



Femeraid Air Rescue International – Weekly Medical Alert 49



FEMERAID AIR RESCUE INTERNATIONAL

Weekly Medical Alert

**05 – 12 OF DECEMBER
WEEK 49 - 2016**

Femeraid Air Rescue International Unit assesses on weekly basis all Health risk around the World and produces a summarized report for Knights and Dames of Our Sovereign Order and State .

Medical Alerts this week :46 New alerts: 13 Updated alerts: 36

Continents – Pacific/ Asia/ Middle East/ Africa/ Americas/ Europe

Countries- USA/New zealand /Saudi Arabia /Puerto Rico/ Philippines /Sudan /South Sudan/St Vincent /India /Mali /Niger /Solomon /Myanmar/Romania/Congo /Ghana/Iran /Yemen/China/ Burundi/ Cape verde /Jamaica/ Venezuela/Guine Bissau/ Nigeria / Virgin Islands/ Malaysia /Thailand/Burkina Faso/ Chad/ Montserrat/ St Vincent/ Japan / Nepal/ Palau/ Philippines/Yemen / Denmark

Red Flags (Imminent risks)-  (4)

Yellow Flags (Actions should be taken) -  (0)

Green Flags (Be aware of) -  (3)

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[Global Issue: Sporadic Zika transmission](#)

Since 2013, sporadic transmission of Zika virus has been reported in the population or travellers in a number of countries / territories in Asia and the Pacific. These countries may have Zika virus in the mosquito population, which may occasionally infect people. There appears to be no outbreak or active transmission at present, and overall the risk of acquiring Zika appears low, however the situation may change as testing and surveillance is increased.

Middle East

Mid East [Iran: Air pollution rises in Tehran](#)

A significant rise in air pollution has been recorded in Tehran. Schools have been closed in the capital city and its neighbourhoods. Several other restrictions including those on traffic movement have been imposed to control the situation. Health officials have urged the public to stay indoors and use masks when outdoors. The current high level of pollution is likely to improve in a couple of days.

[Yemen: Cholera outbreak deepens](#)

An outbreak of cholera is underway. By mid-November, more than 4,000 suspected cases had been reported. The governorates most affected are Aden and Taiz but cases have also been identified in Al Bayda, Al Hudaydah, Amran, Dhamar, Hajjah, IBB, Lahj, and Sana'a. Cholera is consistently present in the country

[Saudi Arabia: MERS-CoV](#)

Cases of Middle East Respiratory syndrome (MERS-CoV) continue to be reported across Saudi Arabia. In November, cases have been recorded in Bahrah, Buraidah, Kharj, Najran and Tabuk.

Africa

[South Sudan: Cholera outbreak](#)

Cases of cholera continue to be reported, with Juba in Jubek State recording the most. The affected states include Eastern Lakes, Eastern Nile, Imatong, Jonglei, Northern Liech, Southern Liech, Terekeka, and Western Bieh. Suspected cases have also been recorded in other regions, including Ayod and Mayendit. Cholera is consistently present in the country.

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[Burundi: Cholera outbreak](#)

An outbreak of cholera is ongoing in six health districts of Burundi including Bujumbura Mairie Nord, Bujumbura Mairie Sud, Bubanza, Kabezi, Mpanda and Nyanza Lac. A decline in number of cases has been recorded in September as compared to the previous month.

[Cape Verde: Ongoing Zika transmission](#)

Cases of locally-acquired Zika infection have been reported in Cape Verde. Zika is transmitted primarily through mosquito bites. Sexual transmission occurs. Although symptoms of Zika are usually mild and self-limited, severe and irreversible birth defects may occur in the babies of women infected when pregnant.

[Congo: Cholera outbreak in Mbamou Island, Brazzaville](#)

A cholera outbreak has been reported on Mbamou Island, Brazzaville. the latest provinces to be affected are Central Kongo, Haut Katanga and Nord Kivu. Many other provinces are affected, particularly those along the Congo river There have been some fatalities. Cholera is consistently present in the Republic of Congo and is spread via contaminated food and water.

[Guinea-Bissau: Zika in Bijagos archipelago](#)

The Bijagos archipelago continues to report new cases as local transmission gets established in the region. Zika is transmitted primarily through mosquito bites. Sexual transmission occurs.

[Nigeria: Polio in Borno state](#)

Cases of wild poliovirus have been detected in Nigeria after a gap of two years. At least three children in Borno state have been infected. Polio is a highly contagious viral illness that causes paralysis and death. The infection is spread through ingestion of contaminated food or water, or directly from an infected person.

[Africa: Outbreak of Rift Valley Fever](#)

An outbreak of Rift Valley Fever (RVF) which began in August, continues along the Mali-Niger border. Cases continue to be reported from several districts, although the most affected area is Tchintabaraden district in Tahoua region of Niger, located alongside Mali's Menaka region. The majority affected are nomadic populations. RVF can be transmitted to humans via contact with the blood, organs, or bodily fluids of infected animals. Infection can also occur through the bite of an infected mosquito or other bloodsucking insects.

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Burkina Faso: Dengue outbreak

Cases of dengue fever have been reported in several parts of the country since early August 2016. Surveillance for dengue is limited in Burkina Faso but the threat of dengue is present in much of the country as the mosquitoes which transmit the disease are widespread.

Chad: Hepatitis E outbreak in Salamat

An outbreak of hepatitis E has been reported in the Salamat Region. There have been several fatalities. Hepatitis E is spread by contaminated food and water.

Ghana: Cholera outbreak Central Region

A cholera outbreak continues in the Central Region. The Cape Coast Municipal is recording the majority of cases. Other affected districts include Abura-Asebu-Kwamankese, Asikuma-Odoben-Brakwa, Komenda Edina Abrem (KEEA), Mfantseman Municipality and Twifo Hermang. Cholera is consistently present in Ghana and is spread via contaminated food and water.

Niger: Malaria outbreak

There is a resurgence of malaria this year across the country. The activity is higher than that seen in last three years. Malaria is endemic or consistently present in all parts of Niger. The disease is spread through mosquito bites and can be fatal unless promptly treated.

Sudan: Suspected cholera outbreak

A suspected cholera outbreak is underway in Blue Nile State. Other regions remain at risk of sporadic outbreaks as the disease is consistently present in the country. Cholera spreads via contaminated food and water. Symptoms include vomiting and profuse, watery diarrhoea which can lead to severe dehydration. Travellers staying in quality accommodation are at lower risk. Pay strict attention to hygiene and consider vaccination.

Yemen: Cholera outbreak deepens

An outbreak of cholera is underway. By mid-November, more than 4,000 suspected cases had been reported. The governorates most affected are Aden and Taiz but cases have also been identified in Ad Dāli', Al Bayda, Al Hudaydah, Amran, Dhamar, Hajjah, IBB, Lahj, and Sana'a. Cholera is consistently present in the country and is spread via contaminated food and water.

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Asia & the Pacific

[China: Bird flu in humans](#)

Sporadic cases of bird flu H7N9 continue to be reported in China. In November, new cases have been recorded in Jiangsu and Zhejiang provinces. A number of other bird flu strains including H5N1, H5N6 and H9N2 have also infected humans in the country. Bird flu can cause a severe respiratory illness which may be fatal.

[New Zealand: Earthquake Health Implications](#)

The south island of New Zealand has experienced an earthquake of magnitude 7.8, causing significant damage to infrastructure and disruption of services. Major aftershocks are continuing. Details of damage and disruption are still emerging however, several casualties and some fatalities have been reported. Remain alert and follow the advice of the local authorities, including in and around coastal areas.

[Asia & the Pacific: Ongoing Zika transmission](#)

Local transmission of Zika virus is ongoing in parts of the Pacific. Zika transmission is widespread and growing in some locations, with sporadic or declining activity in others. Zika is transmitted primarily through mosquito bites. Sexual transmission occurs. Although symptoms of Zika are usually mild and self-limited, severe and irreversible birth defects

[India: Increase in mosquito borne diseases](#)

Mosquito-borne illnesses continue to be reported from many states including Delhi and the National Capital Region (NCR). These mainly comprise chikungunya, dengue and malaria. Many cases go unreported and therefore the actual number of cases is expected to be much higher than the official numbers.

[India: Increase in scrub typhus in Himachal Pradesh](#)

An increase in scrub typhus cases was reported in parts of Himachal Pradesh including capital Shimla. The rising trend is reported to have continued through early November. Several districts such as Bilaspur, Mandi and Solan have been affected. Some people have died. The illness is common in India. Scrub typhus is a bacterial disease spread to humans by infected mite bites.

[Malaysia: Zika transmission](#)

Local transmission of Zika virus has been reported in parts of Malaysia including, Likas, Sabah and Johor Bahru. Increased surveillance and mosquito control activities are ongoing. Zika may be established in the local mosquito population however, the extent and intensity of spread is uncertain at this time. Zika is transmitted primarily through mosquito bites..

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Thailand: Zika virus

Locally-acquired Zika cases have been reported from a number of regions including Bangkok, BuengKan, Chiang Mai, Chanthaburi, and Phetchabun. Zika is transmitted primarily through mosquito bites. While less common, sexual transmission occurs

India: Japanese encephalitis in some states

An outbreak of Japanese encephalitis (JE) continues. Malkangiri district in Odisha is largely affected and has suffered a number of fatalities. Puri has also reported some activity. As of mid-October, JE cases have been detected in parts of eastern Uttar Pradesh as well. JE is persistently present in many areas of India and cases occur year round. It is spread by mosquito bites.

India: Leptospirosis outbreak

Cases of leptospirosis have been reported in states of Maharashtra and Karnataka. Most of the cases have been recorded in Mumbai, Maharashtra. Udipi region in Karnataka state has also recorded a few fatalities. Leptospirosis is always present in India. The bacterial disease is mainly spread through contaminated water entering the body through the skin or mucous membranes (eyes, nose, or mouth).

Japan: Tsunami warnings northeastern Honshu

All tsunami warnings and advisories have been lifted by the Japan Meteorological Agency (JMA) at 12.50 (local time) on 22 November. An earthquake at 0550 local time had caused tsunami warnings for an area that included the Fukushima nuclear power plant, the plant that was damaged by the earthquake and tsunami in 2011 causing a serious nuclear accident. The plant still holds water contaminated with radiation and major efforts are ongoing to ensure protection of the surrounding environment. At present, there is no indication of further damage or leaking of contaminated water.

