

## Killer Virus "Accidentally" Distributed Globally

Posted by

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[pej news](#) - The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has put out an urgent call to all labs receiving the virus to immediately destroy the bug and provide documentation verifying that action [. - {lex}](#)

### Killer Flu Virus Distributed Worldwide by U.S. Company

[C. L. Cook](#)

pej.org news

[http://consusgroup.com/images/logos/  
companies/meridian\\_bioscience.gif](http://consusgroup.com/images/logos/companies/meridian_bioscience.gif)

**April 13, 2005**

Cincinnati-based, [Meridian-Bioscience](#) has admitted to sending a deadly virus to more than 4000 laboratories worldwide. The H2N2 flu virus strain killed millions in 1957, before being effectively wiped out through a vaccine campaign. But, samples of the strain were preserved.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has [put out an urgent call](#) to all labs receiving the virus to immediately destroy the bug and provide documentation verifying that action. The great fear is: Because H2N2 has been treated as extinct, no immunization against it has been provided since 1968. That leaves those born after that year particularly vulnerable.

For its part, Meridian-Bioscience says the massive distribution of the killer flu strain was accidental, a claim CDC Director, Dr. Julie Gerberding says is, ["almost impossible to believe."](#)

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While senior World Health Organization scientist, Dr. Klaus Stohr criticized Meridian's decision to include this particular viral agent with others routinely sent out to labs as "unwise."

In a statement released today, Meridian-Bioscience denied culpability saying, "Such samples are used by professional laboratories accustomed to handling viral agents. The company has a long history of supplying samples to the College [of American Pathologists] and believes it has been and is in compliance with all applicable regulations."

Dr. Stohr says he believes the risks of an outbreak are remote and "should not lead to a big scare."

Laboratories receive these types of viruses and bacteria to better help them to detect and identify new, naturally occurring strains. Meridian says it sent the material as part of a contract to the College of American Pathologists. The particulars of that "contract" are still unclear. The CDC's Gerberding says the company did not immediately respond to calls for information, adding the CDC is still trying to find out what exactly happened.

"The explanation for why H2N2 was used in proficiency panels by Meridian Bioscience ... is not something that was clarified."It is almost impossible to believe they did not know they were dealing with H2N2," she said.

The appearance of the H2N2 virus was first detected by Canadian health officials March 26, but is believed to have been dispersed as long ago as September, 2004 through the U.S. and countries including: Canada, Italy, Brazil, Hong Kong, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Mexico, and Jamaica.