

Important Health Information– Zika virus
FAMU Student Health Services
August 23, 2016

In July we were notified by the Florida Department of Health that Florida is experiencing local transmission of Zika virus. Locally acquired Zika infections have been found in the Wynwood/Overtown area in Miami and Miami Beach. Cases are also being investigated in Pinellas County. To date, there are almost 500 persons in Florida that have been infected with Zika virus. Forty-two cases are not-travel related, meaning that the persons were probably infected through mosquito bites. Governor Scott and the Florida Department of Health is working with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to provide information and needed resources to manage the outbreak. All county health departments are providing free Zika testing for any pregnant woman.

The mosquito that is most likely to transmit Zika virus can be found across the state of Florida. For this reason it is important that everyone do their part to minimize the spread of Zika virus. Individuals are asked to do the following:

1. Eliminate areas that mosquitoes are likely to breed near your home and place of work
2. Take precautions to avoid mosquito bites – use insect repellent and/or wear protective clothing (loose light weight clothing with long-sleeves and long pants)
3. Pregnant women should avoid travel to areas with active Zika virus transmission and to see their healthcare provider if they believe they have been infected
4. Prevent the spread of Zika virus through sexual contact by using condoms or other barrier methods

General Information about Zika virus

What is Zika Virus and where is it found?

The CDC has reported outbreaks of the virus in Central America, South America, the Caribbean, the U.S. territories of Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands, American Samoa, and Florida. Travel – related cases of Zika virus have been reported in 47 states.

Transmission of Zika Virus

There are three ways a person can be infected with Zika virus:

- 1) Zika virus is transmitted through the bite of an infected mosquito. The mosquito bites an infected person then transmits the virus by biting another person.
- 2) A pregnant woman infected with Zika virus may pass the virus to her fetus during pregnancy or delivery. Zika virus infection can cause numerous serious birth defects.
- 3) Zika can be transmitted from an infected person to another person through unprotected sexual contact. This includes oral, vaginal, anal sex and sharing sex toys. The virus has been found in semen, vaginal fluids, urine and blood and can be transmitted even though the person does not have any symptoms.
- 4) There have also been reported a number of cases of Zika virus transmission through blood transfusions and laboratory exposure. Blood banks in the affected area of the U.S. have temporarily suspended blood collections.

Symptoms, Diagnosis and Treatment

Infection with the Zika virus typically causes a mild illness. Symptoms may include; **fever, rash, conjunctivitis (red eyes), joint pain, muscle pain, headache**. Symptoms usually subside within a week and *most people infected with Zika virus will have no symptoms*. If you think you have been infected with Zika virus, see your healthcare provider. This is especially important for pregnant women as Zika infection in the fetus may result in very serious birth defects and fetal death. Guillain-Barré syndrome (GBS) is an uncommon illness that affects the nervous system. Countries with active Zika virus outbreaks have reported an increase in GBS among people infected with Zika virus.

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It is important to take steps to protect yourself and others by preventing mosquito bites, minimizing areas where mosquitos can breed around your home and protecting yourself during sex.

A diagnosis of Zika is based on the presence of symptoms and recent history of mosquito bites and can be confirmed through blood or urine tests. Persons are usually treated with common pain and fever medicines, rest and plenty of water. Currently, there is no cure or vaccine for the disease.

Prevention

It is important to avoid mosquito bites in areas where there is transmission of Zika virus. The mosquitos that transmit Zika are very aggressive and are known to bite during the daytime. The Florida Department of Health and the CDC both provide information on mosquito bite prevention (see resource list below). Individuals should do the following:

- Take appropriate measures to reduce exposure to mosquito bites
 - Use insect repellent that contains DEET, Picardin, Oil of lemon eucalyptus or IR3535
 - Treat outer clothing with Permethrin or purchase Permethrin treated clothing
 - Wear light colored clothes that cover arms and legs
 - When inside, use air conditioning or ensure windows and doors are screened.
 - Use indoor foggers to treat areas where mosquitos may rest
 - Weekly eliminate standing water in flower pots, vases, or other items that hold water
 - Outside your home empty any items that hold water like buckets, planters, tires
 - Cover large water storage containers such as rain barrels
 - Use larvicides for large containers of water that will not be used for drinking water
 - Use outdoor flying insect spray under patio furniture, your garage or carport
- If you are pregnant, you should not travel to areas with active Zika transmission
 - <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/intheus/florida-update.html>
- Stay up-to-date with CDC Travel Alerts on potential risks

For More Information:

Florida Department of Health

- ~ Zika Virus Information Hotline 1-855-622-6735
http://www.floridahealth.gov/diseases-and-conditions/zika-virus/index.html?utm_source=flhealthIndex&utm_source=PR&PDF
- ~ Information About Zika Virus <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AE6tkoWanXk>
- ~ Drain & Cover information <http://www.floridahealth.gov/newsroom/2016/08/080116-zika-update.html>
- ~ Department of Health Daily Zika Update

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

- ~ Information on Zika <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/index.html>
- ~ How to Protect Against Mosquito Bites <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/pdfs/mosqprevinus.pdf>
- ~ Interim Guidance for Prevention of Sexual Transmission of Zika virus http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/65/wr/mm6529e2.htm?s_cid=mm6529e2_w
- ~ Travel Notices <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices>

World Health Organization

- ~ Zika Virus Fact Sheet <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/zika/en/>
- ~ Zika Virus Questions & Answers <http://www.who.int/features/qa/zika/en/>