



# **SIGNS OF THE TIMES**

**News Articles for Episode 417**

# Emerging Iran deal faces strong criticism in Israel, despite PM Netanyahu's assurances | All Israel News.com

#bibleprophecy, #israel, #iran, #war, #netanhahu

May 25, 2026

The emerging deal between Washington and Tehran to end the war has encountered strong criticism from voices in the Israeli military and senior politicians, despite Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's assertions that the deal would decisively end the regime's nuclear program.

After U.S. President Donald Trump implied that a [deal with Iran was imminent](#) on Saturday, Netanyahu stated after a call with Trump that they "agreed that any final agreement with Iran must eliminate the nuclear threat. This means dismantling Iran's nuclear enrichment facilities and removing the enriched nuclear material from its territory."

In addition, a "political source," widely believed to be the prime minister or someone close to him, briefed media outlets that Israel is being updated about the talks with Iran, reiterating that Netanyahu emphasized the importance of ensuring Israel's freedom of action, particularly in Lebanon.

However, *Channel 13 News* reported Sunday that, in closed talks, Netanyahu has admitted the limitations of Jerusalem's influence on Trump's decisions. According to the report, Israeli efforts are focused on the prospective deal's contents rather than on preventing an agreement, which is seen as very likely.

ILLUS [pic.twitter.com/FQcgGjmaHE](https://pic.twitter.com/FQcgGjmaHE)

— Benjamin Netanyahu - בנימין נתניהו (@netanyahu) [May 24, 2026](#)

The emerging deal that would leave the regime in power – and possibly with its nuclear program intact, while limiting Israel's ability to strike Hezbollah in Lebanon – provoked strong criticism from various sources in Israel.

*Ynet News* cited a senior defense official who warned that the deal could be "a disaster for Israel."

"The Iranian public and regime are under severe distress in a way that threatens the regime's survival," the official said. "With the agreement as it is being presented, they get a way out, with the Strait of Hormuz opened and the blockade on it removed. When the U.S. gives up on continuing the war, it loses the last significant leverage it has over Iran for future negotiations."

Avigdor Liberman, leader of the hawkish opposition party Yisrael Beitenu, said any deal with the regime would be a “catastrophe,” accusing Netanyahu of turning Israel into a “banana republic” governed from Washington.

JUST NOW: President Trump posts a picture of a bomb under a fighter jet with the words, "THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION TO THIS MATTER!" 🙄

While Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian responded on state television by pleading that his country is "not seeking nuclear weapons," the... [pic.twitter.com/CXcdVBM63u](https://pic.twitter.com/CXcdVBM63u)

— Donald J Trump Posts TruthSocial (@TruthTrumpPost) [May 24, 2026](#)

“Trump is putting the entire State of Israel through a campaign of humiliation with Netanyahu’s blessing,” Liberman said, emphasizing that Israel was hesitant to strike in Lebanon because “the U.S. forbade it.”

While the Iranian nuclear and ballistic missile programs have been Israel’s most important concern during the war, most of the criticism of the emerging deal has focused on the Lebanese front, where Hezbollah has used FPV drones, as well as rockets and mortars, to harass Israeli troops, [killing 11](#) since the ceasefire started.

“It is absolutely forbidden under any circumstances to accept the ceasefire in Lebanon as part of a deal with Iran,” warned Benny Gantz, chairman of the Blue and White Party, and former IDF chief and defense minister.

“Acquiescing to the ceasefire in Lebanon as part of a deal with Iran would be a strategic mistake that we will pay for for years to come. This is exactly the case where Israel needs to say to the U.S. – no.”

Army officials told *Ynet* that the IDF is already reorganizing troops in southern Lebanon to prepare for a potential deal, fearing a return to the days of the security zone in the 80s and 90s, when Israeli soldiers became static and exposed to Hezbollah attacks that killed hundreds.

They also noted that the return of the evacuated Lebanese residents to villages in the area, in particular, would harm the security of northern Israeli residents and troops in the field.

A senior military official said the current situation is “definitely hard for us, but it is even harder for Hezbollah.”

“The negotiations are proceeding in an orderly and constructive manner, and I have informed my representatives not to rush into a deal in that time is on our side... Both sides must take their time and get it right. There can be no mistakes!” - President Donald J. Trump us [pic.twitter.com/GfylPZdqBf](https://pic.twitter.com/GfylPZdqBf)

— The White House (@WhiteHouse) [May 24, 2026](#)

“They are losing people every day. They have no motivation to come down to the border, and their infrastructure is shattered,” he added.

