



## March 31, 2023 Weekly Situational Awareness Brief

### [CISA Gets Proactive With New Pre-Ransomware Alerts](#)

“The US Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) this week announced a new initiative to alert organizations of early-stage ransomware attacks. Since the start of the year, the agency has notified more than 60 organizations in the energy, education, healthcare, water/wastewater, and other sectors. Many of these organizations were able to mitigate the attack before data was encrypted and exfiltrated.”

### [Tuberculosis — United States, 2022](#)

“During the early COVID-19 pandemic (2020), U.S. incidence of reported tuberculosis (TB) substantially declined. Incidence partially rebounded in 2021 but remained lower than incidence during prepandemic years. During 2022, reported TB incidence increased slightly. Among non–U.S.-born persons with TB, the proportion who had recently arrived in the United States increased. Higher TB incidence among American Indian or Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander persons compared with other race and ethnicity groups represents an ongoing health disparity. TB incidence is returning to prepandemic levels. TB diagnosis and treatment to interrupt transmission and prevention of TB through treatment of latent TB infection are critical to U.S. TB elimination efforts.”

### [Rising drug shortages pose national security threat, Senate panel says](#)

“A new Senate report found that drug shortages in the U.S. are increasing in frequency and duration, due to over-reliance on foreign countries like China and India, which is posing national security concerns. The report from the Democrat-led Senate Committee

on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs provided a damning indictment of the U.S. government's ability to predict drug shortages and address them effectively. It also laid out troubling statistics on the rate of drug shortages. The report said drug shortages increased by almost 30 percent between 2021 and 2022, with a five-year high of over 295 active drug shortages in place at the end of last year. The report also said the average drug shortage lasts about a year and a half, and that more than 15 "critical" drugs have been in shortage for more than a decade."

### **Some ADHD Medications Are in Short Supply. Schools Are Feeling the Fallout**

"In recent weeks, teachers have been forwarding emails from parents to Kelly Barlow-Eichman, the sole school nurse for the Shorewood, Wisc., school district, about possible behavioral struggles their children may be having in class. The emails, Barlow-Eichman said, read something like this: Hey, if you're noticing some behavioral struggles, please know my child is not taking their medications. Or they are trying a different dose. It's a message to which California mom Jess Berthold can relate. Berthold described the immediate change in her son as "night and day" when, at 6 years of age, he was diagnosed with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, or ADHD, and prescribed Adderall, a stimulant commonly used to manage the inattentiveness, hyperactivity, and impulsivity that accompany the disorder."

### **Life Is Worse for Older People Now: A generation of Americans still can't escape the threat of COVID**

"Last December, during a Christmas Eve celebration with my in-laws in California, I observed what I now realize was the future of COVID for older people. As everyone crowded around the bagna cauda, a hot dipping sauce shared like fondue, it was clear that we, as a family, had implicitly agreed that the pandemic was over. Our nonagenarian relatives were not taking any precautions, nor was anyone else taking precautions to protect them. Endive spear in hand, I squeezed myself in between my 94-year-old grandfather-in-law and his spry 99-year-old sister and dug into the dip. We all knew that older people bore the brunt of COVID, but the concerns seemed like a relic from earlier in the pandemic. The brutal biology of this disease meant that they disproportionately have fallen sick, been hospitalized, and died. Americans over 65 make up 17 percent of the U.S. population, but they have accounted for three-quarters of all COVID deaths. As the death count among older people began to rise in 2020, "a lot of my patients were really concerned that they were being exposed without anyone really caring about them," Sharon Brangman, a geriatrician at SUNY Upstate University Hospital, told me."

### **6 tick-borne diseases you really don't want to get**

"Tick season is not only starting sooner—it's becoming a year-round event. While April through September are usually the most active months, the pesky eight-legged parasites are biting people and animals much earlier in the year than expected. The increasing tick bites are leading to a rise in a variety of tick-borne diseases, including some that were previously uncommon. One reason for the hike in tick-transmitted diseases like Lyme disease and babesiosis is because humans are expanding towns and cities into previously forested areas. Andrew Handel, a pediatric infectious disease specialist in Stony Brook Medicine, says cutting down forests creates an edge habitat—when one

habitat type meets another—which presents more opportunity for common tick hosts such as deer and mice to interact with humans.”

### **A hidden pandemic: the orphans Covid has left behind**

“Papa died last night, but his death is not the end.” Those are the first words Veronica Fletcher uttered to her three children after her husband, Joseph Fletcher, died from Covid-19 on April 11, 2020. “We’re going to keep papa’s name alive,” Fletcher, 49, later told her children. “He lives in us.”

### **What is the Marburg virus? Another country reports outbreak of ‘highly virulent’ disease**

“The African country of Tanzania reported its first-ever outbreak of Marburg disease, which has so far resulted in eight total cases and five deaths. The Ebola-related virus was also responsible for additional lab-confirmed illnesses stemming from a February outbreak in Equatorial Guinea, which has so far sickened nine patients, seven of which have died.”

### **China reports human case of H3N8 bird flu**

“A woman in southern China has tested positive for H3N8 bird flu, local officials say, making it only the third time that the virus has been found in humans, although a previous strain may have caused the 1889 pandemic.”

### **Indianapolis has some of the worst air pollution in the U.S.**

“Nearly 90% of humans in the world experienced unhealthy air in 2022, according to an air quality report released from a Swiss tech company that specializes in protection against airborne pollutants.”

### **FDA approves first over-the-counter nasal spray for opioid OD reversal**

“The Food and Drug Administration approved Wednesday the first over-the-counter nasal spray that rapidly reverses the effects of opioid overdose.”

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