

Talking Points: Zika Virus

Key Messages

- Zika virus is transmitted to people by mosquitoes and maintained in a cycle between people and mosquitoes.
- Zika virus risk is limited to travelers who visit countries with ongoing virus transmission.
- The mosquito species that are known to transmit this virus are not currently found in Minnesota.
 - *Aedes aegypti* (Yellow fever mosquito) is found in the southern U.S.
 - *Aedes albopictus* (Asian tiger mosquito) is found throughout much of the eastern U.S., but all known infestations in MN have been eradicated soon after their discovery. The eggs from this mosquito species have not been known to survive winter temperatures as far north as Minnesota.
- Most people infected with Zika virus (80%) fight off the virus with no symptoms. The majority of people with symptoms have relatively mild illness with:
 - Fever
 - Rash
 - Joint pain
 - Conjunctivitis (pink eye)
- The primary health concern is for women who are pregnant or might become pregnant traveling to areas where Zika is currently circulating.
 - Microcephaly has been documented in infants born to mothers infected with Zika virus.
 - Pregnant women considering travel to the Caribbean, Central or South America, or Mexico, should consider postponing the trip.
- MDH and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention advise doctors to test for Zika in patients who have recently returned with symptoms from any of the following countries as of Jan. 29:
 - Barbados, Bolivia, Brazil, Cape Verde, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, French Guiana, Guadeloupe, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Martinique, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Puerto Rico, Saint Martin, Samoa, Suriname, U.S. Virgin Islands, and Venezuela.
 - The Zika-affected areas are likely to change throughout the course of the outbreak. For the most up to date travel advisories, visit <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/>
- To date, there have been no reports of Zika virus transmission occurring within the continental U.S. All of the reported cases have been exposed to the virus when they traveled to outbreak areas mentioned above.

Zika Virus Talking Points

- No vaccines or treatments are available so protection against mosquito bites during travel is the best course of action
 - Use mosquito repellents containing DEET, picaridin, IR3535, or oil of lemon eucalyptus.
 - Stay in dwellings with good doors and window screens
 - Consider postponing travel to Zika outbreak areas
- For the latest information on the virus and areas affected by the virus, visit the CDC Zika site at <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/>

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