



Onondaga County Health Department

Joanne M. Mahoney, County Executive
Indu Gupta, MD, MPH, Commissioner of Health

John H. Mulroy Civic Center • 421 Montgomery Street, Syracuse, NY 13202



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Dear Colleague:

As many students and their families are making plans to travel during the upcoming spring break, the Onondaga County Health Department would like to provide you with some important information regarding traveling to areas where there are active cases of Zika virus transmission.

Zika virus is spread to people primarily through the bite of an infected daytime mosquito of the *Aedes* species. These mosquitoes are found in Southern and some Southeastern states of the US, Mexico, Central and South America, and in the Caribbean. Zika virus infection has been linked to the increase in fetal loss and abnormal brain development of the fetus in infected pregnant women and Guillain-Barré Syndrome (a potentially severe paralytic illness) in infected people. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has issued a Travel Notice Information about these locations. If someone does travel to one of these areas, there are precautions that they are urged to take before and during travel to prevent getting infected with Zika virus. This information can be found at ongov.net or by going to the CDC's website for specific Zika travel information at: <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/page/zika-travel-information>.

Please share this important public health information with your key staff including health services personnel and school building principals/administrators. They will be able to help facilitate getting the above information immediately to students, faculty, and families as they may be making plans to travel outside the continental United States to an area that has active ongoing Zika virus transmission.

If you have any specific medical questions, please contact me at 315-435-3155. Thank you for your efforts to keep our community healthy.

Sincerely,

Quoc Nguyen, MD
Medical Director
Onondaga County Health Department

Zika Virus Fact Sheet



What is Zika virus?

Zika virus is spread by an infected day time biting mosquito of the Aedes family. These mosquitoes are found in Southern and some Southeastern states of the US, Mexico, Central and South America, and in the Caribbean. Currently, there is no local spread of Zika virus by mosquitoes in the continental United States, but cases have been reported in returning travelers from outbreak countries. Zika virus can also be spread by sex, mother to baby, and blood transfusion. Onondaga County does not have Aedes mosquitoes, so at present there is no risk for mosquito transmission of Zika locally.

What are the symptoms of Zika virus infection?

In most cases, Zika virus is a mild illness and most people may not realize they have been infected. Only about 20% of infected people show symptoms. Common symptoms are fever, joint pain, rash, red eyes, and muscle pain. Symptoms usually appear within 2 to 7 days after being bitten. Chikungunya and Dengue virus infections, which are also transmitted by the same mosquitoes, may cause the same symptoms.

There are no specific medical treatment, and there is no vaccine.

Who should be tested for Zika virus infection?

- **All pregnant women** who have traveled to an area where there is active ongoing Zika virus transmission should consult their medical provider for testing **even if they have no symptoms.**
- **Anyone who has symptoms** such as fever, joint pain, rash, red eyes, and muscle pain **within 14 days of travel to an affected area** should consult their medical provider for testing.

Your health care provider will work with your local Health Department for any further investigation.

What conditions may be linked to Zika virus infection?

There have been reports of negative fetal outcomes including fetal loss and babies born with a small head (microcephaly), and Guillain-Barre Syndrome (a paralysis illness that can be severe) in areas where Zika virus infection are ongoing.

What should you do if you are pregnant or trying to be pregnant?

The CDC **strongly recommends** that women of child bearing age and pregnant women **postpone travel** to areas where there is active ongoing Zika virus transmission until further notice. Those who do travel to those areas should talk to their doctor first and **strictly follow steps to prevent mosquito bites during the trip.** If you become sick within 14 days of travel, seek care immediately and inform your provider of your recent travel history.

For more information visit:
www.cdc.gov/zika

How can you protect yourself from getting Zika virus?

If you are traveling to areas with active ongoing Zika virus transmission:

- **Protect yourself against mosquito bites, both indoors and outdoors.**
- **Stay in dwellings with good screened windows and doors.**
- **Use insect repellent safely. Follow the instructions on the product label.**
- **Wear protective clothing such as long pants, long sleeved shirts, and socks to cover exposed skin.**

If you develop symptoms of Zika virus (fever, joint pain, rash, red eyes, and muscle pain) and have recently traveled, call your healthcare provider immediately.

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Adapted from: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Pan American Health Organization