



## Department of Health

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February 4, 2016

**TO: Healthcare Providers, Hospitals, Local Health Departments (LHDs)**

**FROM: NYSDOH Bureau of Communicable Disease Control**

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**HEALTH ADVISORY: ZIKA VIRUS TESTING NOW AVAILABLE TO ALL  
PREGNANT WOMEN IN NEW YORK STATE**  
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*Please distribute to the Infection Control Department, Emergency Department, Infectious  
Disease Department, Obstetrics/Gynecology (including Nurse Practitioners and  
Midwives), Family Medicine, Travel Medicine Service, Pediatrics, Director of Nursing,  
Medical Director, Laboratory Service, Pharmacy, and all patient care areas.*  
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- New York State Department of Health's Wadsworth Center Laboratories will now begin to provide Zika virus testing for **all** pregnant women who traveled to an area with ongoing Zika virus transmission during pregnancy.
  - Previously, NYSDOH offered testing only to symptomatic pregnant women who traveled to an area with ongoing Zika virus transmission.
  - The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) maintains a map of countries that have past or current evidence of Zika virus transmission at <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/geo/index.html>.
  - Revised clinical algorithms will be forthcoming soon and distributed to providers.
- A case of sexual transmission of Zika virus was reported by the Dallas County Health Department on February 2. Possible sexual transmission from a traveler was also reported in Colorado in 2008.<sup>1</sup>
  - Information on Zika virus is rapidly evolving. Information will be distributed to providers as soon as additional information is available from the NYSDOH or CDC.
  - CDC and NYSDOH recommend that until more is known, males who have traveled to or live in an area with active Zika virus transmission and are sexual partners of pregnant women, abstain from sex or consistently and correctly use latex condoms during each act of vaginal, anal, or oral sex for the duration of the pregnancy.
    - Fact sheets on condoms and information on using condoms correctly are available from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and CDC at <https://www.aids.gov/hiv-aids-basics/prevention/reduce-your-risk/using-condoms/> and <http://www.cdc.gov/condomeffectiveness/brief.html#Condom>.
- The Wadsworth Center will offer molecular tests which detect the presence of the virus, as well as both screening and confirmatory tests for antibodies against Zika and other related viruses. Complete results can take up to 21 days after initiation of testing at Wadsworth.
- Hospitals and providers must contact their LHD to receive **prior approval** for testing. Upon learning of a request for Zika virus testing, LHDs should contact their regional epidemiologist.

<sup>1</sup> [http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/eid/article/17/5/10-1939\\_article](http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/eid/article/17/5/10-1939_article)

- Contact information for LHDs is available at <http://www.nyscho.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=3713>.
- A minimum of three ml of serum and three ml of urine should be frozen at -70 to -80C and shipped on dry ice to the Wadsworth Center, David Axelrod Institute, 120 New Scotland Avenue, Albany, NY 12208. Wadsworth's Infectious Diseases Requisition form, which is available at [http://www.wadsworth.org/divisions/infdis/DOH-4463\\_061109\\_fillable.pdf](http://www.wadsworth.org/divisions/infdis/DOH-4463_061109_fillable.pdf), must be completed before submission.
- Results of Zika virus testing will be made available to LHDs and the ordering provider. Providers can access public health consultation for assistance with interpretation of results by calling 1-888-364-4723 between 9AM and 6PM weekdays
- To date, Zika virus has been diagnosed in 11 New York State residents, each of whom was a returning traveler. No cases of local transmission have occurred in the state.
- Zika virus is primarily transmitted by certain species of infected Aedes mosquitoes. Aedes aegypti, the more efficient vector for humans, is not found in the State. However, Aedes albopictus, sometimes called the Asian tiger mosquito, is a possible vector.
  - Aedes albopictus has been found in Nassau, Suffolk, Westchester, Rockland and Orange Counties as well as in New York City.
  - NYSDOH will be enhancing mosquito surveillance activities as the weather warms up and continue these efforts throughout the summer. Enhanced activities will include but not be limited to:
    - Additional trapping in Putnam, Orange, Sullivan, Ulster and Dutchess counties to determine whether Aedes albopictus has spread farther north.
    - Testing Aedes albopictus for Zika virus when they're collected during routine mosquito surveillance.
- Hospitals and providers must report suspected cases of Zika virus and all other arboviral diseases to the LHD where the patient resides. Providers who cannot reach their LHD can access 24/7/365 public health consultation from NYSDOH at 518-473-4439 during business hours and 866-881-2809 evenings, weekends, and holidays.

If you have any questions, please contact your LHD or the NYSDOH Bureau of Communicable Disease Control at [bcdc@health.ny.gov](mailto:bcdc@health.ny.gov).