires/53070276/1)

Firefighters equipped with pet oxygen masks have increasingly resuscitated animals at the scene of house fires in the last decade, and with unconfirmed estimates suggesting tens of thousands of animals die in fires every year, every mask counts. "Immediate oxygen therapy can make the difference between life and death in severely affected pets," said emergency veterinarian Elke Rudloff. (2/13)

[**Influenza viruses can infect pets**](http://www.patriotledger.com/community/blogs/dog-blog/x50591681/The-Ruff-Report-Dogs-and-Health)

The AVMA endorsed the production of a canine influenza vaccine in 2006 when the disease became evident in racing greyhounds and shelter dogs. Vaccination prevents serious illness and reduces shedding time for infected animals. The AVMA also notes that four ferrets in Oregon and one cat in Iowa contracted H1N1 from their owners, and Oregon state veterinarian Emilio DeBess stresses the importance of trying to reduce the spread of disease between owners and pets. (2/14)

[**Horses are used as multifaceted tool to help children with disabilities**](http://www.boston.com/news/local/massachusetts/articles/2012/02/16/in_suburbs_horseback_riding_helps_special_needs_children/?page=1)

Children at several Boston-area horse riding facilities reap the benefits of therapeutic riding to help with sensory and motor issues. Regular riding, assisted by trained physical or occupational therapists, as well as volunteers, helps many children with conditions such as cerebral palsy, autism and microcephaly gain fine motor skills. (2/16)

[**Veterinarians are working diligently to protect the food supply**](http://nationalhogfarmer.com/health/protecting-our-borders)

At the Center for Food Security and Public Health at Iowa State University, veterinarian James Roth runs a team of 30 veterinarians and students charged with preparing for an intentional or accidental disease threat to public health or the food supply. The center created a book on foreign animal disease that is used by veterinary schools in the U.S. and Canada and soon to be used in Central and South America. A current focus of the group is developing strategies to contain foot-and-mouth disease should it strike U.S. livestock. (2/15)

[**Rare cat born to surrogate mother with new reproductive technique**](http://www.wdsu.com/news/30669047/detail.html)

An African black-footed kitten, a rare species, was born Feb. 6 after in vitro fertilization of five embryos in a domestic cat, marking the first time the species has been born to such a cat. The Audubon Nature Institute scientists who conducted the procedure believe it can be used to help re-establish and preserve endangered species. (3/13)

[**Rabid kitten bites 7 people, and its feral colony may also have rabies**](http://www.wsbtv.com/news/news/local/more-cats-tested-after-rabid-kitten-bites-seven-pe/nLR66/)

Cherokee County officials are testing more cats and kittens for rabies after an infected kitten bit seven people. At least four cats have been tested so far, another remains in quarantine. This testing has come after a stray kitten died of rabies last week after biting seven people, who are now undergoing rabies treatment. (3/13)

[**White-nose syndrome is spreading south, threatening gray bats**](http://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/white-nose-fungus-reaches-bats-in-alabama-to-biologists-dismay/2012/03/13/gIQArUUiBS_story.html)

White-nose syndrome, a fungal disease caused by Geomyces destructans that has killed nearly 7 million bats in the U.S. and Canada, was confirmed in endangered gray bats in Alabama in early March, the farthest south the disease has been detected. Although no dead gray bats have been found yet, biologists fear the disease will "devastate" the population. (3/14)

[**USDA’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service now defines One Health**](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/about_aphis/programs_offices/veterinary_services/oh.shtml)

The Veterinary Services of 2015 employees from across the organization have been working for the past 3 years to more clearly define our future. Their work has culminated in a new plan for the organization entitled Veterinary Services: A New Perspective. Our New Perspective addresses the critical steps we're taking to fully realize our place in the new animal health landscape. It articulates a clear vision for our organization and set specific goals, objectives, and priorities to achieve that vision, including aspects of One Health. (3/14)

[**Officials recommend rabies vaccine for some livestock in N.M.**](http://southwestfarmpress.com/livestock/rabies-outbreak-new-mexico-threatens-livestock)

New Mexico officials say the state is experiencing "one of the most concentrated outbreaks of rabies in decades," raising concerns about livestock and horses and prompting officials to urge vaccination for livestock that come into contact with humans, such as 4-H and FFA animals. CDC guidelines for veterinarians regarding suspect rabid animals with and without vaccination are also explained in this article. (3/14)

