

Infectious Network

Aiming at people in developing nations, Yale University's School of Public Health has set up what it calls "the first regularly scheduled global Internet channel for scientific research." It's a seminar on emerging infectious diseases that will enable participants to "attend" lectures by leading experts and ask questions afterward. The lectures, says Robert Ryder, professor of epidemiology and medicine at Yale, are targeted at public health and development officials and educators. For example, a talk about the Ebola virus in Zaire will cover how it is transmitted by monkeys and how ecological stresses such as deforestation contribute to the problem. The Emerging Infections Information Network can be found on the World Wide Web at <<http://www.med.yale.edu/EIINet>>. People can download the talks, available in audio, and accompanying slide presentations, between 4 and 5 p.m. EST on designated dates. Then from 6 to 7 p.m. they can join a "global chat room" for a real-time question and answer period—in writing—with the lecturer. The first seminar, a 6 February talk on the re-emergence of infectious diseases by Ruth L. Berkelman of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, attracted "about 1500 hits," says Ryder.

