



Hays County Update on Zika Virus

Hays County does not have any reports of persons with Zika virus as of this post, June 15, 2016. If this status changes, it will be reported here.

The mosquito that carries Zika is native to Central Texas. Zika virus is transmitted to persons primarily through the bite of an infected mosquito (*Aedes* species, which can also transmit West Nile virus, dengue fever and chikungunya virus). The *Aedes* mosquitoes are aggressive daytime biters and are located near populated areas.

The most common symptoms of Zika virus disease are fever, rash, joint pain, and conjunctivitis (red eyes). The illness is typically mild and lasts about one week. **During that time, a mosquito that bites an infected person can carry the virus to the next person it bites, so it is critical to follow your health care provider's recommendation to reduce exposure to others.**

Preventative measures residents can take to avoid mosquito bites include

Draining any water around their property (mosquitos can breed in as little as a Bottle cap full of water),
Wearing long-sleeved shirts and long pants, and
Using EPA-registered insect repellents containing DEET, picaridin or oil of Lemon Eucalyptus, and follow directions closely

Travel Precautions

On January 22, 2016, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) posted interim guidelines for health care providers in the United States caring for pregnant women during a Zika virus outbreak. Zika infection in pregnant women may be associated with congenital microcephaly and fetal loss. Guillain-Barre syndrome has also been reported in patients after suspected Zika infection. **CDC is recommending that all pregnant women consider postponing travel to**

areas where Zika virus transmission is ongoing. A link to the guidance can be found at: <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/65/wr/mm6502e1.htm>

Persons with suspected infections should also be evaluated and managed for possible dengue and chikungunya virus. Aspirin and other NSAID's should be avoided until dengue can be ruled out to reduce the risk of hemorrhage.

The Hays County Epidemiology Team has alerted local health care providers and partner organizations to be aware of Zika as they see patients and to ask about travel history. The County works with providers to help them assess the need for laboratory testing and facilitate testing from the State Health Department lab in Austin.

Hays County encourages people to follow travel precautions and avoid mosquito bites. The Zika virus has been declared an emerging public health threat by the World Health Organization. Zika virus was first isolated in a Ugandan monkey in 1947. In 2007 the first outbreak occurred in Micronesia. Since 2011 there have been lab-confirmed Zika cases in returning travelers from areas with local transmission.

For more information about the Zika virus, visit www.TexasZika.org and <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/>.

Information about the Hays County Mosquito Surveillance Program is at [Fight the Bite](#).