[**Tick numbers vary depending on several factors**](http://www.sentinelandenterprise.com/topstory/ci_20170458/tick-talk-experts-recommend-precautions-against-lyme-disease)

Although some are predicting this season will bring more ticks and hence more Lyme disease in people and dogs, Tufts University infectious diseases professor Sam Telford says several factors affect the tick population, including small mammal carriers, humidity, time of day and deer populations. Although a Lyme vaccine for people is no longer available, a canine vaccine exists. (3/14)

[**Officials: 3 cats dead from avian influenza in Israel**](http://www.jpost.com/Headlines/Article.aspx?id=262052)

Israeli veterinary officials have confirmed that three stray cats died of avian influenza after ingesting meat from infected poultry. Officials will catch other strays in the Eilat area and are urging the public to avoid contact with the animals.  (3/15)

[**Proper disposal of medications is essential for public health**](http://www.sunherald.com/2012/03/15/3821428/think-before-you-dispose-of-old.html)

Until recently, flushing unused or expired medications was considered an acceptable disposal option, but since water treatment facilities do not remove medicine from the water, methods have changed. Veterinarian Jim Randolph writes about drug disposal recommendations in this article, including returning them to the point of purchase. Dr. Randolph suggests people offer leftover medications to local veterinary offices before choosing another means of disposal. (3/15)

[**Flame-retardant chemicals may be causing illness in cats**](http://news.discovery.com/earth/flame-retardants-cats-120319.html)

Exposure to a class of chemicals known as polybrominated diphenyl ethers, or PBDEs, which are used as flame retardants in furniture and other household items, may lead to illnesses including hyperthyroidism in cats, according to research from the University of Illinois. PBDEs have been linked to illnesses including cancers, neurological disorders and reproductive and developmental problems. (3/19)

[**Lab tests show potential for Ebola cures**](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/20/health/advances-suggest-possible-cures-for-ebola-and-marburg-virus.html?_r=1)

There's no known cure for Ebola and other deadly hemorrhagic fevers, but researchers at the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases say early lab tests showed leukemia drugs Gleevec and Tasigna stopped Ebola cells from replicating. Other tests have shown that antibodies from infected monkeys and treatments using genetic material may hold promise. (3/19)

[**Veterinary school participates in canine stress study**](http://thedp.com/index.php/article/2012/03/veterinarian_to_study_the_other_side_of_therapuetic_dog_petting_sessions_at_penn)

Veterinarian and professor Cindy Otto of the Penn Vet Working Dog Center is collaborating with a Virginia Tech veterinarian and graduate student, Zenithson Ng, to study whether dogs benefit from petting sessions in the same way humans do, the first such study. The researchers are quantifying a pet's cortisol levels during petting and hope to develop work guidelines for therapy dogs to prevent burnout. (3/19)

[**World Veterinary Day to center on antimicrobial resistance**](http://www.avma.org/onlnews/javma/apr12/120401g.asp)

"Loss of efficacy in antimicrobial treatment through resistance development is an ever-present risk both towards animal as well as public health," according to the WVA-OIE announcement of the theme for World Veterinary Day 2012. The AVMA plans to promote the event via an advertisement—with the message "Antimicrobial resistance, it's everyone's responsibility"—as well as a press release on pet medications, a podcast, and other promotions. (3/21)

[**Swine-industry changes may mean higher-priced pork**](http://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/food/pork-industrys-move-from-small-crates-to-group-pens-for-pregnant-sows-could-cost-consumers/2012/03/22/gIQAHP57SS_story.html)

Consumers will likely feel the pinch of higher pork prices as hog farmers invest in new barns and facilities needed to phase out gestation crates and add more open pens, a trend driven by increasing demand from activists and customers. AVMA says there are pros and cons to both crates and group pens, and there's currently no clear-cut science on the issue. (3/22)

[**One Health resources available**](http://www.avma.org/onehealth/)

The AVMA now has a centralized, online collection of [One Health resources](http://r.smartbrief.com/resp/dzwJBXzCwNCcwpbkCidalECicNziuc). The collection includes information on the history of One Health and the One Health Commission; what the AVMA is doing to promote One Health; what veterinarians and members of the public can do to promote One Health; and additional One Health-related links and resources. As a member of the [Healthy People Consortium](http://r.smartbrief.com/resp/dzwJBXzCwNCcwpblCidalECicNCHAP), AVMA and hundreds of other organizations are committed to improving our nation's health. (3/22)