David Bitan, an influential lawmaker from Netanyahu’s Likud party, told *Radio 103FM* on Monday that the war's outcome “does not depend only on us. We cannot deal with Iran alone, especially not with the nuclear issue, so we are dependent on the United States. That is a fact; it cannot be changed.”

“Netanyahu succeeded in recruiting the United States on this matter. On the nuclear issue, he pushed it back many years,” he noted. “No matter what is in the agreement, I do not believe there will be an agreement that ties Israel’s hands and feet so that it cannot deal with these matters.”

However, he also acknowledged that the “total victory” promised by Netanyahu “will just take longer than we thought.”

“It depends on how you define total victory. The level of expectations was problematic in this matter. What’s the problem in Israel? People are never satisfied with anything. You see that tremendous efforts are being made in order to achieve total victory, but nothing is appreciated; people always approach it from the political side,” he said.

# [13 Arrested on Temple Mount as Jews Attempt to “Sacrifice” Shavuot Bread Offering | Israel365 News.com](#)

#bibleprophecy, #israel, #temple mount, #sacrificie, #bread

May 24, 2026

Israeli police [arrested 13 people Friday](#) after they broke through security barriers and forced their way onto the Temple Mount in Jerusalem’s Old City, attempting to perform the [Biblically mandated grain offering](#) to mark the festival of *Shavuot*. The arrests came hours before the holiday began at sundown, and initial reports misidentified the ritual items as preparation for an [animal sacrifice](#). What the group actually carried onto the holy site were two loaves of bread.

The suspects breached security and ran into the compound in an attempt to perform the ritual before being stopped by authorities, police said. No animals were present. According to the Ynet news site, the group brought loaves of *chametz* — leavened bread — made from freshly harvested wheat, the centerpiece of the *Shavuot* grain offering.

13 נאמני הר הבית הצליחו לפרוץ לתוך מתחם הר הבית, מתוך מחסום משטרת. זו לא פעם הראשונה בשבועות האחרונים שהם מצליחים להיכנס להר הבית בניסיון לבצע קורבן. אבל זה בהחלט פעמים ראשונות בתקופת מפקד המחוז הנוכחי שזה קורה פעמיים ובטח ובטח בתקופה מתירנית של השר הנוכחי.  
[pic.twitter.com/A2dgXJwpuK](https://pic.twitter.com/A2dgXJwpuK)

— Yossi Eli (@Yossi\_eli) [May 22, 2026](#)

## **The Two Loaves of Shavuot**

*Shavuot*, meaning “Weeks,” marks the culmination of the 49-day *Sefirat HaOmer* — the counting of the Omer — that begins on the second night of Passover. It is both an agricultural festival celebrating the wheat harvest and the commemoration of the giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai. At the heart of the Temple service for this day is the *Shtei HaLechem* — the Two Loaves — a unique offering of two loaves of leavened bread baked from the newly harvested wheat and waved before God by the *Kohanim* (priests). It is the only occasion in the Temple service when leavened bread was offered on the altar.

The Bible commands explicitly: “You shall bring from your dwelling places two loaves of bread to be waved, made of two tenths of an ephah; they shall be of fine flour, they shall be baked leavened, as first fruits to the Lord.” (Leviticus 23:17)

Jews are required to perform the Temple service as described in the Torah; it may only be performed on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem, even in the absence of an actual Temple structure.

Shavuot is also referred to as [Chag Habikurim](#) (holiday of first fruits) in Numbers since it was the beginning of the period in which the [bikurim](#) (first fruits) were brought to Jerusalem.

The large loaves were specially shaped, rectangular, with four mini towers at each corner of the loaf.

All of the other grain offerings brought in the Temple were flat, pan bread, usually fried in oil. Even the Show Bread that was always present in the Temple, despite being quite large, was essentially [matzah](#), unleavened bread.

## **A Law That Exists on Paper**

Israel's Protection of Holy Sites Law, enacted in 1967 following the reunification of Jerusalem, mandates freedom of access and religious practice at holy sites for all religious communities. On paper, it applies equally to Jews, Christians, Muslims, and all others.

