The U.S. Food and Drug Administration now says 62 deaths are associated with use of tainted batches of the blood thinner heparin, more than triple the previous estimate of 19 deaths.

The FDA said Tuesday that the deaths weren't new ones. The revised count is based on more data received recently by the agency after reports of the contaminated blood thinner first surfaced in February. The 62 deaths appear to be the allergic-type reactions seen with the other fatalities, the Wall Street Journal reported.

There were only three deaths due to allergic reactions in 2006, the FDA said.

Heparin is often given to dialysis patients and people undergoing heart surgery. The raw materials for the drug come from the mucous lining of pig intestines. Many of those pigs come from rural farms in China, with the intestines often processed by unregulated mom-and-pop workshops.

The FDA last month identified the contaminant in heparin as oversulfated condroitin sulfate, which was found in samples of the blood thinner produced in China for Baxter Healthcare Corp., of Deerfield, Ill.

Oversulfated chondroitin sulfate mimics heparin's qualities and is a modified form of chondroitin sulfate. Chondroitin sulfate is a naturally occurring substance made from animal cartilage and is often used in supplements to treat arthritic joints. But, oversulfated chondroitin sulfate is man-made and doesn't occur naturally.

On Tuesday, the FDA posted a month-by-month heparin mortality count on its Web site, showing that a sudden jump in allergic-style fatal reactions actually began last November -- possibly signaling the time when the contamination began, the Associated Press reported.

FDA officials don't know how the contaminant got into the heparin.

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Dyslexia's Impact Differs, Depending on the Language

The areas of the brain affected by dyslexia differ between children who learned to read in English and those who learned to read in Chinese, say researchers who compared MRI brain scans of children, the Associated Press reported.

"This finding was very surprising to us. We had not ever thought that dyslexics' brains are different for children who read in English and Chinese. Our finding yields neurobiological clues to the cause of dyslexia," said study lead author Li-Hai Tan, a professor of linguistics and brain and cognitive sciences at the University of Hong
Kong.

The study was published Monday in the online edition of the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

Children who learn English and other alphabetical languages learn the sounds of letters and how to combine them into words, while Chinese children memorize hundreds of symbols that represent words, Guinevere F. Eden, director of the Center for the Study of Learning at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., told the AP.

This finding shows that "we cannot just assume that any dyslexic child is going to be helped by the same kind of intervention," said Eden, who was not involved in the study.

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**Magnetic Dart Boards Recalled**

About 870,000 Fun 'N Games Magnetic Dart Boards are being recalled by Henry Gordy International Inc., of Plainfield, N.J., because small magnets on the ends of the darts can detach and be swallowed by young children.

If more than one magnet is swallowed, the magnets can attract each other and cause potentially fatal intestinal blockages or perforations. There have been no injuries reported, said the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission.

The recalled dart boards are about 5.5 inches in diameter and came with two 2.75-inch magnetic darts. The Chinese-made toys were sold at Family Dollar stores across the United States from September 2002 through March 2008 for about $1.

Consumers with the recalled dart boards should return them by first class mail to: Henry Gordy International Inc., 809A Market Street, Hermann, Mo., 65041 for a full refund including tax and shipping costs. For more information, contact the company at 888-790-2700.

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**Breakfast Cereals Recalled for Salmonella Threat**

Certain batches of Malt-O-Meal Unsweetened Puffed Rice and Puffed Wheat cereals are being recalled because they may be contaminated with salmonella. The recall affects cereals with "Best If Used By" codes between April 8, 2008 (coded as "APR0808") and March 18, 2009 (coded as "MAR1809").

The recalled products were distributed across the United States, marketed under the Malt-O-Meal brand, as well as under private label brands including Acme, America's Choice, Food Club, Giant, Hannaford, Jewel, Laura Lynn, Pathmark, Shaw's, ShopRite, and Weis Quality, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration said.

A full list of recalled products can be found at www.malt-o-meal.com/recallinfo. There have been no illnesses reported in connection with the recalled cereals.

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**Baby With 2 Faces Born in India**

A baby with two faces born in a northern Indian village is doing well and being worshipped as the reincarnation of Durga, the Hindu goddess of valor, the Associated Press reported.

The baby, Lali, has two noses, two pairs of lips and two pairs of eyes, the result of an extremely rare condition called craniofacial duplication. It's often associated with serious health complications, but a doctor said Lali is doing fine.
"She drinks milk from her two mouths and opens and shuts all the four eyes at one time," said Sabir Ali, the director of Saifi Hospital. Lali has no breathing difficulties and the doctor said he saw no need for surgery, the AP reported.

"My daughter is fine -- like any other child," said father Vinod Singh, a poor farm worker.

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**Pfizer Halts Melanoma Drug Trial**

A late-stage study of the experimental melanoma treatment tremelimumab has been halted by drug maker Pfizer Inc., after a data review showed the drug was no more effective than standard chemotherapy.

Even though the trial has been stopped, study investigators will work with patients to determine if they're benefiting from treatment and should continue taking tremelimumab, the Associated Press reported.

All the data from the study is being analyzed, and more details about the results are expected to be available at June's annual meeting of the American Society for Clinical Oncology, in Chicago.

"We continue to focus on additional studies involving tremelimumab alone and in combination with other therapies which are currently ongoing in patients with several types of cancer," said Charles Baum, vice president and oncology therapeutic area head at Pfizer Global Research and Development, the AP reported.

Baum also said Pfizer "will continue to assess the study data to understand the clinical benefit seen in some patients who received tremelimumab."

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**Deadliest Form of Skin Cancer Largely Unknown**

Merkel cell carcinoma -- the deadliest form of skin cancer -- hasn't received much scientific scrutiny, and most people probably haven't heard of it, according to the Associated Press.

Funding is a major issue. Researchers investigating the disease have long had to rely on small pilot grants and family fund-raising.

It's only been about 15 years since Merkel cell carcinoma was recognized as distinct from melanoma. Since then, the number of diagnosed cases in the United States has tripled to about 1,500 a year. Merkel cell carcinoma is more aggressive than melanoma and requires different treatment -- intense radiation.

Last month, the first comprehensive report on Merkel cell carcinoma symptoms and risk factors was published. The disease almost exclusively develops on sun-exposed skin on Caucasians over age 50, the AP reported.

In January, University of Pittsburgh scientists announced they'd identified a possible cancer-triggering virus inside Merkel cell tumors.

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