Myanmar: Japanese encephalitis

The Ayeyarwady Region continues to record cases of Japanese encephalitis (JE), particularly in rural areas. Several fatalities have occurred. JE is spread by mosquito bites and is consistently present throughout Myanmar.

Myanmar: Zika virus transmission

The first case of Zika virus infection has been reported in Yangon, Myanmar. Zika may be established in the local mosquito population however, the extent and intensity of spread is uncertain at this time. Zika is transmitted primarily through mosquito bites. Sexual transmission occurs.

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[Nepal: Increased dengue fever and scrub typhus](#)

An increase in dengue fever and scrub typhus cases has been reported. Both diseases are present in many districts, including Kathmandu, however Chitwan and other districts of the Terai are most affected. Dengue is spread by mosquitoes while scrub typhus is spread via mites.

[Palau: Zika virus transmission](#)

Local transmission of the Zika virus has been reported in Palau. Zika is transmitted primarily through mosquito bites. Sexual transmission occurs. Although symptoms of Zika are usually mild and self-limited, there is a risk of severe and irreversible birth defects in the babies of women infected when pregnant

[Philippines: Chikungunya & Zika](#)

An outbreak of chikungunya is underway in Indang, Cavite and Maasin, Southern Leyte.

Locally-acquired cases of Zika infection have been reported from the regions of Western Visayas, Calabarzon, Central Visayas and the National Capital Region (Manila). The majority of these are from the City of Iloilo, Panay island in the Western Visayas. Zika is transmitted primarily through mosquito bites.

[Solomon Islands: Rise in dengue activity](#)

Cases of dengue fever continue to be reported in several parts of the country. Guadalcanal province, including the capital Honiara, is significantly affected. Choiseul, Malaita, Isabel and Western provinces have also recorded cases. The disease is persistently present throughout Solomon Islands. Dengue is spread by mosquitoes.

[China: Reduced air quality](#)

Some areas of the country, including the cities of Beijing and Tianjin are experiencing poor air quality, with very high levels of pollutants at times. Anhui, Hebei, Henan, Jiangsu, Shaanxi, Shandong and Shanxi provinces are also affected.

Europe & CIS

[Romania: Measles outbreak](#)

An outbreak of measles is underway. Approximately a thousand cases have been reported, mostly in people who had not been vaccinated. At least 30 counties have recorded cases, while Arad, Bristrita and Mures regions are the worst affected. Several fatalities have occurred. Measles is caused by a highly contagious virus that spreads from person-to-person via infectious droplets. Prevention is through vaccination.

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[Denmark: Rise in pertussis cases](#)

A surge in pertussis (whooping cough) cases has been observed in Denmark, particularly in the Capital Region. In 2016, the disease activity is much higher than seen in the last few years. All ages have been affected. Pertussis is highly contagious and spreads when infected people cough or sneeze droplets into the air. Infants are affected most frequently

Americas

[United States: Mumps in Arkansas](#)

Cases of mumps continue to be reported in Arkansas. Affected counties include Benton, Clark, Faulkner, Madison, Pulaski and Washington. It has impacted a number of workplaces and schools. Mumps is caused by a virus that spreads from person-to-person via infected droplets. It is highly contagious and nearly all cases occur among unvaccinated people.

[Americas: Ongoing Zika transmission](#)

Locally-acquired Zika infection has been reported from approximately 50 countries and territories in the Americas region. In some locations transmission is widespread and growing, in others, sporadic or declining.

Local transmission of the Zika virus continues to be reported in USA Florida - Miami-Dade County. Authorities advise that active transmission is occurring in a one square mile area bounded by NW 79th St to the North, NW 63rd St to the South, NW 10th Ave to the West and N Miami Ave to the East and in Miami Beach

The Florida Department of Health has cleared approximately three miles for local Zika transmission in North Miami Beach, from 28th street to 63rd street. A 1.5 square mile area between 28th St to the north, 8th St to the South, Intercoastal Waterway on the west and Atlantic Ocean on the east remains zoned as active for local transmission in Miami Beach, as does a one square mile in Little River, Miami-Dade County

[Haiti: Hurricane Matthew: health implications, cholera outbreak](#)

Hurricane Matthew has devastated areas of Haiti, with hundreds of injuries and fatalities, and displaced over 2 million people. Essential infrastructure and services, including power, telecommunications, transport and medical facilities, are damaged and disrupted. Cholera cases continue to occur throughout the country, including in areas that were not directly affected by the hurricane. Acute respiratory infections, influenza-like-illnesses, fever and other acute diarrhoeal diseases have been recorded. Malaria cases have also been reported.

[Jamaica: Hand, Foot and Mouth disease](#)

A spike in cases of hand, foot and mouth disease (HFMD) has been reported. Kingston, St. Andrew and St. Catherine are particularly affected. Cases have occurred mostly among children.

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[Jamaica: Dengue cases rise](#)

An increase in dengue cases has been reported. The disease activity is much higher than that observed in 2015. Dengue is consistently present in Jamaica. It is spread by mosquitoes, and is present in both rural and urban areas.

[Montserrat \(UK\): Zika virus transmission](#)

Local transmission of the Zika virus has been reported in Montserrat. Zika is transmitted primarily through mosquito bites. Sexual transmission occurs

[St Vincent and the Grenadines: Hand, foot and mouth disease](#)

An increase in hand, foot and mouth disease (HFMD) has been reported. The majority of those infected are children.

[United States: Cryptosporidiosis in central Ohio](#)

Cases of cryptosporidiosis continue in central Ohio. Affected counties are Columbus, Franklin and Delaware. The outbreak is not linked to a single location, many of those infected visited a number of recreational water facilities in the affected areas. Cryptosporidiosis is caused by a parasite transmitted via contaminated food, water and surfaces.

[Puerto Rico \(US\): Increase in dengue fever](#)

An increase in dengue cases has been reported. The disease activity is much higher than that observed in 2015. Dengue is consistently present in Puerto Rico. It is spread by mosquitoes, and is present in both rural and urban areas.

[US Virgin Islands \(US\): Conjunctivitis outbreak](#)

An outbreak of conjunctivitis has been reported in St Thomas. Health officials have confirmed it as Epidemic Keratoconjunctivitis (EKC), a highly contagious infection of the eye (more severe than pink eye) often caused by adenoviruses. The infection is transmitted directly from an infected person, or by touching a contaminated object (including your hands) to your eyes.

[Venezuela: Diphtheria cases](#)

Cases of diphtheria have been reported from Caroni, Heres and Sifontes municipalities in Bolivar state and in Sucre and Nueva Esparta states. Some fatalities have been recorded. Diphtheria is a serious, potentially fatal, bacterial infection. The disease is highly contagious and spreads when infected people cough or sneeze droplets into the air.

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Alert details

Iran: Air pollution rises in Tehran

Level: Notice **Location:** Tehran - Iran; **Category:** Air Pollution

A significant rise in air pollution has been recorded in Tehran. Schools have been closed in the capital city and its neighbourhoods. Several other restrictions including those on traffic movement have been imposed to control the situation. Health officials have urged the public to stay indoors and use masks when outdoors. The current high level of pollution is likely to improve in a couple of days. Polluted air can cause symptoms such as wheezing, coughing, shortness of breath, and irritation of the eyes and nose. Although young children, the elderly, pregnant women and people with underlying heart and lung disease (high-risk groups) are more vulnerable, high levels of air pollution affects everyone. Be aware of the pollution levels and accordingly avoid or reduce exposure and physical activity outdoors.

Advice for all Knights and Dames

At times of high air pollution, do the following:

- avoid or minimise time outdoors
- reduce physical exertion
- keep windows and doors closed
- use air conditioner in 'recirculate' mode
- consult your medical practitioner if you experience symptoms

Consider:

- using an air cleaning device
- using a respirator (N95 mask) while outdoors (consult your doctor for an individual recommendation)

Yemen: Cholera outbreak deepens

Level: Notice **Location:** Yemen; **Category:** Cholera

An outbreak of cholera is underway. By mid-November, more than 4,000 suspected cases had been reported. The governorates most affected are Aden and Taiz but cases have also been identified in Al Bayda, Al Hudaydah, Amran, Dhamar, Hajjah, IBB, Lahj, and Sana'a. Cholera is consistently present in the country and is spread via contaminated food and water. Symptoms include vomiting and profuse, watery diarrhoea which can lead to severe dehydration. Travellers staying in quality accommodation are at low risk. Pay strict attention to hygiene and consider vaccination.

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Advice Advice for all Knights and Dames

- If available, vaccination is recommended for travellers and relief workers who are likely to encounter unsanitary conditions, or will have limited access to safe water.
- Drink only boiled or bottled water, water that has been treated with chlorine or iodine, or carbonated beverages.
- Select food, water and other beverages carefully.
- Choose food that has been thoroughly cooked while fresh and is served hot.
- Avoid ice, raw fruit, and raw vegetables (including salad). Fruit and vegetables that you peel yourself are safer choices.
- Pay close attention to hygiene. Wash your hands frequently, especially before eating.
- Get medical advice / treatment if you develop severe diarrhoea and/or vomiting.

Consider: Carrying water purification supplies with you.

United States: Mumps in Arkansas

Level: Notice **Location:** Arkansas - United States; **Category:** Mumps

Cases of mumps continue to be reported in Arkansas. Affected counties include Benton, Clark, Faulkner, Madison, Pulaski and Washington. It has impacted a number of workplaces and schools. Mumps is caused by a virus that spreads from person-to-person via infected droplets. It is highly contagious and nearly all cases occur among unvaccinated people. Symptoms include fever, painful, swollen glands, pain on swallowing and in men, the testes can become inflamed. Serious complications can occur. All travellers should ensure they are fully vaccinated against mumps.

Advice Advice for all Knights and Dames

Ensure you are immune to mumps before travelling.

- People are immune if they've had the disease before or if they had an adequate series of vaccinations (often given as measles-mumps-rubella, or MMR).
- Check your vaccination records. Mumps vaccine requires two doses, usually given once to a young child and again before entering school.
- If you are unsure about your immunity, talk to your doctor.

Keep young children and other people who are not immune away from sick people in outbreak areas.