In practice, the reality on the Temple Mount tells a different story. Under the *status quo* arrangement — a set of unwritten rules governing the site that successive Israeli governments have upheld under Jordanian Waqf administration — non-Muslims, including Christians, face strict limitations. Jewish and Christian visitors are permitted entry only during limited daytime hours. They are prohibited from praying audibly, bowing, or making any visible act of worship. They may not bring prayer books, a *tallit* (prayer shawl), *tefillin* (phylacteries), Torah scrolls, or *shofarot* (ram's horns) onto the mount. Anyone who appears to be praying can be immediately removed by Israeli police, who enforce Waqf rules on Judaism's holiest site.

National Security Minister Itamar Ben Gvir, who has made repeated visits to the Temple Mount, has publicly called for lifting the ban on Jewish prayer there. His visits have triggered strong reactions from Jordan, the Palestinian Authority, and Muslim governments across the region. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has repeatedly denied that the *status quo* has changed.

## **What the Sages Said**

The Sages taught that the Temple Mount is the *Even HaShetiyah* — the Foundation Stone — the point from which, according to Jewish tradition, the world was created. The longing to restore the Temple service is written into the three-times-daily Jewish prayer, the Passover Seder, and every major Jewish holiday — including *Shavuot*. This is emphasized by Jews facing the Temple Mount when they pray. The 13 people arrested Friday were Jews trying to fulfill a biblical commandment at the place the Bible designates for it — and they were stopped by the government of the Jewish state.

The Temple Mount is Judaism's holiest site, and it is in Israel's capital city. Jewish rituals at the site are explicitly described in the Bible, and the Jews carried them out in the two temples for a total of more than 800 years. But for some inexplicable reason,

after Israel conquered Judaism's holiest site in the 1967 Six-Day War, control of the site was turned over to the Jordanian Muslim Waqf, and despite the law requiring Jews to have freedom of worship, the Israeli police remove any Jew who tries to exercise that right. That is the *status quo* that Israeli governments across the political spectrum have maintained for 58 years.

The two loaves of bread never made it to the altar. The men who carried them are in police custody. And the Mount stands as it has stood — without a Temple, without a service, and without the *Shte'i HaLechem* ascending before God on *Shavuot*.

# [Israel began the Iran war as a partner of the US – and is ending it on the sidelines | The Times of Israel.com](#)

#bibleprophecy, #israel, #united states, #war, #iran

May 25, 2026

When Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu made the case for fighting a second war with Iran in eight months, he put forward two arguments.

The first was that, for Israel’s survival, the threat posed by the regime in Tehran needed to be stopped.

“The goal of the operation is to put an end to the threat from the Ayatollah regime in Iran,” he [said in a video message](#) on February 28, back-to-back with one delivered by US President Donald Trump, hours after the campaign was launched.

“If we do not act,” Netanyahu said, “we will face a nuclear Iran, an Iran with tens of thousands of ballistic missiles, an Iran that seeks to destroy us and would be immune to our countermeasures.”

The second argument, only slightly more implicit, was that this war represented an offer Israel couldn’t pass up: a chance to fight its chief adversary shoulder-to-shoulder with the most powerful army in the history of the world. By prosecuting this war, the US and Israel, Netanyahu suggested, were closer than ever.

“We are doing this in full coordination with our friends in the US, under the courageous leadership of Trump,” he said. “As a people that cherishes life, we have no choice but to go to battle. But this time, we do so with the combined mighty power of the State of Israel and the United States of America.”

Near the beginning of the speech, he assured his country: “This operation will continue as long as necessary.”

Three months later, it has become all but conventional wisdom in Israel that the first set of goals for the war — toppling the regime and eliminating its threat — has not been met. The Iranian regime still exists. It still possesses much of its ballistic missile arsenal and its stockpile of enriched uranium. And it also controls the Strait of Hormuz.

Now, it appears that Netanyahu’s second reason for the war — building an unprecedentedly strong US-Israel relationship — is also crumbling. Netanyahu has claimed that he and Trump are partners, but he’s finishing the war on the sidelines. And he’s not the only one being shunned: In addition to emerging from the Iran war in

a strategically precarious position, Israel itself is historically unpopular among the citizens of its greatest ally.

The US and Israel did, indeed, begin this war together. But they are ending it separately or, more accurately, Trump is ending it himself, with Netanyahu watching.

Trump, always true to character, has made this explicit, [telling the press](#) last week that the leader of Israel will “do whatever I want him to do.”

Further proof of this dynamic came on Saturday, when Trump, in the throes of fateful negotiations with Tehran, [held a summit-style call](#) with a group of Middle East leaders to brief them on the talks. Netanyahu wasn't included.

