**One Health News Bits  
March 16, 2011**

[**Student contracts first U.S. cowpox case from lab contamination**](http://r.smartbrief.com/resp/BhxMdjhChsdrnnbsfDaefcfCvuGj?format=standard)

A student laboratory worker at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, is the first person in the United States to come down with cowpox, a less dangerous relative of smallpox, and the culprit is lab contamination. Researchers from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [reported](http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/737030) last week at the International Meeting on Emerging Diseases and Surveillance in Vienna that the unvaccinated patient was infected by a genetically modified cowpox virus strain in her research lab, one she had never even worked with, by inadvertently handling contaminated materials.

[**Study finds candidate gene for primary open angle glaucoma**](http://r.smartbrief.com/resp/BizsdjhChsdrrUegfDaefcfCcEfC?format=standard)

U.S. researchers, using a beagle model of primary open angle glaucoma, have identified a gene called ADAMTS10 as a strong candidate gene for the disease. The finding, published in the journal PLoS Genetics, may lead to a further understanding of glaucoma pathology, as well as improved treatment methods.

[**Report: Elephant linked to TB outbreak among Tenn. sanctuary workers**](http://r.smartbrief.com/resp/BizsdjhChsdrrUesfDaefcfCkmLF?format=standard)

A recent Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report suggests that a tuberculosis outbreak in 2009 that affected eight employees at an elephant sanctuary in Tennessee might have been linked to one of the pachyderms. Investigators suspect that the TB bacteria might have been transmitted through the air or through the animal's waste.

[**Peru sees rabies outbreak in children bitten by vampire bats**](http://r.smartbrief.com/resp/BizsdjhChsdrrUeQfDaefcfCDOfp?format=standard)

So far in the month of February, at least six children have perished to rabies in Amazonas region of Peru according to the Ministry of Health. The children range in age from 1 to 14 years of age and all were bitten by vampire bats.

[**FDA proposal to rein in unapproved animal drugs draws fire**](http://r.smartbrief.com/resp/BizsdjhChsdrrUhQfDaefcfCRKZT?format=standard)

A U.S. Food and Drug Administration proposal to end the use of non-FDA-approved animal drugs has received opposition from some pet owners, veterinarians and pharmacists in Austin, Texas, who say it constitutes an "attack on pet health and wellness." According to this article, AVMA believes that compounded drugs prescribed by veterinarians are not part of this FDA move.

[**Pharmacists say proposed FDA rules are not in animals' best interest**](http://r.smartbrief.com/resp/BizsdjhChsdrrViAfDaefcfCZPuE?format=standard)   
Pharmacists are taking issue with proposed FDA regulations that would prohibit them from creating animal medications by compounding pure chemicals to create gels and liquids as alternatives to pills. Veterinarians say the change would limit their ability to ensure proper dosages of drugs for animals based on a patient's species and size.

[**Controlling lizard populations could help lower Lyme disease risk**](http://r.smartbrief.com/resp/cOamBXzCwNBYpHtWCicOlzCicNYYdz?format=standard)

Reducing the population of Western fence lizards could lower the population of ticks, which carry Lyme disease, a study appearing in the Proceedings of the Royal Society B journal suggests. Researchers found that the number of ticks dropped 95% in areas where the lizards, which carry a blood protein that attacks the Lyme disease-causing Borrelia bacteria, had been removed.

[**Florida county issues rabies alert after finding rabid raccoon**](http://r.smartbrief.com/resp/cOamBXzCwNBYpHtYCicOlzCicNmUPr?format=standard)

The Mandarin area of Duval County, Fla., is under a rabies alert until May 14, after officials discovered a rabid raccoon. Pet owners are advised to confine their animals and make sure animals have current rabies vaccinations from licensed veterinarians.

[**Snake bites pose a global threat; venom may be getting stronger**](http://r.smartbrief.com/resp/cOamBXzCwNBYpHufCicOlzCicNRZMX?format=standard)

The number of human snake-bite victims around the world may be much higher than previously thought, and the issue may be further compounded as some species of snakes apparently develop stronger venom, according to recent studies. Rodents, including California ground squirrels and rock squirrels, have blood that has developed immunities to certain snake venoms, and snakes such as the eastern diamondback rattlesnake are developing more poisonous venom, according to research published last month.

[**Valley Fever can affect dogs, too**](http://r.smartbrief.com/resp/cOamBXzCwNBYpHugCicOlzCicNUeuY?format=standard)

Dogs, like their human owners, are at risk of contracting Valley Fever, whose clinical signs in dogs may include fever, kennel cough-like symptoms, appetite loss and depression. A California veterinarian says the illness appears most frequently from June to October.

[**Accidental xylitol ingestion in dogs has increased**](http://r.smartbrief.com/resp/cOamBXzCwNBYpHuqCicOlzCicNWjkf?format=standard)

Accidental ingestion of xylitol can put pets at risk for health issues such as liver failure and low blood sugar levels, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration has warned. AVMA reports there has been an increase in the number of dogs victimized by xylitol poisoning, and owners are advised to seek veterinary help if they see their pets exhibiting signs such as vomiting and depression.