

Recent news from WHO

- WHO announced on 8 July the launch of a new network to combat noncommunicable diseases. The **Global Noncommunicable Disease Network (NCDnet)** is made up of leading organizations and experts from around the world. It aims to unite fragmented efforts by bringing the cancer, cardiovascular, diabetes and respiratory communities together with tobacco control, healthy diets and physical activity advocates.
- More than 30 new **food safety standards** were adopted by the Codex Alimentarius Commission, WHO said on 6 July. These include guidelines: to reduce acrylamides in food; for microbiological testing and environmental monitoring for *Listeria monocytogenes* in ready-to-eat food; and for ginseng products, fermented soybean paste and gochujang.
- A **clinical trial** is beginning in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ghana and Liberia to test a drug for onchocerciasis, or river blindness, WHO said on 1 July. The drug, moxidectin, is being investigated for its potential to kill or sterilize the adult worms of *Onchocerca volvulus*, which cause onchocerciasis. Currently, the disease is controlled by the drug ivermectin, which kills the parasite's larvae but not the adult worms.
- WHO Director-General Dr Margaret Chan welcomed sanofi-aventis's donation to WHO of one hundred million doses of vaccine against the currently circulating **pandemic influenza A (H1N1) virus**. In a statement released on 17 June 2009, Chan said: "It is gratifying that vaccine manufacturers are demonstrating their solidarity with WHO in protecting the health of the world's poorer people."

For more about these and other WHO news items please see: <http://www.who.int/mediacentre>