



SUBJECT : ZIKA VIRUS UPDATE

Bulletin #2: THIS BULLETIN HAS BEEN UPDATED USING REVISION BARS TO REFLECT THE PUBLIC HEALTH AGENCY OF CANADA GUIDANCE

What is Zika virus and where did it come from?

Zika is a virus that is transmitted to people through the bite of an infected Aedes mosquito (daytime tropical mosquito). This is the same mosquito that transmits dengue and chikungunya. It's not new, as it was first documented in parts of Africa and Asia in the 1950s.

The virus has recently begun to spread, finding its way into the Americas and Caribbean for the first time. Zika-affected countries include (but are not limited to)*:

America Samoa	Curacao	Guyana	Paraguay
Barbados	Dominican Republic	Haïti	Puerto Rico
Bolivia	Ecuador	Honduras	Saint Martin
Brazil	El Salvador	Martinique	Samoa
Cape Verde	French Guiana	Mexico	Suriname
Colombia	Guadeloupe	Nicaragua	Venezuela
Costa Rica	Guatemala	Panama	Virgin Islands

*For a complete list of countries, please refer to <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/geo/>

How dangerous is it?

Zika is thought to be relatively harmless. The vast majority of those infected never show symptoms. In those who do, the virus typically causes a mild illness (called Zika); marked by a mild fever, rash, muscle pain and red eyes.

The incubation period of Zika virus ranges from 3 to 12 days. The disease symptoms are usually mild and last for 2 to 7 days. Most people recover fully without complications, and hospitalization rates are low. Zika virus infection may go unrecognized or be misdiagnosed as dengue, chikungunya or other viral infections causing fever and rash.

What about the birth defects?

In the last year, doctors in Brazil have been noticing a still-unproven link between Zika and a sudden 20 per cent spike in babies being born there with underdeveloped heads -- a condition called microcephaly.

Validating the link is difficult, especially since other regions that have experienced Zika outbreaks have not reported increases in microcephaly.

The Public Health Agency of Canada has not issued any travel restrictions related to Zika, but we draw to your attention that the Agency has advised pregnant women and those considering becoming pregnant to discuss their travel plans with their health care provider to assess their risk of contracting Zika.

These women should also take measures to protect themselves against daytime and nighttime mosquito bites.

Is there a vaccine for Zika?

There is no vaccine to protect against Zika infection, nor is there any particular way to treat an infection.

What are some prevention measures?

Mosquito bite prevention is the best way to avoid infection. Please refer to Safety Bulletin **CSSI 14-04 – Insect Bite Prevention**.

What is Air Canada doing?

Air Canada will be providing DEET insect repellent in on-board flight satchels of all aircraft on specific destinations where the Zika virus has been confirmed. Employees who have concerns about work-related travel to Zika-affected destinations should discuss them with their local manager.

Where can I get more information?

Information regarding Zika can be found on the Public Health Agency of Canada website:

<http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/phn-asp/2016/zika-eng.php>



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