BGTHA
The British Global and Travel Health Association

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Increasing cases of Cutaneous Leishmaniasis causing concern in Pakistan

https://medriva.com/health/public-health/cutaneous-leishmaniasis-a-neglected-tropical-disease-on-the-rise-in-pakistan/

This sandfly borne disease is a distinct and miserable scourge in many of the warmer regions of our world – including the Mediterranean Basin. There are three recognised varieties of this parasitic disease. Visceral (known as Kala Azar – the Black Death - down to the fact that it is a fatal disease if untreated), Mucocutaneous (where the parasite destroys mucous regions (typically face, ear, etc) and leaves awful disfigurement and finally Cutaneous which is probably what we will most likely see within our travel population. This skin version presents like a resistant mosquito bite but also leaves scars and may take many months to heal. Treatment may speed up that process but then that itself can be quite toxic for some.

37yo dies from dog bite related Rabies in Tunisia

https://urls.fr/SWUTxz

There are so many reports of rabies coming through, and from so many regions of our world, that it is essential we always warn our patients of the risks of any salivary contact with a warm blooded animal during their travels. Even though the usual risk is from bites the travellers need to be warned that bites, licks, scratches and spitting from any warm-blooded animal has to always be treated very urgently. The animal does not have to appear 'mad' and may not be acting in a way you perceive from what is presented through the film industry. Even though we tend to concentrate on the risk within what we refer to as 'developing' countries this deadly disease is still a major concern in what are frequently regarded as well-developed countries such as USA, Eastern Europe and North Africa.

Rabies alert issued in Sarawak (Malaysia)

https://www.theborneopost.com/2024/02/06/mayor-12-bitten-by-potentially-rabid-dog-roaming-jln-chawan/

Over 20 deaths from Rabies in Vietnam so far in Vietnam

https://tuoitrenews.vn/news/society/20240321/ho-chi-minh-city-urgently-responds-to-rabies-amid-fatality-spike/78918.html

Reports on Rabies across USA:

[1] New York (Westchester County): fox, human exposure
https://www.westchestergov.com/home/all-press-releases/10055-two-more-people-come-forward-after-being-bit-by-rabid-fox-killed-in-peekskill
[2] Arizona (Saguaro National Park): bobcat, human exposure
https://www.azfamily.com/2024/01/23/national-park-southern-arizona-warns-possible-rabies-cases-after-visitor-hurt/
[3] Arizona (Saguaro National Park): fox, skunk, bobcats
http://tucson.com/news/local/environment/rabies-warning-after-wildlife-attacks-tucson-saguaro-national-park/article_18184fbc-ba19-11ee-9ada-170a135726dd.html
[4] Arizona (Navajo County): fox, domestic dog
https://www.abc15.com/news/state/navajo-county-health-officials-warn-of-foxes-dog-testing-positive-for-rabies
[5] South Carolina (Saluda County): cows, human exposure
https://www.einnews.com/pr_news/685816523/rabid-cow-confirmed-in-saluda-county-four-people-and-11-cows-exposed

57yo dies from Rabies in Vietnam 5 months after being bitten

https://tuoitrenews.vn/news/society/20240215/dog-meat-seller-dies-from-rabies-after-dog-bite-in-southern-vietnam/78293.html

Remember that the incubation period for rabies can be extensive and that when made aware of any potential exposure for one of our patients the accepted advice is to always treat seriously and as soon as possible undertaking the standard post-exposure protocols even if this is only reported months or years after exposure.

Four Romanians return home from Zanzibar with severe Malaria

https://www.antena3.ro/actualitate/sanatate/alerta-malarie-romani-zanzibar-699475.html

Perhaps we sometimes feel that once we've reached Zanzibar that all the risks of Africa are past and we can relax. However, even though the risk of malaria for those visiting Zanzibar has been regarded as minimal, it is reports like this one from colleagues in Bucharest that should help to focus our thoughts on this awful disease. Malaria can very rapidly turn from the mild fever and sweating into a catastrophic situation and claim lives very quickly. One difficulty is that other mosquito borne disease are frequently also a risk factor (eg Dengue, Chikungunya, Zika) and so the differential diagnosis is rather weighted and can present a difficulty for the unwary.