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Global Issue: Sporadic Zika transmission

Level: Advisory

Location: Bangladesh; Cambodia; Easter Island - Chile; Cook Islands; French Polynesia (France); Indonesia; Laos; Maldives; Solomon Islands; Vanuatu; Vietnam;
Category: Zika virus

Since 2013, sporadic transmission of Zika virus has been reported in the population or travellers in a number of countries / territories in Asia and the Pacific. These countries may have Zika virus in the mosquito population, which may occasionally infect people. There appears to be no outbreak or active transmission at present, and overall the risk of acquiring Zika appears low, however the situation may change as testing and surveillance is increased. Zika is transmitted primarily through mosquito bites. Sexual transmission occurs. Although symptoms of Zika are usually mild and self-limited, there is a risk of severe and irreversible birth defects in the babies of women infected when pregnant. Pregnant women are advised to discuss their risks with their doctor and consider postponing travel to any area where Zika virus transmission is ongoing. The situation is continuing to evolve. Updates, Facts and FAQs are available at the [Zika website](#)

Advice Advice for all Knights and Dames

Pregnant women, women trying to conceive and their partners are advised to discuss their risks with their doctor and consider postponing travel to any area where Zika virus transmission is ongoing. In addition to the infectious risks of any destination, it is important to consider the standard of available healthcare, and the availability of obstetric and neonatal specialist support (should it be required).

For those who will travel, or are in areas where sporadic cases of Zika have been reported:

- Prevent infection by preventing mosquito bites.
 - Use an effective insect repellent that contains DEET, Picaridin, PMD, or IR3535.
 - When outdoors, wear clothing that covers most of your body (long sleeves, long pants, socks).
 - Ensure windows are covered with fly-wire.
 - Use "knock-down" insect spray to kill mosquitoes in your room.
 - Choose air conditioned accommodation if possible.
 - Consider using an insecticide-treated bed net.
- Prevent sexual transmission through the use of condoms (or abstinence).

After travel:

- Pregnant women - Consult your doctor. You may be advised to be tested for Zika whether or not you develop symptoms. Your doctor may also arrange additional monitoring or specialist care.
- All travellers - Monitor your health for two weeks. If you develop symptoms, ensure that you see a doctor and advise them of your travel history. This is especially important if you are, or are trying to fall pregnant.
- Prevent sexual transmission - Anyone who has a pregnant partner should use condoms (applicable to males and females) or abstain for the duration of the

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pregnancy. For those whose partners are not pregnant, authorities differ in their recommendations for the duration for which precautions should continue. [The World Health Organization advises](#) that everyone should continue precautions for at least 6 months after return. [The United States CDC advises](#): **Men** should continue precautions for at least 6 months; **Women** to continue precautions for at least 8 weeks.

- Consider delaying pregnancy - The World Health Organization [recommends](#) couples or women planning a pregnancy, who have returned from an area with Zika transmission, to wait at least 6 months. The United States CDC [recommend](#) women trying to get pregnant wait at least 8 weeks and partners of women trying to get pregnant wait at least 6 months.
- Prevent transmission to local mosquitoes. If you are returning to an area that has mosquitoes which can transmit Zika, continue to prevent mosquito bites for 2 to 3 weeks (e.g. using insect repellent). This will reduce the risk of infecting local mosquitoes with Zika, and therefore reduce the risk of an outbreak.

Benin: Cholera outbreak *Level:* Notice *Location:* Benin; *Category:* Cholera

Cases of cholera continue to be recorded in many parts of the country. At least 13 municipalities have been affected since the outbreak began in August, with Cotonou reporting the highest number of cases. Cholera spreads via contaminated food and water.

Advice for all Knights and Dames – Please read above

Consider: Vaccination, if travelling to an outbreak area and Carrying water purification supplies with you

Burundi: Cholera outbreak

Level: Notice *Location:* Burundi; *Category:* Cholera

An outbreak of cholera is ongoing in six health districts of Burundi including Bujumbura Mairie Nord, Bujumbura Mairie Sud, Bubanza, Kabazi, Mpanda and Nyanza Lac. A decline in number of cases has been recorded in September as compared to the previous month. Other health districts remain at risk of sporadic outbreaks as the disease is consistently present in the country.

Advice for all Knights and Dames – Please read above

Consider: Vaccination, if travelling to an outbreak area and Carrying water purification supplies with you.

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Cape Verde: Ongoing Zika transmission

Level: Advisory **Location:** Cape Verde; **Category:** Zika virus

Cases of locally-acquired Zika infection have been reported in Cape Verde. Zika is transmitted primarily through mosquito bites. Sexual transmission occurs. Although symptoms of Zika are usually mild and self-limited, severe and irreversible birth defects may occur in the babies of women infected when pregnant.

Advice for all Knights and Dames : The same as above

Congo: Cholera outbreak in Mbamou Island, Brazzaville **Level:** Notice **Location:** Congo; **Category:** Cholera

A cholera outbreak has been reported on Mbamou Island, Brazzaville. There have been some fatalities. Cholera is consistently present in the Republic of Congo and is spread via contaminated food and water.

Advice for all Knights and Dames : Please read above

Consider: Vaccination, if travelling to an outbreak area and unsanitary conditions cannot be avoided. Carrying water purification supplies with you.

Guinea-Bissau: Zika in Bijagos archipelago

Level: Advisory **Location:** Guinea-Bissau; **Category:** Zika virus

The Bijagos archipelago continues to report new cases as local transmission gets established in the region. Zika is transmitted primarily through mosquito bites. Sexual transmission occurs. Although symptoms are usually mild and self-limited, complications can occur. Pregnant women are advised to discuss their risks with their doctor and consider postponing travel. Those who are in Guinea-Bissau should protect themselves against mosquito bites and sexual transmission. After travel to the country, ongoing precautions against sexual transmission are recommended.

Advice for all Knights and Dames - Please read above

Assessment The virus is likely present in the local mosquito population and further human cases may occur.

Consider: Providing a travel health kit, including insect repellent and Stipulating a medical pre-travel consultation.

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Nigeria: Polio in Borno state *Level:* Advisory *Category:* Polio
Location: Gwoza, Borno, Jere Local Government Area, Borno - Nigeria;

Cases of wild poliovirus have been detected in Nigeria after a gap of two years. At least three children in Borno state have been infected. Polio is a highly contagious viral illness that causes paralysis and death. The infection is spread through ingestion of contaminated food or water, or directly from an infected person. There is no cure for polio but it can be prevented by vaccine and careful selection of food and water. Risk to the business traveler is low.

Advice for all Knights and Dames :

- All travelers are recommended to be fully immunized against polio (including a booster) before they arrive in Nigeria.
- In addition, the World Health Organization recommends a polio booster to exit Nigeria, within four weeks to twelve months of travel, for all residents and travelers who have been in the country for more than four weeks.
- Vaccination should be recorded on the International Certificate of Vaccination or Prophylaxis (ICVP). You may be required to show this certificate in order to depart Nigeria and to gain entry into other countries when arriving from Nigeria.
- Drink only boiled or bottled water, or sealed carbonated beverages. Avoid ice.
- Choose food that has been thoroughly cooked while fresh and is served hot. Avoid raw fruits and vegetables (including salad).
- Pay attention to hygiene. Wash your hands frequently, especially before eating.

More details

At least three children in Gwoza and Jere Local Government Areas (LGA) have been infected with wild poliovirus type one (WPV1). Two of the children developed paralysis in July, the third had no symptoms and was identified as a close contact. Investigations show that these cases are linked to a strain of virus that was detected in Borno in 2011. Officials admit that gaps exist in polio surveillance in some remote locations of Borno and neighbouring areas. As a response, large scale immunisation campaigns are being planned.

In addition to the wild polio cases, vaccine-derived poliovirus type 2 (cVDPV2) was detected in specimens collected from a healthy household contact of one of the children with WPV1. Analysis showed that this strain has been circulating in the area for 2 years without detection.

Previously, polio was consistently present (endemic) in Nigeria and significant number of cases were recorded each year. However in September 2015, the country was taken off the list of polio-endemic countries more than 12 months after the last case was detected.

Assessment

Low-level transmission of WPV can occur, especially in very remote areas where vaccination is difficult. Risk to the business traveller is low.

Consider: Polio immunisation for travellers and employees residing or visiting affected areas.

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Americas: Ongoing Zika transmission

Level: Advisory

Location: Anguilla (UK); Antigua and Barbuda; Argentina; Aruba (Netherlands); Bahamas; Barbados; Belize; Bolivia; Bonaire (Netherlands), Saba - Bonaire (Netherlands); Brazil; British Virgin Islands (UK); Cayman Islands (UK); Colombia; Costa Rica; Cuba; Curacao (Netherlands); Dominica; Dominican Republic; Ecuador; El Salvador; French Guiana (France); Grenada; Guadeloupe (France); Guatemala; Guyana; Haiti; Honduras; Jamaica; Martinique (France); Mexico; Nicaragua; Panama; Paraguay; Peru; Puerto Rico (US); Saint-Barthélemy - ; St Kitts and Nevis; St Lucia; St Martin (France); St Vincent and the Grenadines; St Maarten (Netherlands); - Bonaire (Netherlands), St Eustatius (Netherlands); Suriname; Turks and Caicos Islands; Trinidad and Tobago; US Virgin Islands (US); Venezuela;

Category: Zika virus

Locally-acquired Zika infection has been reported from approximately 50 countries and territories in the Americas region. In some locations transmission is widespread and growing, in others, sporadic or declining. Zika is transmitted primarily through mosquito bites. While less common, sexual transmission occurs. Although symptoms are usually mild and self limited, severe and irreversible birth defects may occur in the babies of women infected when pregnant. Pregnant women should consider delaying travel to Zika-affected areas. Those who are in affected areas should protect themselves against mosquito bites and sexual transmission. After travel to the affected areas, ongoing precautions against sexual transmission are recommended. The situation is continuing to evolve.

Advice for all Knights and Dames - Please read above

Jamaica: Dengue cases rise **Level:** Notice **Location:** Jamaica; **Category:** Dengue fever

An increase in dengue cases has been reported. The disease activity is much higher than that observed in 2015. Dengue is consistently present in Jamaica. It is spread by mosquitoes, and is present in both rural and urban areas. Dengue can cause a range of symptoms and has no particular treatment. Some people, especially those who have been infected before, get a more severe form that can lead to fatal complications. Although a vaccine has been developed, it is only available in a small number of countries and is not recommended for travellers. Prevent infection by avoiding mosquito bites.

