



For Immediate Release
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News Release

First Case of Zika Virus Disease Reported in Utah

(Salt Lake City) – Utah public health officials have received confirmation from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) that a Utah resident has tested positive for the Zika virus. The patient, a child between the ages of two and 10 years, recently traveled to an affected country before returning to Utah. The child exhibited symptoms, including the typical rash, and has not experienced any complications.

“It isn’t surprising that Utah has an imported case of Zika virus since so many of our residents travel to and from areas where the disease is currently being transmitted,” said Dr. Allyn Nakashima, State Epidemiologist with the Utah Department of Health (UDOH). She adds, “Zika virus, with the possible link to the birth defect microcephaly, is understandably frightening.” Since there is no vaccine to prevent Zika virus, and no specific medical treatment for those who are infected, the UDOH urges all who may be considering travel to the growing number of affected countries to take the necessary precautions to avoid mosquito bites.

Zika virus is transmitted to humans primarily through the bite of an infected *Aedes* species mosquito. Visit <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/geo/index.html> for the most current list of countries affected by Zika virus. Sexual transmission of Zika virus can occur, although there is limited data about the risk. The virus generally only causes fever, rash, joint pain, and red eyes, and is almost always a very mild illness. Most people won’t require testing. Approximately 80 percent of those infected never show any symptoms of the disease, while approximately 20 percent will have only mild symptoms.

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Public health officials encourage pregnant women to postpone traveling to affected areas, if possible, or talk to their health care provider before considering travel. For anyone who does plan to visit the affected countries, prevention is the best approach to avoiding Zika virus infection. Steps to prevent mosquito bites include using insect repellents containing DEET, wearing long-sleeved shirts and long pants, and removing standing water where mosquitoes live and breed.

The UDOH and CDC are monitoring the situation closely.

For more information on Zika virus and how to protect yourself, visit www.cdc.gov/zika. For women who are pregnant and have questions about Zika virus, please call the MotherToBaby program at 1-800-822-2229, text 855-999-3525, or chat live or email www.MotherToBaby.org.

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The mission of the Utah Department of Health is to protect the public's health through preventing avoidable illness, injury, disability and premature death, assuring access to affordable, quality health care, and promoting healthy lifestyles.