



DATE:	June 16, 2016
TO:	Health Alert Network
FROM:	Karen M. Murphy, PhD, RN, Secretary of Health
SUBJECT:	Zika Virus Prevention Guidance for Pregnant Women
DISTRIBUTION:	Statewide
LOCATION:	Statewide
STREET ADDRESS:	Statewide
COUNTY:	Statewide
MUNICIPALITY:	Statewide
ZIP CODE:	Statewide

This transmission is a “Health Advisory” provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.

HOSPITALS: PLEASE SHARE WITH ALL MEDICAL, OBSTETRIC, PEDIATRIC, INFECTION CONTROL, NURSING AND LABORATORY STAFF IN YOUR HOSPITAL

EMS COUNCILS: PLEASE DISTRIBUTE AS APPROPRIATE

FQHCs: PLEASE DISTRIBUTE AS APPROPRIATE

LOCAL HEALTH JURISDICTIONS: PLEASE DISTRIBUTE AS APPROPRIATE

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS: PLEASE DISTRIBUTE TO YOUR MEMBERSHIP

Since January 1, 2016, a total of 24 cases of confirmed or probable Zika virus infection have been reported among Pennsylvania residents. None of these cases have been locally-acquired due to mosquito-borne transmission in Pennsylvania and none have been in pregnant women.

Since June 1, 2016, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has been conducting enhanced surveillance for *Aedes aegypti* and *Aedes albopictus* mosquitoes in eight locations that have historically had (1) large numbers of travel-associated human cases of mosquito-borne diseases and (2) prior presence of *Aedes albopictus*. These locations include:

- Philadelphia, Reading, Lancaster (city), Pittsburgh, Bethlehem, Allentown, southern Montgomery County, and eastern Delaware County.

Since June 1, 2016, DEP has verified the presence of *Aedes albopictus* in all eight of these surveillance locations. Current *Aedes albopictus* activity is low but is expected to increase as summer progresses.

A woman with Zika virus infection can pass Zika virus to her fetus during pregnancy or near the time of delivery. The purpose of this advisory is to remind OB/GYN providers to counsel patients in all areas of Pennsylvania regarding measures to reduce the risk of Zika virus infection in pregnant women.

Zika Virus Prevention Messaging for Pregnant Women

- Pregnant women in Pennsylvania are most at risk of acquiring Zika virus through travel to areas currently experiencing Zika virus transmission.
 - **Travel to these areas should be avoided**
(<http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/page/zika-information>)
- If travel to an affected area cannot be avoided, strict adherence to **mosquito bite** prevention is critical:
 - Use EPA-registered mosquito repellants
 - DEET, picaridin, IR3535, oil of lemon eucalyptus, or para-menthane-diol.
 - Clothing and gear can be treated with permethrin (but do not apply to skin).
 - Cover exposed skin as much as possible:
 - Wear a hat, long-sleeved shirts, long pants, socks and shoes.
 - Choose accommodations that have:
 - Air conditioning
 - Window and door screens in place and in good repair
 - If accommodations do not have the above:
 - Sleep under a permethrin-treated bed net that can be tucked under the mattress
 - Use area repellants (e.g., mosquito coils) containing metofluthrin or allethrin
- **Sexual transmission** of Zika virus is also possible. The following measures are recommended to reduce the risk of sexual transmission following exposure (e.g., travel to a Zika-affected area):
 - Women with Zika virus exposure who develop symptoms should wait at least **eight weeks** after symptoms resolve before attempting pregnancy.
 - Women and men with Zika virus exposure but not developing symptoms should wait at least **eight weeks** after exposure before attempting pregnancy.
 - Men with Zika virus exposure who develop symptoms should wait at least **six months** after symptoms resolve before having unprotected sex.

Zika Virus Testing of Exposed Pregnant Women

- Test asymptomatic pregnant women with possible exposure (e.g., travel, sexual, etc.)
 - Exposure testing can be conducted within two to 12 weeks after exposure.
 - The test used is an IgM antibody test and is currently only available through CDC.
 - Contact the Department of Health (DOH) to arrange testing (877-PA-HEALTH).
- Test symptomatic pregnant women with Zika virus exposure
 - For women who have been symptomatic less than two weeks, Zika virus RNA testing (RT-PCR) is the best test to use. Commercial and CDC testing options are available. DOH consultation regarding testing is available (877-PA-HEALTH).
- All arbovirus infections (e.g., infections due to West Nile, dengue, chikungunya, Zika, etc.) are reportable within 24 hours in Pennsylvania.

Categories of Health Alert messages:

Health Alert: conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.

Health Advisory: provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.

Health Update: provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action.

This information is current as of June 16, 2016 but may be modified in the future.