Advice for all Knights and Dames : please read above

Puerto Rico (US): Increase in dengue fever

Level: Notice **Location:** Puerto Rico (US); **Category:** Dengue fever

An increase in dengue cases has been reported. The disease activity is much higher than that observed in 2015. Dengue is consistently present in Puerto Rico. It is spread by mosquitoes, and is present in both rural and urban areas. Dengue can cause a range of

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symptoms and has no particular treatment. Some people, especially those who have been infected before, get a more severe form that can lead to fatal complications. Although a vaccine has been developed, it is only available in a small number of countries and is not recommended for travellers. Prevent infection by avoiding mosquito bites.

Advice for all Knights and Dames : Please Read above

US Virgin Islands (US): Conjunctivitis outbreak *Level:* Notice *Location:* Saint Thomas - US Virgin Islands (US); *Category:* Adenoviruses, Conjunctivitis

An outbreak of conjunctivitis has been reported in St Thomas. Health officials have confirmed it as Epidemic Keratoconjunctivitis (EKC), a highly contagious infection of the eye (more severe than pink eye) often caused by adenoviruses. The infection is transmitted directly from an infected person, or by touching a contaminated object (including your hands) to your eyes. Viral infections of the eye usually resolve on their own without treatment. Symptoms include pain, redness and swelling of the eye with a watery discharge. In some cases, sensitivity to light and blurred vision can occur. Follow strict hygiene measures, avoid touching your eyes and disinfect surfaces often to prevent infection.

Advice for all Knights and Dames :

- Pay attention to hygiene. Wash your hands thoroughly and frequently.
 - Do not touch your eyes.
 - Do not share personal hygiene or grooming items such as washcloths or make-up.
 - Disinfect surfaces often.
 - Avoid contact with sick people.
-

Venezuela: Diphtheria cases *Level:* Notice *Category:* Diphtheria
Location: Estado Bolívar, Sucre, Nueva Esparta - Venezuela;

Cases of diphtheria have been reported from Caroni, Heres and Sifontes municipalities in Bolivar state and in Sucre and Nueva Esparta states. Some fatalities have been recorded. Diphtheria is a serious, potentially fatal, bacterial infection. The disease is highly contagious and spreads when infected people cough or sneeze droplets into the air. Early symptoms include fever and sore throat followed by episodes of rapid and violent coughing. Most cases occur in people who have never been vaccinated, or have been vaccinated inadequately. A booster vaccine is recommended every 10 years as an adult or if travelling to an area where diphtheria is widespread. Prevention is by vaccination.

Advice for all Knights and Dames :

- Ensure you are fully immunized against diphtheria before travelling.
- Check your vaccination records If you are unsure about your immunity, talk to your doctor.
- Practice good hygiene to prevent infection. Avoid contact with people who are obviously sick.

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- Seek medical care if you develop diphtheria symptoms.
- Call before visiting in person, so staff can protect themselves and other patients from this contagious infection.

Asia & the Pacific: Ongoing Zika transmission *Level:* Advisory
***Location:* American Samoa (US); Fiji; Marshall Islands; Micronesia; New Caledonia (France); Papua New Guinea; Samoa; Tonga;**
***Category:* Zika virus**

Local transmission of Zika virus is ongoing in parts of the Pacific. Zika transmission is widespread and growing in some locations, with sporadic or declining activity in others. Zika is transmitted primarily through mosquito bites. Sexual transmission occurs. Although symptoms of Zika are usually mild and self-limited, severe and irreversible birth defects may occur in the babies of women infected when pregnant.

Advice for all Knights and Dames - Read above

India: Increase in mosquito borne diseases

***Level:* Advisory *Location:* India; *Category:* Chikungunya, Dengue fever, Malaria**

Mosquito-borne illnesses continue to be reported from many states including Delhi and the National Capital Region (NCR). These mainly comprise chikungunya, dengue and malaria. Many cases go unreported and therefore the actual number of cases is expected to be much higher than the official numbers. Most have symptoms of fever and aches and may involve a rash. There is no specific treatment for chikungunya and dengue but there is medication available to prevent and to treat malaria. Although a vaccine for dengue has been developed, it is only available in a few countries and is not currently used for travellers. First-line prevention against all these diseases is by avoiding mosquito bites.

Advice for all Knights and Dames

Some groups are at a higher risk of developing severe illness due to chikungunya and malaria such as children below five years, pregnant women, people with weakened immune systems, non-immune migrants and travellers.

When outdoors, wear clothing that covers most of your body (long sleeves, long pants, socks).

- Use an effective insect repellent that contains DEET, Picaridin, PMD, or IR3535.
- Ensure windows are covered with fly-wire. Use "knock-down" insect spray to kill mosquitoes in your room.
- Consider using an insecticide-treated bed net.
- Choose air conditioned accommodation if possible.
- Seek medical attention if you develop a high fever or a rash.

More details / Please read on last pages about the diseases

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Nationwide, an increased activity of mosquito borne illnesses has been noted. Over 40,000 cases of chikungunya and 80,000 cases of dengue have been reported this year including several fatalities. Compared to 2015, chikungunya has doubled and dengue has affected fewer states severely. The most affected areas include Delhi, National Capital Region (NCR), Karnataka and Maharashtra. High dengue fever activity has also been recorded in Gujarat, Odisha, Kerala, Maharashtra and West Bengal states. The risk of malaria also persists in Delhi with at least 500 confirmed cases in the capital this year. Local health facilities may be under significant additional pressure. Authorities have increased measures to control the spread of these diseases however the situation is predicted to worsen.

Chikungunya, dengue and malaria are consistently present in India and outbreaks occur annually.

Consider: Providing a travel health kit, including insect repellent and stipulating a medical pre-travel consultation to consider the need for antimalarial medication.

India: Increase in scrub typhus in Himachal Pradesh *Level:* Notice *Location:* State of Himāchal Pradesh - India; *Category:* Scrub typhus

An increase in scrub typhus cases was reported in parts of Himachal Pradesh including capital Shimla. The rising trend is reported to have continued through early November. Several districts such as Bilaspur, Mandi and Solan have been affected. Some people have died. The illness is common in India. Scrub typhus is a bacterial disease spread to humans by infected mite bites. The symptoms include an eschar (an area of dead skin) at the site of the bite, fever and swollen lymph nodes. Timely treatment is essential. If left untreated, complications may develop and these can be fatal. There is no vaccine. Prevent mite bites to avoid the illness.

Advice for all Knights and Dames :

- Avoid mite habitats (such as wooded areas, grass, shrubs and areas infested with rodents).
- Wear protective clothing such as long pants with tight cuffs and closed toed shoes and socks. Tuck pant legs into socks.
- Use an insect repellent containing DEET on uncovered skin.
- Consider treating clothes with permethrin. (Do not apply permethrin directly to the skin)
- After visiting an at-risk area, search for mites on your body and clothing. Remove mites promptly. Shower and wash clothing.

Malaysia: Zika transmission *Level:* Advisory *Location:* Malaysia; *Category:* Zika virus

Local transmission of Zika virus has been reported in parts of Malaysia including, Likas, Sabah and Johor Bahru. Increased surveillance and mosquito control activities are ongoing. Zika may be established in the local mosquito population however, the extent and intensity of spread is uncertain at this time. Zika is transmitted primarily through mosquito bites.

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Sexual transmission occurs. Although symptoms of Zika are usually mild and self-limited, there is a risk of severe and irreversible birth defects in the babies of women infected when pregnant. Pregnant women are advised to discuss their risks with their doctor and consider postponing travel to any area where Zika virus transmission is ongoing. Those who are in affected areas should protect themselves against mosquito bites and sexual transmission. After travel, ongoing precautions against sexual transmission are recommended.

Advice for all Knights and Dames – Please Read Above

More details

Since the beginning of September there have been at least seven confirmed cases of Zika, including an imported case from Singapore. Testing on five of the Zika patients indicate that the virus contracted locally is from the "Asian lineage". Two cases, including the imported case, are similar to the post-2007 strain, currently circulating in French Polynesia since 2013. The other three cases are from the older "Asian" lineage which has been previously circulating in Southeast Asia.

Zika may have been present in mosquitoes in Malaysia for some time. A report [published in May 2015](#) confirms Zika infection in a traveller who visited Sabah and peninsular Malaysia in 2014.

Assessment

The situation is continuing to evolve. The geographic spread within Malaysia, and transmission intensity is uncertain. An increase in cases is likely as screening and testing is increased. Further cases may be sporadic in nature, however an outbreak with high case numbers and rapid growth might occur.

Thailand: Zika virus *Level:* Advisory *Location:* Thailand; *Category:* Zika virus

Locally-acquired Zika cases have been reported from a number of regions including Bangkok, BuengKan, Chiang Mai, Chanthaburi, and Phetchabun. Zika is transmitted primarily through mosquito bites. While less common, sexual transmission occurs. Although symptoms are usually mild and self-limited, severe and irreversible birth defects may occur in the babies of women infected when pregnant. Pregnant women are advised to discuss their risks with their doctor and consider delaying travel to Zika-affected areas. Those who are in affected areas should protect themselves against mosquito bites and sexual transmission. After travel to the affected areas, ongoing precautions against sexual transmission are recommended.

Advice for all Knights and Dames - Please see above

Mid East Saudi Arabia: MERS-CoV *Level:* Advisory *Location:* Saudi Arabia; *Category:* Coronavirus

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Cases of Middle East Respiratory syndrome (MERS-CoV) continue to be reported across Saudi Arabia. In November, cases have been recorded in Bahrah, Buraidah, Kharj, Najran and Tabuk. Overall the risk to travellers is low if precautions are taken. Avoid contact with sick people and practice good general hygiene. Avoid contact with camels and do not eat or drink raw camel products.

Advice for all Knights and Dames

The risk of severe illness is higher among people with chronic diseases or a weakened immune system. Do the following:

- Avoid contact with sick people, including in healthcare facilities.
- Avoid contact with live animals, especially camels, and their environments such as farms, markets or barns.
- Pay attention to general hygiene:
 - Wash your hands frequently.
 - Avoid touching your face.
 - Keep some distance from people who are coughing, sneezing or appear sick.
 - Ensure any food or drink for consumption is safe - thoroughly washed, peeled, boiled, cooked through etc. Do not eat or drink raw camel products including raw camel milk, camel urine and undercooked meat.
- Should you require medical attention, call any assistance center and we will arrange an appropriate referral.
- Anyone who develops a fever and respiratory symptoms (such as cough) which are more than mild should seek medical attention and mention their travel history. You may also be required to disclose information about your medical and travel history when visiting other countries.

