



News Release

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CDC Sends Out New Guidance on Caring for Infants and Children with Possible Zika Virus Infection

COLUMBUS - The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, (CDC) has updated its interim guidelines for healthcare providers who care for infants and children with possible Zika virus infection. Ohio currently has four confirmed cases of Zika virus in the state.

The new recommendations include infants with typical head size, normal ultrasounds, and a normal physical exam born to mothers who traveled to areas with Zika do not require any special care beyond what is routinely provided to newborns. Also, children in addition to infants, who have traveled to an area with Zika within the past two weeks and have at least two of these symptoms: fever, rash, red eyes, or joint pain are classified as a suspect case. The transmission of Zika virus from mother to infant during delivery is possible, so this recommendation applies to infants during the first two weeks of life whose mother traveled to those affected areas within two weeks of delivery.

“Parents and families traveling to areas with Zika can help protect their children by strictly following steps to prevent mosquito bites,” said Dr. Mary DiOrio, medical director for the Ohio Department of Health. “CDC also recommends that pregnant women consider postponing travel to areas with Zika virus transmission due to the possible association between Zika and certain birth defects.”

Zika virus disease in children, as for adults, is usually mild with 80 percent of those people not having any symptoms. When symptoms occur, they are often mild, lasting from several days to a week, and include fever, rash, joint and muscle pain, conjunctivitis (red eyes), and headache. Severe disease requiring hospitalization is uncommon.

Zika virus is primarily transmitted through a mosquito bite, and there is no indication that it can spread from person to person through casual contact.

Go to the ODH website at <http://www.odh.ohio.gov/zika> for more information about Zika virus and links to CDC resources including travel advisories for countries where Zika virus transmission is ongoing.

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