Netanyahu and Trump did speak later that night, after it was clear that Washington and Tehran were closing in on a memorandum of understanding, based on talks that pointedly excluded Israel.

Trump reportedly urged the Arab and Muslim nations on the call to normalize ties with Israel. And Netanyahu, in a [post on X](#) on Sunday, insisted that he and Trump “agreed that any final agreement with Iran must eliminate the nuclear danger.” He added: “That means dismantling Iran's nuclear enrichment sites and removing its enriched nuclear material from its territory.”

Trump and Netanyahu may have agreed to all of those things. But Trump frequently contradicts himself in public, and has a famous relish for dealmaking, a craft that generally entails changing positions and making concessions. He said as much in a [Truth Social post](#) on Sunday, in which he wrote that any deal he reached with Iran would be “good and proper” but that “nobody has seen it, or knows what it is. It isn't even fully negotiated yet.”

In other words, a final agreement with Iran may well lead to the dismantling of its nuclear program, or perhaps even to relations between Jerusalem and Riyadh. But Israel has no guarantee of that, and Netanyahu won't be at the table where the deal is decided.

This isn't just about Netanyahu, who, after all, may or may not be prime minister a few months from now. He's far from the only Israeli premier to feud with a US president, even when the alliance is going well.

The issue for Israel's leaders across the political spectrum is that, at least for the near future, Trump might be the friendliest American president they can hope for. Last week, a fresh batch of polling data told what is now becoming an old story: Following the wars in Gaza, Lebanon and Iran, Americans are souring on Israel.

The [New York Times/Siena survey](#) found that most Americans disapproved of the way Trump was handling the Iran war and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and opposed American military and economic support for Israel. In each case, disapproval was

overwhelming among Democrats, but a quarter or so of Republicans also opposed Trump's policies on those fronts. Only 56 percent of Republicans said they want to see their next candidate for president follow Trump's lead on Israel.

Another way to read that data, of course, is that most Republicans — if not most Americans — still support Israel. So if Republicans somehow manage to retain control of the US government after the November midterm elections, the status quo could continue.

But that status quo is not the one of the shoulder-to-shoulder US-Israeli partnership described in Netanyahu's speech. Rather, it's one in which the US president is freezing Israel out of talks with Iran, and in which he publicly boasts about controlling Israel's prime minister. The status quo is one in which US voters' support for Israel is plummeting at the very moment the US negotiates a deal that could determine Israel's security and standing in the Middle East for years.

Trump has often made clear his desire to be seen as a peacemaker, and if he succeeds in ending a war he started, he may again assert his claim to that mantle. But while Israel began the war with the US, its conclusion will be primarily decided by America. The same bellicose, eliminationist threats to Israel will probably still be there, all while American support for fighting them slips away.

# [Trump: I'm not sure I'll make deal with Iran if Gulf countries don't join Abraham Accords | The Times of Israel.com](#)

#bibleprophecy, #trump, #iran, #abraham accords, #israel

May 27, 2026

US President Donald Trump suggests he may not sign a deal with Iran if neighboring Gulf countries do not join the Abraham Accords.

“I’m not sure we should make the deal if they don’t... join the Abraham Accords,” Trump says during a cabinet meeting, referring to Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait, and others.

On Sunday, Trump for the first time tied Iran talks with the Abraham Accords, as he seeks to secure diplomatic wins amid questionable results on the battlefield, with the Islamic Republic still in power and in control of missiles and uranium stockpiles, as well as the Strait of Hormuz.

But Saudi officials were quick to reiterate that Riyadh will only normalize ties with Israel if the latter agrees to establish an irreversible pathway to a Palestinian state — something Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has vowed to reject.

Trump appears not to budge, telling reporters that Gulf countries “owe it” to the US to join the Abraham Accords after Washington launched the war against Iran — a conflict that placed them in Tehran’s crosshairs for weeks.

Asked if he would go as far as to specifically make the Iran deal contingent on countries joining the Abraham Accords, Trump takes a step back from the bluster.

“I’m not going to [tell] you what’s contingent, and what’s not,” he responds.

Trump turns to US special envoy Steve Witkoff and asks if countries will join the Abraham Accords, but the senior adviser is similarly non-committal.

“We’re definitely pushing it,” Witkoff responds.

