



United States Department of the Interior
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Washington DC 20240

Memorandum

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To: Solicitor
Inspector General
Bureau and Office Heads

Attn: Senior Executive Emergency Management Council
Bureau and Office Emergency Coordinators

From: Director, Office of Emergency Management
/s/ Lisa A. Branum

Subject: DOI Zika Virus Information – Memorandum #2

Local transmission of Zika virus has been reported in the U.S. Territories of the U.S. Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico and American Samoa, as well as in Mexico, Caribbean, and Central and South America. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has issued Travel Notices (Alert Level 2, Practice Enhanced Precautions) for Zika-affected countries and territories. As of May 25, 2016 there have been no locally transmitted cases in the Continental United States to date, but there have been 591 travel-associated cases reported and 935 reported cases that were locally acquired in US territories. This memo is being issued as an update to the DOI Zika Information Memorandum #1 to inform you of new and/or emerging risks of Zika to U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) employees, volunteers, and visitors to DOI lands and to DOI facilities.

Background

The Zika virus is transmitted to people by infected mosquitoes through the *Aedes* species (*Aedes aegypti* and *Ae. albopictus*). *Aedes* mosquitoes are endemic in the U.S. Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, Hawaii, Guam and American Samoa. *Aedes* mosquitoes are also established in the continental United States, as far north as Iowa and New York, west to Texas, and in scattered areas of California, Arizona and New Mexico. This type of mosquito typically breeds in domestic water-holding containers, and is an aggressive daytime biter that feeds both indoors and outdoors near dwellings. Transmission of Zika virus remains in the blood of an infected person for about a week, but in some people it may be longer. During the first week of infection, the virus can be passed from an infected person to a mosquito through a mosquito bite. The infected mosquito can then spread the virus to other people. Zika virus can be transmitted sexually or through blood transfusions, although the Red Cross continues to implement safety measures to protect the blood supply from Zika virus.

Prevention

Persons traveling to or residing in areas of active Zika virus transmission should take steps to prevent infection through prevention of mosquito bites such as:

- Applying insect repellents containing DEET (preferably 20 - 30% DEET), picaridin, 1R3535 and some oil of lemon eucalyptus and para-menthane-diol products provide longer-lasting protection. If using both sunscreen and insect repellent, apply sunscreen first.
- Wearing long-sleeved shirts and long pants.
- Wearing permethrin-treated clothing, but DO NOT treat skin with permethrin.

- Using bed nets, window/door screens, and/or air conditioning, as appropriate.
- Emptying standing water from outdoor containers (e.g., flowerpots, tires, tarps).
- Pregnant women should discuss their male partner's potential exposures to mosquitoes and history of Zika-like illness with their health care provider.

Signs and Symptoms

- Most people who are infected with the Zika virus do not experience any symptoms.
- The most common symptoms are fever, rash, joint pain, conjunctivitis (red eyes), muscle pain and headache.
- The illness is usually mild; symptoms typically last several days to a week.
- People very rarely die of Zika, but Zika virus may be associated with Guillain- Barré syndrome (GBS) in a small proportion of infections. GBS is an uncommon sickness of the nervous system in which a person's own immune system damages the nerve cells, causing muscle weakness, and sometimes, paralysis.
- Zika has also been associated with other rare complications, such as increased risk for bleeding and other neurologic conditions.

Additional Concerns for Women

The Zika virus is a cause of microcephaly and other severe fetal brain defects in babies of mothers who were infected with Zika virus while pregnant. Pregnant women can be infected with Zika virus in any trimester. The CDC recommends that all pregnant women should not travel to areas where Zika virus transmission is ongoing. If a pregnant woman travels to an area with Zika virus transmission, she should be advised to strictly follow steps to avoid mosquito bites.

Diagnosis

If you develop the symptoms described above and have recently visited or live in an area where the Zika virus is found, consult with your doctor. A preliminary diagnosis is based on symptoms, travel history and or area of residence. Specialized blood tests are used to confirm the diagnosis of Zika virus.

Treatment

Currently, no vaccine exists to prevent Zika virus infection. When Zika virus does cause illness, care should be focused on relieving the symptoms and includes:

- Getting plenty of rest and drinking fluids to prevent dehydration.
- Taking acetaminophen (Tylenol) to relieve fever and pain.
- Prevent additional mosquito bites for the first week of your illness to protect your friends and family.

DOI Zika Virus Information

DOI employees are encouraged to visit the DOI Office of Emergency Management (OEM) website which contains Bureau-specific guidance, as available, and links to key CDC resources at: <https://www.doi.gov/emergency>, or visit the CDC Zika website directly at: <http://www.cdc.gov/zika> for more information.

Additional guidance and information on Bureau-specific needs and concerns may be issued as well. To obtain more information, please contact the OEM Interior Operations Center at doi_watch_office@ios.doi.gov.