More details

In November, cases have been reported from the cities of Bahrah, Buraidah, Kharj, Najran and Tabuk Nationally, over 160 cases of MERS have been confirmed to date in 2016. While some of those infected had direct exposure to camels, or direct contact with people with MERS, for others the source of infection is unknown. Some people who have tested positive for the virus have no symptoms, some have had a mild illness, while others are critically ill with organ failure, and fatalities continue to be reported.

In October, there was an outbreak at a hospital in Hofuf city where four people were infected. An additional case outside of the hospital outbreak was also detected, this individual was a household contact of the hospital index case. Earlier in June, another outbreak at a hospital occurred in Riyadh which left at least 27 people infected.

Assessment

The virus is likely present in the environment in Saudi Arabia. "Sporadic" cases and human-to-human transmission has been ongoing since 2012. Outbreaks of MERS-CoV involving health care facilities have occurred previously in the country, in Riyadh and Hofuf. MERS-

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CoV has also been repeatedly exported by travellers from Saudi Arabia to other countries. Risk is especially higher in people with weakened immune systems

Niger / Mali: Outbreak of Rift Valley Fever *Level:* Notice *Location:* Niger; Mali; *Category:* Rift Valley fever RVF

An outbreak of Rift Valley Fever (RVF) which began in August, continues along the Mali-Niger border. Cases continue to be reported from several districts, although the most affected area is Tchintabaraden district in Tahoua region of Niger, located alongside Mali's Menaka region. The majority affected are nomadic populations. RVF can be transmitted to humans via contact with the blood, organs, or bodily fluids of infected animals. Infection can also occur through the bite of an infected mosquito or other bloodsucking insects. Symptoms of RVF may include a mild flu-like illness. However, in some cases it is severe and can be fatal. Prevention is through avoiding contact with potentially infected animals and their fluids/organs, preventing mosquito and other insect bites, and avoiding unpasteurised dairy products.

Advice for all Knights and Dames : Avoid contact with potentially infected animals.

- Do not touch their tissues, organs, blood or body fluids.
- Do not drink unpasteurised dairy products.

Prevent insect bites while outdoors, indoors or asleep.

- Wear light-colored clothing that covers most of the body (long sleeves and long pants, socks).
 - Use an effective insect repellent, such as one containing DEET, Picaridin, PMD, or IR3535. Reapply after swimming or excessive sweating.
 - Check that there is fly-wire on the windows.
 - Use "knock-down" insect spray to kill mosquitoes and other insects in your room.
 - Use electric insecticide vaporisers if insects can get into your room. Follow the manufacturer's instructions.
 - Choose air-conditioned accommodation where possible.
 - Consider using an insecticide-treated bed net.
-

Burkina Faso: Dengue outbreak *Level:* Notice *Location:* Burkina Faso; *Category:* Dengue fever

Cases of dengue fever have been reported in several parts of the country since early August 2016. Surveillance for dengue is limited in Burkina Faso but the threat of dengue is present in much of the country as the mosquitoes which transmit the disease are widespread. Prevent infection by avoiding mosquito bites.

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Advice for all Knights and Dames : Please read above

More details The World Health Organization has identified more than 1,050 probable cases from around 1,260 suspected. At least 15 people have died from dengue. All 12 districts of Ouagadougou have been affected and two other regions have identified small case numbers including the Sahel Region in the north and the Hauts-Bassins region in the west. Burkina Faso has limited diagnostic capability for dengue but the disease is considered to be endemic. Malaria, which is a more pressing concern, shares some symptoms with dengue.

Chad: Hepatitis E outbreak in Salamat *Level:* Notice *Location:* Chad - Chad; *Category:* Hepatitis E

An outbreak of hepatitis E has been reported in the Salamat Region. There have been several fatalities. Hepatitis E is spread by contaminated food and water. Symptoms include yellow discolouration of the skin (jaundice), loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting and fever. Hepatitis E is usually a mild disease but complicated cases can be fatal.

Advice for all Knights and Dames:

- Maintain a high level of personal hygiene; wash hands frequently with soap and water.
- Drink only bottled or treated water or hot beverages.
- Select safe food. Meals should be thoroughly cooked and served hot. Avoid under-cooked or raw meat, fish or shellfish. Eat only fruit that you peel yourself.

Congo (DRC): Cholera outbreak *Level:* Notice *Location:* Congo (DRC); *Category:* Cholera

An outbreak of cholera continues to spread, the latest provinces to be affected are Central Kongo, Haut Katanga and Nord Kivu. Many other provinces are affected, particularly those along the Congo river. Cholera spreads via contaminated food and water. Symptoms include vomiting and profuse, watery diarrhoea which can lead to severe dehydration. Travellers staying in quality accommodation are at lower risk. All travellers are advised to be careful to select safe food and water, and pay close attention to hygiene. An effective oral vaccine is available in some countries.

Advice for all Knights and Dames : Please Read above

Ghana: Cholera outbreak Central Region *Level:* Notice *Location:* Central Region - Ghana; *Category:* Cholera

A cholera outbreak continues in the Central Region. The Cape Coast Municipal is recording the majority of cases. Other affected districts include Abura-Asebu-Kwamankese, Asikuma-Odoben-Brakwa, Komenda Edina Abrem (KEEA), Mfantseman Municipality and Twifo Hermang. Cholera is consistently present in Ghana and is spread via contaminated food and

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water. Symptoms include vomiting and profuse, watery diarrhoea which can lead to severe dehydration. Travellers staying in quality accommodation are at low risk. Be vigilant in choosing safe food and water, pay strict attention to hygiene and consider vaccination.

Advice for all Knights and Dames : Please read above

Niger: Malaria outbreak *Level:* Advisory *Location:* Niger; *Category:* Malaria

There is a resurgence of malaria this year across the country. The activity is higher than that seen in last three years. Malaria is endemic or consistently present in all parts of Niger. The disease is spread through mosquito bites and can be fatal unless promptly treated. Symptoms can develop as early as six days or as late as several months after exposure. Early malaria symptoms may be flu-like, such as head/body aches and malaise. Chemoprophylaxis and mosquito bite avoidance help prevent malaria.

Malaria in this country is resistant to the medication chloroquine. Consult your travel health professional about chemoprophylaxis. Consider enhanced bite prevention measures such as insecticide treated clothing and mosquito nets.

Advice for all Knights and Dames - Prevent mosquito bites while outdoors:

- Wear clothing that covers most of the body (long sleeves and long pants).
- Use an effective insect repellent, such as one that contains DEET, Picaridin, PMD, or IR3535. Follow the manufacturer's instructions, and reapply after swimming or excessive sweating.

Prevent mosquito bites while you are indoors or asleep:

- Ensure windows are covered with fly-wire.
- Use "knock-down" insect spray to kill mosquitoes in your room.
- Choose air conditioned accommodation if possible.
- If you develop a fever with flu-like symptoms, seek medical attention promptly. Tell your care provider that you have visited an area where malaria may be circulating. Malaria symptoms can occur months, or even a year, after exposure.

More details – Please read about the disease on last pages of this report

A nationwide spike in malarial activity has been observed in the last few months. Badly affected regions include Tahoua, Diffa, Maradi and Zinder. Although control measures have been stepped up, authorities anticipate the cases might increase further.

Malaria occurs across the country and thousands of cases are reported annually.

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Assessment The outbreak is anticipated to continue further.

Americas Haiti: Hurricane Matthew: health implications, cholera outbreak

Level: Advisory **Location:** Haiti - Haiti; **Category:** Cyclone, Cholera

Hurricane Matthew has devastated areas of Haiti, with hundreds of injuries and fatalities, and displaced over 2 million people. Essential infrastructure and services, including power, telecommunications, transport and medical facilities, are damaged and disrupted. Cholera cases continue to occur throughout the country, including in areas that were not directly affected by the hurricane. Acute respiratory infections, influenza-like-illnesses, fever and other acute diarrhoeal diseases have been recorded. Malaria cases have also been reported. Defer non-essential travel.

Advice for all Knights and Dames Defer non-essential travel. For those who will still travel, such as relief workers, prior to travel:

- Consult a travel health doctor or clinic for an individual health assessment.
- Ensure routine vaccinations are up-to-date, and consider additional vaccinations (typhoid, hepatitis A, cholera).
- Consider malaria preventive medication
- Pack a first aid kit, and consider including water purification supplies.

While in Haiti:

- Prevent mosquito bites. Use an effective insect repellent, such as one containing DEET. Reapply as necessary.
 - Avoid flood waters. If you must wade through waters, cover all cuts, wear protective clothing and footwear, and wash thoroughly afterwards. Treat skin infections early.
 - Practice good hygiene. Wash your hands frequently.
 - Drink only boiled or bottled water, or canned or carbonated beverages.
 - Select food carefully. Choose food that has been thoroughly cooked while fresh and is served hot. Avoid pre-peeled fruit and raw vegetables.
-

Jamaica: Hand, Foot and Mouth disease **Level:** Notice **Location:** Jamaica;
Category: Hand Foot and Mouth Disease

A spike in cases of hand, foot and mouth disease (HFMD) has been reported. Kingston, St. Andrew and St. Catherine are particularly affected. Cases have occurred mostly among children. Symptoms include a fever, sores in the mouth and a red rash on the hands and feet that may blister. The illness spreads from person-to-person and occasionally it can be severe. Maintain strict hygiene measures to prevent spread of infection. There is no vaccine for HFMD.

Advice for all Knights and Dames :

- Wash your hands frequently and thoroughly with soap and water - especially after using the toilet or changing a diaper.

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Fameraid Air Rescue International – Weekly Medical Alert 49

- Do not share food, drinks or eating utensils.
- Avoid close contact, such as kissing and hugging.
- Disinfect contaminated surfaces and items by washing with a diluted chlorine-containing product or an iodized disinfectant.

If someone has HFMD symptoms, they should: Stay at home.

- Ensure adequate fluid intake.
- Seek medical attention if the rash is accompanied by a persistent high fever, vomiting or a seizure.

