



## **P R E S S R E L E A S E**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **First Case of Travel-Associated Zika in Santa Barbara County**

The Santa Barbara County Public Health Department confirms that a Santa Barbara County resident has tested positive for Zika virus infection. The resident is a pregnant female who contracted the virus during travel to Central America. To protect patient privacy, further details about the case will not be released.

The spread of Zika virus occurs primarily through infected *Aedes* mosquitoes, which have not been detected in Santa Barbara County. The Mosquito and Vector Management District has increased their trapping and testing of mosquitoes to determine if the *Aedes* mosquito has migrated to Santa Barbara County and thus far has found no evidence of the mosquito here.

“There is currently no risk for contracting Zika virus in Santa Barbara County via infected mosquitoes,” said Dr. Charity Dean, Santa Barbara County Health Officer. “Taking precautions when traveling to areas with Zika virus, or engaging in sexual contact with someone at risk for Zika infection, are the best ways to avoid contracting the virus.”

If you have concerns about your personal risk for Zika virus infection, please contact your Primary Care Provider.

#### **Prevention**

There have been Zika virus outbreaks in Africa, Asia, the Pacific Islands, Mexico, and Central and South America. In the last few weeks, there have been 42 cases of locally acquired Zika virus in Florida. Maps of affected areas can be found at [www.cdc.gov/zika/geo/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/zika/geo/index.html).

Although the mosquitoes that carry Zika virus have not been detected in Santa Barbara County and there have been no reported cases of locally acquired Zika virus in California, people should always take steps to avoid mosquito bites. Safety precautions include:

- Use EPA-registered insect repellents
- Wear long sleeve shirts and long pants
- Use air conditioning and window/door screens
- Empty standing water from containers such as flower pots or water buckets

Zika can also be transmitted through sexual contact. If your partner has traveled to an area with Zika or if you are pregnant or considering getting pregnant, it is important to protect yourself during sexual activity.

The Centers for Disease Control recommends that pregnant women postpone travel to regions where the virus has been identified.

## **Zika Infection**

Four out of five infected people will not have any symptoms of infection and almost all people with Zika get better without any special treatment. Common symptoms include fever, eye redness, achy joints and a skin rash. The greatest concern is for unborn babies when the pregnant mother is infected with Zika. In these situations, the virus can cause microcephaly (small head syndrome), brain damage and other birth defects. There is no vaccine to prevent Zika, although research is underway.

## **Resources**

The Santa Barbara County Public Health Department is monitoring the evolving Zika situation closely along with State and Federal agencies. The Public Health Department provides updates and testing recommendations to local health care providers and coordinates information with the Mosquito and Vector Management District of Santa Barbara County. More information can be found at:

[http://cosb.countyofsb.org/zika\\_Virus/](http://cosb.countyofsb.org/zika_Virus/)

[www.cdph.ca.gov/HealthInfo/discond/Pages/Zika.aspx](http://www.cdph.ca.gov/HealthInfo/discond/Pages/Zika.aspx)

<http://www.cdc.gov/zika/>

Report mosquito problems, particularly aggressive daytime biting mosquitoes to the Mosquito and Vector Management District at [www.mvmdistrict.com/](http://www.mvmdistrict.com/)

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