Aedes mosquitoes in northern France raise the possibility of many infections including Zika

https://www.rfi.fr/en/france/20240322-tiger-mosquitoes-now-everywhere-in-france-after-spreading-to-normandy

Where in the world you may ask is it safe from these pesky creatures!

Spike in Hepatitis E cases reported across 10 European countries
https://www.foodsafetynews.com/2024/02/ecdc-monitoring-hepatitis-e-cases-in-europe/
Hepatitis A and Hepatitis E are similar in that they are transmitted through the oral-faecal route and both can be very incapacitating, and even fatal in some cases. Good food preparation and increased personal hygiene and making sensible decisions about dietary choices will go a long way to help avoid these problems. Unfortunately we do not have a vaccine against Hepatitis E.

99 confirmed cases of Hepatitis E in Finland so far in 2024
https://yle.fi/a/74-20079415?origin=rss

150 with food poisoning linked to ehomaki rolls made by sushi restaurants in Japan
https://www3.nhk.or.jp/news/html/20240208/k10014352791000.html
Remember that old and very wise advice . . . . . If it ain't cooked, boiled or peeled – forget it!

Typhoid in Taiwan being linked to oysters and sashimi
https://focustaiwan.tw/society/202402200017

Raw milk in Washington State linked to E coli cases
https://foodpoisoningbulletin.com/2024/raw-milk-e-coli-outbreak-sickens-two-in-washington-state/

Over 200 ill in Nha Trang (Vietnam) from food poisoning
https://e.vnexpress.net/news/news/nha-trang-food-poisoning-case-escalates-with-over-200-hospitalized-4722453.html

Report on Typhoid situation across Sub Saharan Africa
https://www.eurekalert.org/news-releases/1037356

Mosquito borne Ross River virus alert issued in Queensland
https://www.news.com.au/national/queensland/news/increasing-amount-of-ross-river-virus-virus-detected-in-mosquitoes-in-queensland/news-story/06473945a3eabbf8a74481ad3bbf825e
Ross River Fever is a viral disease transmitted by mosquitoes and known as "endemic arthritis". Cases are reported from many regions of the continent and patients typically present with fatigue, fever, sweating, headache, rash and other flu like symptoms as well as arthritis. If the disease hits a traveller from Europe and they return home with these symptoms (which can last for many months) then the diagnosis may too easily be missed and they are frequently labelled as 'seronegative rheumatoid arthritis'. Avoiding aspirin is important which is the same advice for other arboviral infections such as Dengue, Chikungunya etc.

CDC in US advises all international travellers to be vaccinated against Measles
https://emergency.cdc.gov/han/2024/han00504.asp
With the number of reports of Measles, which are now a daily occurrence, and the recognised hesitancy of many to receive the vaccine, it is hardly surprising that the CDC are taking this step. We may have thought that 'post Covid' international travel was safe and secure but the recent alerts relating to Measles and air travel has meant that this needs to be considered through again and, who knows, perhaps even the wearing of masks may become a sensible option.

21yo dies from Avian Influenza in Khanh Hoa Province of Vietnam
https://laodong.vn/cac-loai-benh/10-nam-moi-ghi-nhan-ca-mac-cum-ah5n1-thu-hai-1319005.ldo
Currently Avian Influenza is rarely transmitted from human to human but once that barrier is crossed through viral mutations will this become the next Global Pandemic? Perhaps out of an abundance of caution, our travellers should be advised to avoid close interaction within the animal sections of Asian marketplaces.

Tick-borne Powassan infection identified on Rhode Island
https://www.ri.gov/press/view/47192
Another pesky creature capable to causing untold damage through its feeding habits. Lyme Disease is also a concern in this region so taking steps to avoid their bites and doing a full body check for any after potential exposure is essential to lessen the risks. Particularly it is essential to check children from top to bottom!

WHO report on Yellow Fever situation across 13 African countries
https://www.who.int/emergencies/disease-outbreak-news/item/2024-DON510
This report relates to the situation in Burkina Faso, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Chad, Republic of the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Guinea, Niger, Nigeria, South Sudan, Togo, and Uganda. The vaccine has been given to many millions across these regions and frequently without the very clear focus regarding contraindications we have to provide in this part of the world. Nevertheless the reports of severe adverse reactions are rare which has to provide us with some increased level of comfort.

HAVE A GREAT EASTER EVERYONE