# [Iran's Supreme Leader Warns U.S. Will Have 'No Safe Haven' — Vows Israel's Annihilation | Breitbart.com](#)

#bibleprophecy, #anti-semitism, #iran, #israel, #united states

May 26, 2026

Iran's Supreme Leader Mojtaba Khamenei — who has not been seen or heard from publicly since succeeding his slain father following the opening U.S.-Israeli strikes on Iran — declared Tuesday that “Death to America” and “Death to Israel” would become the rallying cries of the Muslim world while vowing that the Jewish state was nearing the “final stages” of its existence.

In a written message marking the annual Hajj pilgrimage to Mecca, Khamenei described Israel as a “cancerous tumor,” echoed his father’s prediction that the Jewish state would not survive another 25 years from a decade ago — effectively placing Israel’s destruction within roughly 15 years — and warned that regional nations would no longer serve as “shields” for American military bases.

“‘Death to America’ and ‘Death to Israel’ shall become the common chants of the Islamic ummah [nation] and the world’s oppressed, especially among the youth,” Khamenei wrote in the statement [published](#) by Iranian state-linked outlets and across his official X account, while praising Hezbollah and other Iranian-backed terror groups for what he called victories against the “American-Zionist armies.”

Khamenei also called on Muslims to pray for “the liberation of Palestine and the Al-Aqsa Mosque” and for “final victory against global arrogance” — a term the regime routinely uses to describe the United States.

“The shaken Zionist regime and the cancerous tumor of Israel are approaching the final stages of their wretched existence,” he charged, adding that “the United States not only will no longer have a safe haven for its mischief and for establishing military bases in the region but day by day, it is growing more distant from its former status.”

Khamenei further praised what he described as the power of “Allahu Akbar,” claiming Iranian forces and allied jihadist groups had delivered “a hard slap” to the United States while leaving Israel “gasp[ing] its final breath.”

“The armed forces of Islamic Iran, prepared to sacrifice their lives, together with the fighters of the resistance front, particularly beloved Lebanon, have achieved astonishing victories against two terrorist armies, the American and Zionist armies,” he wrote, referencing Hezbollah and other Iranian-backed terror proxies operating throughout the region.

The remarks came as tensions surrounding negotiations between Washington and Tehran [intensified](#) following fresh U.S. strikes on Iranian targets in southern Iran Monday night into Tuesday, including missile launch sites and vessels allegedly attempting to lay mines in the Strait of Hormuz.

U.S. Central Command [said](#) the strikes were carried out in “self-defense” to protect American forces, while Iranian officials accused Washington of violating the fragile ceasefire currently under discussion.

Iran’s Revolutionary Guards subsequently warned they would deliver a “devastating” response to any future attacks by the United States or Israel, while Iranian state media claimed Tehran had downed an American drone — an assertion not confirmed by the Pentagon.

At the same time, Hezbollah sharply [escalated](#) attacks on northern Israel, launching explosive drones, rockets, and artillery fire toward Israeli communities and military positions along the border as Israeli officials warned of broader military action in Lebanon.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu [said](#) Monday that Israel would intensify operations against Hezbollah, while the Israel Defense Forces carried out dozens of strikes targeting Hezbollah infrastructure throughout southern Lebanon and the Bekaa Valley.

The escalating rhetoric and military activity unfolded even as the Trump administration continued signaling that negotiations with Tehran over ending the nearly three-month war were progressing.

Secretary of State Marco Rubio said Tuesday that talks involving Qatari mediators and senior Iranian officials could still produce an agreement “in a few days,” while stressing that President Donald Trump would only accept a “good deal or no deal.”

Trump, meanwhile, reiterated Monday that Iran would never be permitted to retain enriched uranium capable of supporting a nuclear weapon.

“The Enriched Uranium (Nuclear Dust!) will either be immediately turned over to the United States to be brought home and destroyed or, preferably, in conjunction and coordination with the Islamic Republic of Iran, destroyed in place,” Trump [wrote](#) on Truth Social.

Speaking at Arlington National Cemetery on Memorial Day, Trump also paid tribute to the 13 U.S. service members killed during Operation Epic Fury.

“These incredible men and women gave their lives to ensure that the world’s number one state sponsor of terror will never have a nuclear weapon,” Trump [declared](#). “Oh, and they won’t. They will never have a nuclear weapon.”

Iranian officials, however, continued publicly hardening their position.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baghaei [said](#) Tuesday that Tehran was not yet discussing the details of its nuclear program and insisted that any agreement must also address the conflict in Lebanon, the future of the Strait of Hormuz, sanctions relief, and the release of frozen Iranian assets.