Montserrat (UK): Zika virus transmission

Level: Advisory **Location:** Montserrat (UK); **Category:** Zika virus

Local transmission of the Zika virus has been reported in Montserrat. Zika is transmitted primarily through mosquito bites. Sexual transmission occurs. Although symptoms of Zika are usually mild and self-limited, there is a risk of severe and irreversible birth defects in the babies of women infected when pregnant. Pregnant women are advised to discuss their risks with their doctor and consider postponing travel to any area where Zika virus transmission is ongoing. Those who are in affected areas should protect themselves against mosquito bites and sexual transmission. After travel, ongoing precautions against sexual transmission are recommended.

Advice for all Knights and Dames - Please read above

More details

Locally-acquired cases of Zika infection have been reported, indicating the virus is present in the mosquito population. [The U.S Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) has added Montserrat to the list of locations with a level 2 travel notice recommending enhanced precautions against the virus. Public Health England advises that Montserrat is a high risk location for Zika virus infection.

Assessment

The situation is continuing to evolve. The transmission intensity is uncertain. An increase in cases is likely as screening and testing is increased. Further cases may be sporadic in nature, however an outbreak with high case numbers and rapid growth might occur.

St Vincent and the Grenadines: Hand, foot and mouth disease

Level: Notice **Location:** St Vincent and the Grenadines; **Category:** Hand Foot and Mouth Disease

An increase in hand, foot and mouth disease (HFMD) has been reported. The majority of those infected are children. Symptoms are usually mild and include a fever, ulcers in the

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mouth and a rash on the hands and feet that may blister. The illness spreads from person-to-person and occasionally it can be severe. There is no vaccine. Prevent infection by observing general hygiene.

Advice for all Knights and Dames Do the following: Please read above

United States: Cryptosporidiosis in central Ohio

Level: Notice **Category:** Cryptosporidiosis
Location: Columbus, Franklin, Delaware - United States;

Cases of cryptosporidiosis continue in central Ohio. Affected counties are Columbus, Franklin and Delaware. The outbreak is not linked to a single location, many of those infected visited a number of recreational water facilities in the affected areas. Cryptosporidiosis is caused by a parasite transmitted via contaminated food, water and surfaces. Symptoms include diarrhea, stomach cramps, nausea, vomiting and fever. Children, elderly and those with weak immune systems are more susceptible to the infection. Practicing good hygiene helps in preventing the infection. Authorities are also advising visitors to pools and water parks to avoid swallowing the water.

Advice for all Knights and Dames - Do the following:

- Avoid swimming pools and other recreational waters if you or your family member has diarrhea.
- Take a shower before going in the water.
- Do not swallow water while swimming.
- Take children on frequent bathroom breaks and avoid changing diapers by the pool.
- Seek medical attention if you develop symptoms, especially if you are higher risk for more severe illness.

Observe routine hygiene:

- Wash hands frequently using soap and water and Select safe food and water

United States: Locally acquired Zika in Florida

Level: Advisory **Category:** Zika virus
Location: Miami-Dade County - United States;

Local transmission of the Zika virus continues to be reported in Miami-Dade County. Authorities advise that active transmission is occurring in a one square mile area bounded by NW 79th St to the North, NW 63rd St to the South, NW 10th Ave to the West and N Miami Ave to the East and in Miami Beach. Some international authorities, including the CDC, consider the risk may extend beyond these areas. Pregnant women are advised not to travel to areas with Zika transmission. Everyone who does travel to affected areas should take steps to prevent mosquito bites and sexual transmission of Zika.

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Advice for all Knights and Dames - Please read above

More details

The Florida Department of Health has announced another area of Miami-Dade county with locally occurring transmission, bounded by NW 79th St to the North, NW 63rd St to the South, NW 10th Ave to the West and N Miami Ave to the East, in addition to the Miami Beach 4.5 square-mile area from 8th to 63rd Streets. The Wynwood area was declared no longer active on 19 September. The United States CDC has depicted active Zika transmission as a red area. A “Zika cautionary area” is depicted in yellow and represents the rest of Miami-Dade County. The CDC advises pregnant women, women trying to conceive and their partners, to avoid travel to all of Miami-Dade County.

Since the end of July, over 200 locally-acquired cases have been identified, including in visitors to Florida. The majority were acquired Miami-Dade County. However, several cases have been identified outside these areas - in Broward, Palm Beach and Pinellas counties. Some international authorities consider Zika transmission risk extends beyond these areas and have issued travel notices advising pregnant women to postpone travel to these counties or in some cases the state.

Assessment

A new area of active local transmission of Zika in Miami-Dade county indicates the potential for the virus to cause infection outside currently identified active transmission areas. Mosquito-borne infection may occur elsewhere in the city. Public health authorities continue to implement significant measures to prevent widespread transmission. The outbreak is expected to be limited in numbers, similar to previous outbreaks of dengue fever in Florida, however there is potential for further geographic spread.

United States: Mumps in Arkansas *Level:* Notice *Location:* Arkansas - United States;
Category: Mumps

Cases of mumps continue to be reported in Arkansas. Affected counties include Benton, Clark, Faulkner, Madison, Pulaski and Washington. It has impacted a number of workplaces and schools. Mumps is caused by a virus that spreads from person-to-person via infected droplets. It is highly contagious and nearly all cases occur among unvaccinated people. Symptoms include fever, painful, swollen glands, pain on swallowing and in men, the testes can become inflamed. Serious complications can occur. All travellers should ensure they are fully vaccinated against mumps.

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China: Bird flu in humans *Level:* Advisory *Location:* China; *Category:* Avian Influenza H5N1, Avian Influenza H7N9

Sporadic cases of bird flu H7N9 continue to be reported in China. In November, new cases have been recorded in Jiangsu and Zhejiang provinces. A number of other bird flu strains including H5N1, H5N6 and H9N2 have also infected humans in the country. Bird flu can cause a severe respiratory illness which may be fatal. The overall risk of infection appears to be low.

Advice for all Knights and Dames - Travel can proceed. Do the following if in an affected area:

- Do not go to live animal markets, poultry farms or pig farms.
- Avoid unnecessary contact with animals.
- Do not handle any birds, even if they appear well. Prevent children from doing so.
- Avoid touching any surfaces that may be contaminated by bird droppings. Do not swim in any body of water that is used by birds.
- Always maintain high levels of personal hygiene. Frequent hand washing is very important. Wash hands before and after food preparation and before eating.
- Thoroughly cook all poultry and poultry products, including eggs. Thoroughly wash any objects that touch the raw products and sanitize kitchen surfaces.
- Monitor the advice of local health authorities - they may screen travellers returning from China.
- Members in China who develop flu-like symptoms should call the assistance centre for advice before seeking care at a medical facility.

More details

Since October 2015, at least 120 cases of H7N9 were confirmed in several provinces of China including Zhejiang, Jiangsu, Guangdong, Fujian, Hunan, Anhui, Hebei, Jiangxi, Shandong, Hubei and Liaoning (in decreasing order of cases reported). Cases were also recorded in Beijing, Shanghai and Tianjin during this period. A northward spread of the disease has been observed this year. Most of the cases were exposed to poultry in the weeks prior to falling ill.

H7N9 was first reported in March 2013, since then around 800 people have been infected across much of southern and eastern China. Human-to-human transmission of H7N9 has occurred in a limited fashion between close contacts in the past. Travel-related cases of H7N9 have also been reported in Hong Kong, Taiwan, Canada and Malaysia.

Additionally, cases of bird flu H9N2 have been reported sporadically from Guangdong, Henan, Jiangxi and Yunnan since October last year. Although most of the infected have been children, cases have occurred among adults. The majority had a history of exposure to poultry. During this period, cases of H5N6 have also been reported in Anhui, Guangdong, Hubei and Hunan.

In early 2016, a single case of H5N1 was confirmed in Sichuan province.

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Assessment

The virus may be consistently present in birds in many areas of China. More sporadic cases are likely to be reported in people who have direct contact with live poultry. There may be a seasonal increase during cooler months. Small clusters of human to human transmission may be recorded in family members and others who are in close contact with symptomatic people, however the risk to the general traveller who avoids contact with live poultry and their environment is low.

India: Japanese encephalitis in some states *Level:* Notice *Category:* Japanese encephalitis *Location:* Orissa, Uttar Pradesh - India;

An outbreak of Japanese encephalitis (JE) continues. Malkangiri district in Odisha is largely affected and has suffered a number of fatalities. Puri has also reported some activity. As of mid-October, JE cases have been detected in parts of eastern Uttar Pradesh as well. JE is persistently present in many areas of India and cases occur year round. It is spread by mosquito bites. Most people infected do not experience any symptoms. However those who do fall sick have nausea, vomiting, headache and fever. Severe complications (including paralysis, seizures and permanent brain damage) and fatalities can occur. Prevent infection through preventing mosquito bites. Vaccination may be recommended for people whose activities put them at higher risk.

Advice for all Knights and Dames - Talk to your doctor about Japanese encephalitis vaccination if you plan to visit the rural areas, or spend a significant amount of time outdoors in areas outside of cities.

Prevent mosquito bites.

- When outdoors, wear light-coloured clothing that covers most of your body (long sleeves, long pants, socks).
- Use an effective insect repellent that contains DEET, Picaridin, PMD, or IR3535.
- Ensure windows are covered with fly-wire.
- Use "knock-down" insect spray to kill mosquitoes in your room.
- Choose air conditioned accommodation if possible.

India: Leptospirosis outbreak *Level:* Notice *Category:* Leptospirosis *Location:* Mumbai, Maharashtra, India, Karnataka - India;

Cases of leptospirosis have been reported in states of Maharashtra and Karnataka. Most of the cases have been recorded in Mumbai, Maharashtra. Udipi region in Karnataka state has also recorded a few fatalities. Leptospirosis is always present in India. The bacterial disease is mainly spread through contaminated water entering the body through the skin or mucous membranes (eyes, nose, or mouth). Symptoms are often mild and flu-like, but the infection can be severe. Untreated it can cause organ failure which can be fatal. Antibiotics are used to treat the disease.

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- Wash your hands with soap regularly and wash any skin cuts/abrasions thoroughly.
- Avoid contact with standing water, or floodwater, which could be contaminated.

If contact is unavoidable:

- wear protective clothing such as thigh-high waterproof boots and cover all cuts. Wash thoroughly afterwards.
- Speak to your doctor about using the antibiotic doxycycline to prevent infection.

