



Zika Virus Advisory

Zika virus disease (Zika) is a disease caused by Zika virus that is spread to people primarily through the bite of an infected *Aedes* species mosquito. There is a consensus that two *Aedes* species are responsible for the recent spread of the virus. *Aedes aegypti* is considered to be the primary vector in the current outbreak and *Aedes albopictus* is believed to be a secondary vector. The range of *Ae. aegypti* includes tropical and sub-tropical areas plus areas within the southern United States. The northern limits for *Ae. aegypti* currently includes Florida, the gulf coast states, Texas, southern California and Hawaii. It seems unlikely that even with climate change that *Ae. aegypti* will reach a northern location such as Massachusetts. Most of the evidence suggests that there will not be a significant outbreak of Zika Virus outside of areas where *Ae. aegypti* are found.

In September 2014, one *Ae. albopictus* was collected in a gravid trap set out in Charlestown by the Suffolk County Mosquito Control Project. Despite intensive trapping efforts by the Suffolk County MCP during the remainder of 2014 and the 2015 season, no other *Ae. albopictus* have been found in Boston. The current plan is to continue surveillance efforts to look for *Ae. albopictus*.

The most common symptoms of Zika are fever, rash, joint pain, and conjunctivitis (red eyes). The illness is usually mild with symptoms lasting for several days to a week after being bitten by an infected mosquito. People usually don't get sick enough to go to the hospital, and they very rarely die of Zika. For this reason, many people might not realize they have been infected. Once a person has been infected, he or she is likely to be protected from future infections.

Symptoms usually last from several days to 1 week. Guillian-Barre syndrome (muscle weakness) has been reported in patients following suspected Zika infection. In Brazil, reported increased cases of microcephaly in infants has been associated with the increase in Zika virus.

Because there is no vaccine or prophylactic medication available to prevent Zika, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) recommends that all pregnant women consider postponing travel to areas where Zika virus transmission is ongoing. Pregnant women should discuss their mosquito exposure with their physician.

Sexual transmission of the Zika virus from infected men is possible and has been documented rarely. Until more is known, men who reside in or have traveled to an area of active Zika virus transmission who have a pregnant partner should abstain from sexual activity or consistently and correctly use latex condoms during sexual activity for the duration of the pregnancy.

Avoiding mosquito bites is also important. Mosquito prevention recommendations include:

- Wearing long sleeves and pants
- Eliminate all unnatural receptacles of stagnant water from your yard
- Using U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)- registered insect repellants
- Using permethrin (insect repellent) treated clothing
- Staying and sleeping in screened-in or air conditioned rooms

Sudbury is a member of the Eastern Middlesex Mosquito Control Project which provides prevention, surveillance, and control of the mosquito population.

For more information please go to <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices/>