Iranian officials have also increasingly [suggested](#) China could play a larger role in any future agreement, with Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Army Chief Asim Munir meeting Chinese President Xi Jinping in Beijing on Monday as Islamabad pushed for Beijing to act as a guarantor in a potential agreement between Tehran and Washington.

On X, Iran analyst Arash Azizi [described](#) Mojtaba Khamenei's Hajj statement as "remarkable for how extremely eliminationist it is toward Israel, even by the regime's standards."

Israeli Foreign Minister Gideon Sa'ar responded mockingly to the Iranian leader's remarks while referencing his disappearance from public view following the February 28 strike that killed his father.

"Sounds familiar," Sa'ar wrote on X. "I remember someone with a similar surname who used to say it. BTW, where are you?"

# [Hantavirus exposure risk may be higher than believed in parts of US, study finds](#) | [Foxnews.com](#)

#bibleprophecy, #hantavirus, #virus, #united states, #infection

May 22, 2026

Researchers found unusually high [hantavirus levels](#) in rodents in the Pacific Northwest, suggesting greater exposure risk in the surrounding agricultural communities.

The area with the biggest prevalence is the Palouse region, which includes parts of eastern Washington and north-central Idaho in the Pacific Northwest.

Researchers from Washington State University's College of Veterinary Medicine found unexpectedly high levels of Sin Nombre virus (SNV), which is the strain most strongly linked to [hantavirus pulmonary syndrome](#) (HPS) — among local rodent populations.

In summer 2023, they collected samples from 189 deer mice, voles and chipmunks at eight farms and two forest sites.

Nearly 30% of sampled rodents showed evidence of prior exposure and about 10% had active infections, according to the study press release. The rodents that tested positive were from both agricultural environments (farms) and natural settings (wilderness).

While deer mice are the primary carriers of hantavirus pulmonary syndrome, the researchers [found infections](#) across multiple rodent species.

This suggests that Sin Nombre virus may be more widespread in the region than previously thought.

## [HANTAVIRUS FEARS SPARK COVID FLASHBACKS, BUT EXPERTS SAY THERE'S ONE MAJOR DIFFERENCE](#)

The findings were published in 2026 in *Emerging Infectious Diseases*, a peer-reviewed journal from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

"We were surprised both by how common the virus was locally and by how little data existed for the Northwest," said Stephanie Seifert, the study's corresponding author and principal investigator of the Molecular Ecology of Zoonotic and Animal Pathogens lab in the College of Veterinary Medicine's Paul G. Allen School for Global Health, in the press release.

"We're really just beginning to understand how widespread and complex this virus is in rodent populations here."

The Sin Nombre virus, the [most common hantavirus in the U.S.](#), is typically spread to humans through inhalation of aerosolized rodent urine, droppings or saliva and is not known to spread person-to-person.

This is different from the [Andes virus, the strain linked](#) to the recent outbreak on board the MV Hondius cruise ship. Andes virus is the only hantavirus that is capable of spreading between people through close, prolonged contact.

"People may be exposed more often than we realize, but severe cases are more likely to be tested for hantavirus."

Dr. Sonja Bartolome, an expert in pulmonary and critical care at UT Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas, pointed out that since national tracking began in 1993, the illness has [remained rare](#), with 864 cases reported between 1993 and 2022.

### **POSSIBLE HANTAVIRUS CASE UNDER INVESTIGATION IN UPSTATE NEW YORK; NO CONNECTION TO DEADLY CRUISE SHIP OUTBREAK**

"Most cases have occurred in Colorado, New Mexico and Arizona, and 94% have been reported in states west of the Mississippi River," Bartolome, who was not involved in the study, told Fox News Digital.

"It is important to conduct research that expands our understanding of how the [virus spreads](#)," she went on. "Studies like this – which obtain and compare viral genetic sequences across regions and animals – help clarify how the virus moves geographically and between species."

Although similar findings have been reported in other regions, this is the first study to reveal the pattern in this part of the country, Bartolome noted.

"Because humans most commonly contract hantavirus through exposure to aerosolized rodent urine or droppings, precautions remain essential when [cleaning areas with evidence of](#) rodent activity," she added.

The study presented some limitations, primarily that it only measured the infection in rodents and did not evaluate human transmission risk.

Additionally, the samples were only taken in the Palouse region and may not be generalized to all the Pacific Northwest.

The research was also conducted during a single season, which means the conclusions don't reflect year-round data.