Japan: Tsunami warnings northeastern Honshu *Level:* Advisory

Location: Miyagi prefecture, Fukushima prefecture - Japan; *Category:* Earthquake, Tsunami

All tsunami warnings and advisories have been lifted by the Japan Meteorological Agency (JMA) at 12.50 (local time) on 22 November. An earthquake at 0550 local time had caused tsunami warnings for an area that included the Fukushima nuclear power plant, the plant that was damaged by the earthquake and tsunami in 2011 causing a serious nuclear accident.

The plant still holds water contaminated with radiation and major efforts are ongoing to ensure protection of the surrounding environment. At present, there is no indication of further damage or leaking of contaminated water. Authorities are continuing to assess the situation.

Advice for all Knights and Dames - Avoid or immediately leave low-lying coastal areas affected by tsunami warnings and advisories and follow the advice of authorities.

Monitor the [Japan Meteorological Agency Tsunami Warnings/ Advisories](#), this alert and our travel security alerts on Japan for further details

Myanmar: Japanese encephalitis *Level:* Notice *Location:* Myanmar; *Category:* Japanese encephalitis

The Ayeyarwady Region continues to record cases of Japanese encephalitis (JE), particularly in rural areas. Several fatalities have occurred. JE is spread by mosquito bites and is consistently present throughout Myanmar. Most people infected do not experience any symptoms however, those who do fall sick have nausea, vomiting, headache and fever. Severe complications (including paralysis, seizures and permanent brain damage) and fatalities can occur. Prevent mosquito bites and consider vaccination if you are participating activities that put you at higher risk (such as trekking, camping, spending time outdoors in rural areas).

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Myanmar: Zika virus transmission *Level:* Advisory *Location:* Myanmar; *Category:* Zika virus

The first case of Zika virus infection has been reported in Yangon, Myanmar. Zika may be established in the local mosquito population however, the extent and intensity of spread is uncertain at this time. Zika is transmitted primarily through mosquito bites. Sexual transmission occurs. Although symptoms of Zika are usually mild and self-limited, there is a risk of severe and irreversible birth defects in the babies of women infected when pregnant. Pregnant women are advised to discuss their risks with their doctor and consider postponing travel to any area where Zika virus transmission is ongoing. Those who are in affected areas should protect themselves against mosquito bites and sexual transmission. After travel, ongoing precautions against sexual transmission are recommended.

Advice for all Knights and Dames - Please read above

More details

A 32-year-old pregnant woman, who is a foreign national living in Yangon, has tested positive for the Zika virus. Authorities have stepped up surveillance and control measures to prevent further spread. Zika may have been present in mosquitoes in Myanmar for some time. Many people who live in Myanmar could be immune. Travellers, who have no immunity, are at a greater risk of acquiring infection however, the level of risk in Myanmar is still not known.

In September, the [United States CDC](#) advised special travel considerations be taken by travellers to Myanmar and ten other Southeast Asian countries due to unknown Zika risk. This included advising pregnant women to consider postponing non-essential travel to these destinations.

Assessment

The situation is continuing to evolve. The geographic spread within Myanmar, and transmission intensity is uncertain. An increase in cases is likely as screening and testing is increased. Further cases may be sporadic in nature, however an outbreak with high case numbers and rapid growth might occur.

Nepal: Increased dengue fever and scrub typhus *Level:* Notice *Location:* Nepal; *Category:* Dengue fever, Scrub typhus

An increase in dengue fever and scrub typhus cases has been reported. Both diseases are present in many districts, including Kathmandu, however Chitwan and other districts of the Terai are most affected. Dengue is spread by mosquitoes while scrub typhus is spread via mites. Prevent infection by avoiding insect bites.

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New Zealand: Earthquake Health Implications *Level:* Advisory *Location:* New Zealand;
Category: Earthquake, Tsunami

The south island of New Zealand has experienced an earthquake of magnitude 7.8, causing significant damage to infrastructure and disruption of services. Major aftershocks are continuing. Details of damage and disruption are still emerging however, several casualties and some fatalities have been reported. Remain alert and follow the advice of the local authorities, including in and around coastal areas.

Advice for all Knights and Dames intending to conduct travel to earthquake-affected areas should contact the assistance centre for a pre-travel briefing covering safety preparations and the support required to ensure the trip is feasible.

If in the affected area: Monitor developments and heed all warnings. Follow all directives issued by the local authorities and emergency services including [New Zealand Civil Defence](#).

- Conserve water, and drink only boiled or bottled water, or canned or carbonated beverages where water supply may be contaminated.
- Avoid contact with contaminated water / sewer spills.
- Practice good hygiene. Wash your hands with soap and safe water, or use a hand sanitizer. This is especially important before preparing food or eating.
- Clean skin cuts and abrasions thoroughly. Treat skin infections early.

More details

Over 50 casualties and at least two deaths have been reported. There is disruption to transport, power and water supplies. Residents of some areas are being asked to conserve water supplies, and for other areas there is a boil water notice in place. Major aftershocks are continuing and are expected to continue over the next few months. Strong and unpredictable currents may continue to affect coastal areas. For details, see the Ministry of Civil Defence & Emergency Management [twitter account](#) and [website](#).

Health Implications

There is an immediate danger to people in the areas from aftershocks and interruptions to essential services. There may potentially be temporary shortages of safe food and water and medical supplies. Transportation issues may delay the appropriate treatment of injuries and illnesses. There is an increased risk of diarrhoeal illness from contaminated food and water, and food that has spoiled due to lack of refrigeration.

Assessment

There remains a danger to people in the area from aftershocks, landslides and interruptions to essential services, as well as temporary shortages of safe food and water.

Consider: Providing a travel health kit.

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- Mitigation steps are in place if the situation becomes worse, including reviewing insurance coverage.

Palau: Zika virus transmission *Level:* Advisory *Location:* Palau; *Category:* Zika virus

Local transmission of the Zika virus has been reported in Palau. Zika is transmitted primarily through mosquito bites. Sexual transmission occurs. Although symptoms of Zika are usually mild and self-limited, there is a risk of severe and irreversible birth defects in the babies of women infected when pregnant. Pregnant women are advised to discuss their risks with their doctor and consider postponing travel to any area where Zika virus transmission is ongoing. Those who are in affected areas should protect themselves against mosquito bites and sexual transmission. After travel, ongoing precautions against sexual transmission are recommended.

Advice for all Knights and Dames - Please read above

More details

Locally acquired cases of Zika infection have been reported on the island indicating the virus is present in the mosquito population. The U.S Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has added Palau to the list of locations with a level 2 travel notice recommending enhanced precautions against the virus. Public Health England advises that Palau is now considered a high risk location for Zika infection.

Assessment

The situation is continuing to evolve. The transmission intensity is uncertain. An increase in cases is likely as screening and testing is increased. Further cases may be sporadic in nature, however an outbreak with high case numbers and rapid growth might occur.

Philippines: Chikungunya *Level:* Notice *Location:* Philippines; *Category:* Chikungunya

An outbreak of chikungunya is underway in Indang, Cavite and Maasin, Southern Leyte. Symptoms include fever, joint pain, headache and rash. Some groups are at a higher risk of severe illness such as newborn babies, older adults, and people with underlying health issues (such as diabetes, heart disease, weakened immune system). Prevent infection by avoiding mosquito bites.

Advice for all Knights and Dames :

- Anyone who is at higher risk of severe illness should discuss their itinerary with their doctor for individual advice.
- When outdoors, wear clothing that covers most of your body (long sleeves, long pants, socks).
- Use an effective insect repellent that contains DEET, Picaridin, PMD, or IR3535.
- Ensure windows are covered with fly-wire. Use "knock-down" insect spray to kill mosquitoes in your room.
- Choose air conditioned accommodation if possible.

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- Seek medical attention if you develop a high fever or a rash.

Philippines: Zika virus *Level:* Advisory *Location:* Philippines; *Category:* Zika virus

Locally-acquired cases of Zika infection have been reported from the regions of Western Visayas, Calabarzon, Central Visayas and the National Capital Region (Manila). The majority of these are from the City of Iloilo, Panay island in the Western Visayas. Zika is transmitted primarily through mosquito bites. While less common, sexual transmission occurs. Although symptoms are usually mild and self-limited, severe and irreversible birth defects may occur in the babies of women infected when pregnant. Pregnant women are advised to discuss their risks with their doctor and consider delaying travel to Zika-affected areas. Those who are in affected areas should protect themselves against mosquito bites and sexual transmission. After travel to the affected areas, ongoing precautions against sexual transmission are recommended.

Advice for all Knights and Dames - Please read above

More details

There have been approximately 23 cases of locally acquired Zika infection reported since September 2016. Cases have been reported from the regions of Western Visayas, Calabarzon, Central Visayas and the NCR. The City of Iloilo and neighbouring Oton on Panay Island (Western Visayas) have reported the majority of cases. Iloilo City is carrying out vector control activities to reduce the mosquito population and prevent further spread. Prior to this, locally-transmitted Zika cases were reported in 2012. Sporadic cases have been documented since, including in travellers visiting Philippines.

Authorities anticipate further cases and have intensified mosquito control activities. Zika may be established in the local mosquito population in parts of the Philippines, however the extent and intensity of spread is uncertain at this time.

Assessment Further cases are likely to occur.

Solomon Islands: Dengue activity *Level:* Notice *Location:* Solomon Islands; *Category:* Dengue fever

Cases of dengue fever continue to be reported in several parts of the country. Guadalcanal province, including the capital Honiara, is significantly affected. Choiseul, Malaita, Isabel and Western provinces have also recorded cases. The disease is persistently present throughout Solomon Islands. Dengue is spread by mosquitoes. Prevent infection by avoiding mosquito bites.

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Romania: Measles outbreak *Level:* Notice *Location:* Romania; *Category:* Measles

An outbreak of measles is underway. Approximately a thousand cases have been reported, mostly in people who had not been vaccinated. At least 30 counties have recorded cases, while Arad, Bristrita and Mures regions are the worst affected. Several fatalities have occurred. Measles is caused by a highly contagious virus that spreads from person-to-person via infectious droplets. Prevention is through vaccination.

Advice for all Knights and Dames

- Ensure you are immune to measles before travelling. People are immune if they've had the disease before or if they've had two doses of measles vaccine.
- Keep young children and other people who are not immune to measles away from outbreak areas.
- If you are unsure about your immunity and may have been exposed, or if you develop symptoms, seek medical attention. Call before visiting in person, so staff can protect themselves and other patients from this very contagious virus.

