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**THE CYBER CORNER**

**Life Watch: Health & Science news ...**  
**5:59AM**

1/16/2009

Alberta Health Services says some vaccines given last year in the Aspen Health Region may not provide adequate protection.

Health services says during a routine check, it was found some vaccines had been exposed to storage temperatures outside the recommended levels.

The vaccines were given to clients in Barrhead, Mayerthorpe, Onoway, Swan Hills, Thorhild, Lac La Biche and Westlock. Health Services says it's conducting assessments on an individual basis to find out which clients should be re-immunized, and are contacting those affected.

A review of the vaccine storage process is underway. *(The Canadian Press, CFXH, ccg)*

**On the Net:**

[AlbertaHealthServices.ca](http://AlbertaHealthServices.ca)

**(Postpartum Depression)**

Two new studies have found that postpartum depression affects about 13 per cent of women in the first year after childbirth.

The Canadian and British studies have found that early identification and intervention can help new mothers who are at risk.

The studies say the result is fewer depressive symptoms in the months that followed childbirth.

The Canadian study was led by Cindy-Lee Dennis of the University of Toronto. She had previously found that mothers receiving peer support over the telephone were significantly more likely to continue to breastfeed.

**On the Net:**

[BIO: Cindy-Lee Dennis of the University of Toronto](#)

**(Video Game Violence)**

A new study says spilling the blood and guts of an opponent and other macabre acts of violence don't make video games more enjoyable for players.

The findings could have implications going forward for game designers.

Authors of the study *(published online in the Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin)* say game designers may decide not to put as many resources into ratcheting up the gore factor.

**On the Net:**

[Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin](#)

**(Cancer-Screening)**

Screening for breast, cervical and colon cancer saves lives. But a new report says too few Americans are getting the recommended screens or getting them regularly enough.

The rate of screening for breast and cervical cancers has stayed about the same since 2000. The rate of colorectal cancer screening has increased, but not as fast as experts had hoped.

Only about 50 per cent of men and women age 50 to 64, and 57.6 per cent of those older than 65, have regular colonoscopies.

**(Colonoscopies)**

Colonoscopies performed by family doctors who are trained to conduct the procedure are safe, effective and meet standard quality guidelines for colon cancer screenings.

That's the finding of new research. The finding is based on an analysis of 12 earlier studies conducted between 1966 and 2007.

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All of them focused specifically on the outcomes of colonoscopies performed by primary-care physicians.

#### (Sleep Apnea)

A new study says repeated surges and drops in blood pressure and blood flow in the brain might make people with sleep apnea more prone to have a stroke and die in their sleep.

The Yale University School of Medicine conducted the study. It found that obstructive sleep apnea causes a decreased blood flow to the brain during episodes.

When this happens, the organ's blood pressure rises. And, when it happens repeatedly, the brain's ability to protect itself in such situations eventually wears down.

#### On the Net:

[The Yale University School of Medicine](#)

#### (Brain Memory)

A new study says the white matter that connects the regions of the brain may have more of a role in memory and cognitive loss than previously believed.

It compared brain scans of groups of healthy young and old adults. The MIT neuroscientists discovered a relationship between loss of memory and cognitive performance in older people and the deterioration of the white matter in the parts of their brains related to those functions.

White matter is made up of the neuronal axons that connect neurons in the "grey matter" brain regions.

White matter also helps the regions of the brain communicate with one another. (*The Canadian Press, ccg*)  
(*LifeWatch by Dennis Harper*)

#### (Flood-related disease fears in Fiji)

Tens of thousands of people are at risk for respiratory illnesses, malaria and dengue fever after Fiji's worst flooding in a generation.

The floods have killed at least 11 people and left thousands homeless.

Joeli Cawaki, National Disaster Management Office director, says it will take time for floods to recede and there is a fear of disease outbreaks. Medical authorities have already reported 85 people, including six babies, with diarrhea and respiratory illnesses at one emergency shelter.

It's in the country's battered western region.

Hundreds of homes and businesses in towns and villages on the main island of Viti Levu have been inundated by waist-deep water from overflowing rivers and streams. (*The Associated Press, ccg*)

#### ("Fish Poop": New Findings!)

Scientists say the world's oceans could be getting help in maintaining the acid balance from an unusual source.

The international researchers say they've discovered that fish waste acts as a buffer against carbon dioxide in the water.

The unusual finding is helping researchers understand the marine carbon cycle and how nature works to reduce CO2 levels that can raise sea temperatures and harm sea life.

Villy Christensen of the University of British Columbia says the phenomenon gives even more reason not to deplete fish stocks. He says it's clear that more fish will not only help in the fight against climate change, but will also result in more food over the long run.

The researchers also came up with the first estimate of the number of fish in the world's oceans. They say they used two models to determine that there are roughly 2 billion tonnes of fish in the sea.

The study is being published today in the journal *Science*. (*The Canadian Press, ccg*)

#### On the Net:

[The Journal Science](#)

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