



NEWS

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Montco Reports First Zika Virus Case

Norristown, PA (March 8, 2016) – The Montgomery County Health Department (MCHD) today announced confirmation of the first case of Zika virus in the county. A 55-year-old woman tested positive for the virus, following travel outside of the United States to an area where Zika virus has been found. There are now six confirmed cases of Zika virus in Pennsylvania, according to the state Department of Health.

“The Zika virus is generally a mild virus that lasts less than a week,” said Montgomery County Commissioner Val Arkoosh, who is also a physician and is Interim Medical Director of the Montgomery County Health Department. “The CDC, the state health department, and our county health department are fully prepared for cases of Zika virus, which is important to note, cannot be transmitted through casual contact. We want to strongly encourage our residents to focus on mosquito bite prevention, if they travel to countries that are affected by the ongoing outbreak. It is also important to talk with your healthcare provider about travel if you are pregnant or planning to become pregnant.”

Zika virus is a generally mild illness that is spread primarily through the bite of an infected mosquito. Common symptoms of Zika virus disease are fever, rash, joint pain, and conjunctivitis (red eyes), lasting from several days to one week. Spread of the virus through blood transfusion and sexual contact has also been reported. The virus cannot be transmitted through casual contact.

The current Zika virus outbreak began in May 2015 in Brazil, leading to reports of Guillain-Barré syndrome and pregnant women giving birth to babies with birth defects and poor pregnancy outcomes. The outbreak has spread to numerous countries and areas, prompting the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to issue travel notices to regions where the Zika virus transmission is ongoing.

The first case of Zika virus disease contracted in the U.S. occurred in Texas, and involved an individual who had sexual contact with someone who acquired the Zika infection while traveling abroad. Other confirmed cases of the illness in the U.S. have occurred in individuals who had traveled to areas affected by the Zika outbreak.

For more information, please visit the MCHD Zika Virus webpage:

<http://www.montcopa.org/index.aspx?nid=2324>.