The study suggests the need for expanded hantavirus monitoring in the Pacific Northwest, especially in agricultural areas.

The researchers recommend efforts to prevent rodent exposure for living and farming in [rural areas](#). Longer-term studies could help clarify how environmental conditions and seasonal changes affect prevalence of the virus, they added.

"People may be exposed more often than we realize, but severe cases are more likely to be tested for hantavirus," said Pilar Fernandez, a co-author on the study and a disease ecologist in the Allen School whose research focuses on the eco-epidemiology of zoonotic diseases, in the release.

"Understanding that gap — how exposure translates into disease — is the next big step."

# [Tick bite ER visits hit highest seasonal level in years as doctors warn of disease surge | Foxnews.com](#)

#bibleprophecy, #hantavirus, #virus, #united states, #infection

May 28, 2026

Tick bite-related ER visits are at their highest seasonal levels since 2017 across most U.S. regions, raising concerns about increased Lyme disease and other [tick-borne illnesses](#).

That's according to recent data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Tick Bite Tracker, which monitors weekly emergency department visits associated with tick bites across the country.

For every 100,000 ER visits, approximately 71 were related to tick bites in April 2026, compared to a historical seasonal average of roughly 30 per 100,000.

## [DOCTORS REVEAL KEY SIGNS OF LYME DISEASE AS TICK SEASON INTENSIFIES ACROSS US](#)

Some of the highest rates of tick-based ER visits were [among children](#) younger than 10 years and adults between 70 and 79 years.

"Over the past three decades, the geographic range of the [blacklegged tick](#) has expanded significantly, and with it, the risk of Lyme disease and other Ixodes-transmitted infections," Dr. Steven Goldberg, MD, a family medicine physician who practices urgent care and family medicine at UofLHealth in Louisville, Kentucky, told Fox News Digital.

"The Ohio River Valley region is one of the most striking examples — Lyme disease cases in Ohio have increased roughly 10-fold over the past decade, likely driven by the convergence of Northeastern and Upper Midwestern [tick populations](#) meeting in that corridor."

States like Virginia and West Virginia, as well as areas south of the traditional endemic zone, are reporting increasing tick abundance and disease cases, the doctor noted.

"Over the past three decades, the geographic range of the blacklegged tick has expanded significantly."

"The lone star tick is also expanding its range northward beyond its traditional stronghold in the Southeast, which means diseases like ehrlichiosis and alpha-gal

syndrome are appearing in regions where clinicians may not yet be thinking about them," he warned.

Some [climate](#) studies predict that the blacklegged tick's suitable habitat could expand by over 200% by the end of the century, Goldberg noted, including into Canada and across the central and southern U.S.

### **What's driving the spike?**

"Warmer, wetter conditions allow ticks to survive in habitats that previously would have been too cold," Sagar said. "Milder winters also extend the lifespan of both ticks and the animals they feed on, accelerating tick reproduction and shortening their life cycles."

Areas that historically experienced longer, colder winters or significant snow cover are now more hospitable to ticks, the doctor noted.

"As temperatures rise and precipitation patterns change, ticks are able to spread northward and thrive in new ecosystems," he said.

Another contributing factor is increased [land development](#) and human expansion into wooded and grassy areas, as well as reforestation of formerly agricultural land.

"The recovery and expansion of white-tailed deer populations — critical hosts for adult blacklegged ticks — has been a major driver," Goldberg added. "Deer density is positively associated with Lyme disease incidence. [Small mammal](#) communities, particularly white-footed mice that serve as key reservoir hosts for *Borrelia burgdorferi*, also play a central role."

### **Tick-borne diseases**

Tick bites are known to transmit numerous illnesses, the most widespread of which is Lyme disease, a [bacterial infection](#).

"Lyme disease cases alone have increased roughly two- to threefold over the past 20 years," Sagar said. Approximately 476,000 Americans are diagnosed and treated for Lyme disease each year, per CDC surveillance data.

Also common are anaplasmosis and ehrlichiosis, two different types of [bacterial infections](#), according to the doctor. Tick bites can also cause babesiosis, a malaria-like parasitic disease that infects and destroys red blood cells.

"Another growing concern is alpha-gal syndrome, a condition in which a (lone star) tick bite triggers a serious [allergic reaction to red meat](#)," Sagar said. "In rare cases, people have died from anaphylactic reactions linked to alpha-gal syndrome following a tick bite."

Ticks can also transmit viruses, including the Powassan virus, which can cause severe neurologic injury.