South Sudan: Cholera outbreak *Level:* Notice *Location:* South Sudan; *Category:* Cholera

Cases of cholera continue to be reported, with Juba in Jubek State recording the most. Other affected states include Eastern Lakes, Eastern Nile, Imatong, Jonglei, Northern Liech, Southern Liech, Terekeka, and Western Bieh. Suspected cases have also been recorded in other regions, including Ayod and Mayendit. Cholera is consistently present in the country. It spreads via contaminated food and water. Symptoms include vomiting and profuse, watery diarrhoea which can lead to severe dehydration. Travellers staying in quality accommodation are at lower risk. Pay strict attention to hygiene and consider vaccination.

Advice for all Knights and Dames : Please read above

Sudan: Suspected cholera outbreak

Level: Notice *Location:* Blue Nile, Sudan - Sudan; *Category:* Cholera

A suspected cholera outbreak is underway in Blue Nile State. Other regions remain at risk of sporadic outbreaks as the disease is consistently present in the country. Cholera spreads via contaminated food and water. Symptoms include vomiting and profuse, watery diarrhoea which can lead to severe dehydration. Travellers staying in quality accommodation are at lower risk. Pay strict attention to hygiene and consider vaccination.

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Yemen: Cholera outbreak deepens

Level: Notice **Location:** Yemen; **Category:** Cholera

An outbreak of cholera is underway. By mid-November, more than 4,000 suspected cases had been reported. The governorates most affected are Aden and Taiz but cases have also been identified in Ad Dāli', Al Bayda, Al Hudaydah, Amran, Dhamar, Hajjah, IBB, Lahj, and Sana'a. Cholera is consistently present in the country and is spread via contaminated food and water. Symptoms include vomiting and profuse, watery diarrhoea which can lead to severe dehydration. Travellers staying in quality accommodation are at low risk. Pay strict attention to hygiene and consider vaccination.

Advice Do the following: Please read above

Denmark: Rise in pertussis cases **Level:** Notice **Location:** Denmark - Denmark;
Category: Pertussis whooping cough

A surge in pertussis (whooping cough) cases has been observed in Denmark, particularly in the Capital Region. In 2016, the disease activity is much higher than seen in the last few years. All ages have been affected. Pertussis is highly contagious and spreads when infected people cough or sneeze droplets into the air. Infants are affected most frequently. Early cold-like symptoms are followed by episodes of rapid and violent coughing. Supportive treatment and antibiotics help to treat the illness. Vaccination is the best way to prevent pertussis.

Advice for all Knights and Dames

All travellers should ensure they are fully immunised against pertussis. As immunity provided by the vaccine can wane over time, adults may require a booster dose

China: Reduced air quality

Level: Notice **Category:** Air Pollution

Location: Beijing, Tianjin, Shandong, Shanxi, Hebei, Henan, Anhui, Shaanxi, Jiangsu - China;

Some areas of the country, including the cities of Beijing and Tianjin are experiencing poor air quality, with very high levels of pollutants at times. Anhui, Hebei, Henan, Jiangsu, Shaanxi, Shandong and Shanxi provinces are also affected. Monitor the air quality, minimise exposure, and reduce physical activity outdoors.

Advice for all Knights and Dames

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Femeraid Air Rescue International – Weekly Medical Alert 49

Follow the advice of authorities at all times. At times of high air pollution, reduce exposure as much as practically possible to reduce the risk of potential health problems:

- reduce time and physical activity outdoors.
- while indoors - keep windows and doors closed, use an air condition in 'recirculate' mode.
- consider using a respirator (N95 mask) while outdoors (consult your doctor for an individual recommendation). N95 respirators will provide some protection against inhaling small particles, though they do not protect against noxious gases.

For more information

- See the U.S Embassy Beijing Air Quality Monitor for hourly [updates](#)
- See the Chinese Ministry of Environmental Protection [Air Quality Daily website](#) and the Beijing Municipal Environmental Protection Bureau [air quality readings](#) (in Chinese)

More details

Officials have issued an orange alert for Beijing and Hebei provinces. Authorities have strengthened pollution response and control measures in the heavily affected areas.

Polluted air can cause symptoms such as wheezing, coughing, shortness of breath, and irritation of the eyes and nose. Although young children, the elderly, pregnant women and people with underlying heart and lung disease (high-risk groups) are more vulnerable, high levels of air pollution can affect everyone.

Yemen: Cholera outbreak deepens *Level:* Notice *Location:* Yemen; *Category:* Cholera

An outbreak of cholera is underway. By mid-November, more than 4,000 suspected cases had been reported. The governorates most affected are Aden and Taiz but cases have also been identified in Ad Dāli', Al Bayda, Al Hudaydah, Amran, Dhamar, Hajjah, IBB, Lahj, and Sana'a. Cholera is consistently present in the country and is spread via contaminated food and water. Symptoms include vomiting and profuse, watery diarrhoea which can lead to severe dehydration. Travellers staying in quality accommodation are at low risk. Pay strict attention to hygiene and consider vaccination.

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Diseases in detail

What is MERS-CoV?

Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus (MERS-CoV), known previously as "novel coronavirus", was first identified in humans in 2012. It is from the same family of viruses as SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome), the coronavirus family. Most cases have originated from the Middle East, although a large outbreak associated with hospitals occurred in South Korea in 2015. There is no specific treatment and no vaccine available.

It is uncertain exactly how the virus is infecting people, however possible sources of infection are direct contact with dromedary camels, or through consuming undercooked camel meat, or drinking raw camel products (milk, urine etc). It has also been found to spread from one person to others in close contact with them, possibly through infected respiratory droplets like other coronaviruses. Clusters of infection have been noted in the healthcare environment and in family members.

What is chikungunya?

Chikungunya is a viral disease transmitted via mosquito bites. Where the disease is known to occur, infections are usually common during the rainy season. It cannot pass from person to person. The first symptom is usually a sudden onset of fever. Severe joint pain is one of the disease's main symptoms - chikungunya is Swahili for "that which contorts or bends up". Headache and rash are also common. Symptoms are similar to dengue, and laboratory testing is required to confirm the diagnosis. There is no specific treatment for chikungunya and it is rarely fatal. Patients are usually instructed to rest and recovery often takes several weeks. The associated joint pain can last for several months, or even years, and patients may be more susceptible to other diseases.

What is dengue?

This viral disease is spread by mosquitoes which bite during the day and is common in urban areas. Dengue is sometimes called "break-bone" fever due to the characteristic pain it causes in muscles, bones and joints. Other symptoms include high fever and a headache/pain behind the eyes. A rash often follows these symptoms. The acute illness can last up to 10 days and complete recovery can take two to four weeks. There is no treatment. Occasionally, infected people can develop a more severe form of the disease called severe dengue (previously known as dengue haemorrhagic fever or DHF). This usually occurs in patients who have previously been infected with one strain of dengue fever, then contract a different strain of the disease. Severe dengue is very serious, sometimes fatal.

What is malaria?

Malaria is a serious disease caused by one of five species of a parasite called Plasmodium. It is transmitted by mosquitoes that bite at night, during the hours between dusk and dawn. Once a patient has been exposed to malaria, it can take as little as six days or as long as one year to develop symptoms. These can be episodic and may include fever, chills,

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headache, muscle aches, fatigue, vomiting, diarrhoea and jaundice. If not promptly treated, malaria caused by *Plasmodium falciparum* can be fatal. Malaria caused by *Plasmodium vivax* is generally less severe, but can stay in the body for years and can cause relapses.

What is Zika?

Zika is a viral illness that is mostly spread via mosquito bites, although sexual transmission occurs. Four out of five people infected have no symptoms. When symptoms occur, they are usually mild - fever, rash, muscle and joint pains, and red eyes (conjunctivitis), similar to many other viral illnesses including flu, dengue and chikungunya. Most people recover fully in about a week. Occasionally neurological complications including "Guillain-Barr syndrome" (a potentially severe muscular weakness) occurs. Irreversible severe birth defects, including "microcephaly" (a small head with severe brain and developmental abnormalities) can occur in the babies of women infected during pregnancy. There is no specific treatment and no vaccine. Prevention is through avoidance of mosquito bites and sexual transmission.

What is polio?

Polio (poliomyelitis) is a highly contagious viral disease of the nervous system. The infection occurs if the virus enters the mouth. In developing countries, the infection is often spread through food or water that has been contaminated with faeces. In countries with higher sanitation levels, the disease is usually transmitted via respiratory droplets coughed by an infected person.

Initial symptoms include fever, headache, nausea and vomiting. The virus mainly affects children under five years old. In approximately one in every hundred cases, the virus will reach the central nervous system and cause some form of paralysis.

In general, all travellers should be up-to-date with polio immunisation regardless of their destination. Choosing safe food and water is another important protective measure.

What is Bird Flu?

Bird flu, also known as avian influenza, refers to influenza A viruses that usually affect birds. Some strains can cause large outbreaks in poultry (farmed birds), causing flocks to suddenly die. As migratory wild birds can carry the virus without becoming ill, they can spread the viruses from area to area and even continent to continent.

Some bird flu viruses infected humans, causing a severe or fatal infection. The H5N1 and H7N9 strains have infected hundreds of people, while a number of other bird flu viruses (including H5N6 and H10N8) have only occasionally infected humans.

People get bird flu from direct contact with infected birds or their environment, although in some cases there was no such exposure (and it is unknown how these people were infected). Usually only one human is infected at a time ("sporadic"), however there have been "clusters" of cases where several people were infected. These clusters may have been

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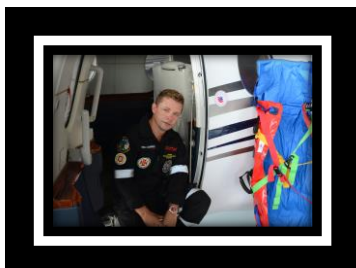
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Femeraid Air Rescue International – Weekly Medical Alert 49

due to people being exposed to birds at the same time and place, however in some instances there has been limited human-to-human spread.

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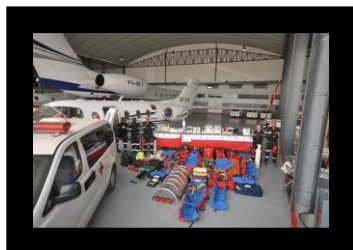
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