

Zika Fever

An Update for Clinicians/Obstetricians in Miami-Dade County

Zika fever, a dengue-like illness caused by a mosquito-borne flavivirus, has been identified in several countries in Central and South America, and the Caribbean, including Puerto Rico. The Ministry of Health of Brazil has reported an increase in the number of babies born with microcephaly and other poor pregnancy outcomes in areas experiencing Zika virus outbreaks. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has issued a travel alert recommending that pregnant women in any trimester postpone travel to Zika affected areas. All patients who decide to travel to areas with Zika virus activity should take appropriate precautions to avoid mosquito bites.

Clinical Presentation: About 1 in 5 people infected with Zika virus are symptomatic. Zika fever is a mild illness with symptoms similar to those of mild dengue fever. Severe disease requiring hospitalization is uncommon. Suspected links between Zika virus infection and Guillain-Barre syndrome (GBS) have also been reported in infected persons. Treatment is symptomatic and illness typically resolves within a week. Co-infections with dengue or chikungunya are possible and should be considered. Aspirin and other non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs are not advised in case of co-infection with dengue. Pregnant women with fever should be treated with acetaminophen.

Signs/symptoms of Zika fever may include: acute fever (often low grade), maculopapular rash, arthralgia, conjunctivitis, myalgia, headache, retro-orbital pain, and vomiting.

Reporting: *Zika fever is now reportable 24/7 to DOH-Miami-Dade at 305-470-5660 upon suspicion.* Health care providers will be required to provide updates every 72 hours regarding the health status of suspect Zika fever patients to DOH-Miami-Dade; this includes updates on weekends and holidays, until Zika virus infection is ruled out or illness resolves. *If a suspect Zika fever patient is hospitalized, these reports will be expected every 24 hours, until Zika virus infection is ruled out or patient is discharged.*

Please contact DOH-Miami-Dade at 305-470-5660 to request approval for testing of patients meeting the following criteria:

All persons, including pregnant women, with two or more of the following signs/symptoms: fever, maculopapular rash, arthralgia or conjunctivitis (GBS could follow) **and** a history of travel to an area reporting Zika virus activity in the two weeks prior to illness onset should be immediately reported and tested.

OR

Mother of an infant or fetus with microcephaly or intracranial calcifications or poor fetal outcome diagnosed after the first trimester **and** with history of travel to an area with Zika virus activity during pregnancy should be immediately reported. Testing of both mother and infant is recommended.

OR

Pregnant women who, while pregnant, **traveled to an area reporting Zika virus activity** regardless of the length of time since the travel/illness occurred, but ideally within 2-12 weeks of travel can also be tested.

OR

A suspect locally-acquired case.

DO NOT SEND SPECIMENS to the Bureau of Public Health Laboratories (BPHL) without prior approval from DOH-Miami-Dade.

Laboratory Testing: Commercial testing for Zika virus is currently not available. The Florida Department of Health can perform testing using polymerase chain reaction (PCR) on serum (2 ml serum/red or tiger top tube), saliva (not sputum) (0.5-2 ml collected in a sterile container), and/or urine (2-3 ml collected in a sterile container) samples during the first three weeks after illness onset. Serum antibody tests are also available for samples collected ≥ 4 days after illness onset; however, cross-reaction with related flaviviruses (e.g. dengue) is common and results may be difficult to interpret. **Specimen containers must be properly sealed and placed in separate plastic bags with the completed BPHL DH1847 form. Without the approval of the DOH-Miami-Dade, specimens will not be tested and will be discarded.**

Health care providers must take samples to the Bureau of Public Health Laboratory (BPHL) located at 1325 NW 14th Avenue, Miami, Florida 33125, Monday-Friday. Please contact BPHL for packaging guidance – Elesi Quaye (305-324-2432 or Elesi.Quaye@flhealth.gov) and Pam Sullivan (305-325-2559 or Pam.Sullivan@flhealth.gov).

Transmission occurs through the bite of an infected *Aedes* mosquito. Rarely, perinatal, in utero, sexual and transfusion transmissions have also been reported. A person suspected to have contracted Zika virus should be advised to avoid mosquito bites while ill to prevent infection of local mosquitoes. Potentially infected men with pregnant partners should either abstain from sex or use condoms during intercourse for the duration of the pregnancy.

Additional Resources:

Mosquito-borne Diseases (DOH): <http://www.floridahealth.gov/diseases-and-conditions/mosquito-borne-diseases/index.html>

Zika Fact Sheet (CDC): <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/>

Q and A's for Obstetrical Healthcare Providers (CDC): <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/pdfs/questions-answers-clinicians.pdf>

Zika Virus and Pregnancy MMWR (CDC): <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/65/wr/pdfs/mm6505e2er.pdf>

Facts About Microcephaly (CDC): <http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/birthdefects/microcephaly.html>

Sexual Transmission of Zika Virus MMWR (CDC): <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/65/wr/mm6505e1er.htm>