"[Powassan virus disease](#) is arguably the most concerning emerging tick-borne infection," said Goldberg, who is also chief medical officer at HealthTrack. "It's transmitted by the same blacklegged tick that carries Lyme disease, but unlike Lyme, it can be transmitted within minutes of tick attachment."

Powassan can cause severe encephalitis with a roughly 10% to 15% fatality rate, and more than half of survivors have lasting [neurological deficits](#), Goldberg noted.

In the Rocky Mountain states, the Rocky Mountain wood tick (*Dermacentor andersoni*) transmits Rocky Mountain spotted fever and Colorado tick fever.

"In the Southeast and South-Central U.S., the lone star tick (*Amblyomma americanum*) drives a different set of concerns: ehrlichiosis, tularemia, and two emerging viral threats — Heartland virus and Bourbon virus," said Goldberg.

## **Symptoms to watch for**

Some common [symptoms of tick-borne illness](#) include fever, chills, fatigue, headaches, muscle aches and joint pain, according to Dr. Suraj Saggar, chief of infectious disease at Holy Name Medical Center in Teaneck, New Jersey.

Another sign is the classic "bullseye" rash associated with Lyme disease, known medically as "erythema migrans."

"Because testing can sometimes be falsely negative early in the disease process, doctors may treat patients based on symptoms and exposure history rather than waiting for laboratory confirmation," Saggar noted.

"If you think you have been bitten by a tick, you should seek [medical attention](#) if you develop symptoms after a known tick bite or after spending time in tick-prone areas, especially during the spring, summer and fall."

## **Preventing tick bites**

As there are no vaccines currently available for any tick-borne disease in the U.S., prevention is the most effective strategy.

Goldberg shared the following recommended prevention strategies.

- Use [EPA-approved repellents](#), including DEET, picaridin, IR3535 or oil of lemon eucalyptus on exposed skin. Treat clothing and gear with permethrin (a synthetic insecticide and repellent) or purchase pre-treated clothing.
- Wear light-colored clothing (to spot ticks more easily), long sleeves and long pants tucked into socks when in wooded or grassy areas.

- After spending time outdoors, check your entire body, paying special attention to the scalp, behind the ears, armpits, groin and behind the knees, the doctor advised. It's also recommended to shower within two hours of coming indoors.
- Tumble-dry clothing on high heat for at least 10 minutes to kill any ticks on clothing.
- Remove ticks promptly and properly. Using fine-tipped tweezers, grasp the tick as close to the skin as possible, and pull upward with steady, even pressure. Clean the bite area afterward.

Approximately 476,000 Americans are diagnosed and treated for Lyme disease each year, per CDC data.

"The longer a tick is attached, the higher the risk of [disease transmission](#) — for Lyme disease, transmission generally requires at least 36 hours of attachment," Goldberg said. "The Powassan virus can be transmitted much more quickly."

# [30k+ Attend Largest Evangelical Gathering in Belarus | Crosswalk.com](#)

#bibleprophecy. #gospel, #franklin graham, #belarus, #salvation

May 22, 2026

Franklin Graham recently led a historic Festival of Hope in Minsk, Belarus, sharing a powerful message of spiritual rebirth with 30,000 attendees and involving nearly 700 churches.

Billy Graham, one of the world's most well-known American evangelists, is estimated to have saved over 3.2 million people through his crusades and evangelical events. Preaching to nearly [215](#) million people across more than 185 countries in his lifetime, his son Franklin now attempts to carry on the ministry as President and CEO of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association and Samaritan's Purse.

This past weekend, Franklin shared the Gospel with 30,000 people attending a historic worship event in Minsk, Belarus. At the Festival of Hope, he encouraged everyone to “experience a spiritual rebirth through [Jesus](#) Christ.” He told the [Christian Post](#):

“Tonight you can experience a new birth, a spiritual rebirth through [Jesus](#) Christ. Jesus didn't come to condemn you; He came to save you. Jesus said, ‘I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.’ There's no other way to God. He made you, and He loves you, but the only way to be forgiven of your sins and have a personal relationship with Him is through His Son, Jesus Christ.”

In the history of Franklin and Billy's events, Franklin explained that “something like this has never happened before in the history of the country.” The event included “a 1,300-member choir from 43 cities and villages, as well as an unbelievable symphony orchestra and several local artists.”

Nearly 700 Churches participated in the Festival of Hope events, and the Billy Graham Association distributed more than 2,000 Bibles.