

Jan. 22, 2016

DEPARTMENT PROVIDES MOSQUITO-BORNE ILLNESS UPDATE



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Tallahassee, Fla.—The Florida Department of Health is monitoring three travel-associated cases of Zika virus, a mosquito-borne illness. It is important to note that there have been no locally-acquired cases and the virus cannot be transmitted from person-to-person.

"While we are not experiencing local cases of Zika virus in Florida, we are reminded that avoiding mosquito bites is the best way to prevent all mosquito-borne disease," said State Surgeon General and Secretary of Health Dr. John Armstrong. "Floridians and visitors are encouraged to take simple steps to reduce the chance of being bitten, such as draining any standing water (no matter how small), covering skin with clothing or repellent and maintaining screens over doors and windows."

We have had **no locally-acquired cases of Zika virus**. There are currently three travel-associated cases of Zika virus in Florida – two are Miami-Dade County residents who traveled to Colombia in December; the third case is a Hillsborough County resident who traveled to Venezuela in December.

It is important to practice "Drain and Cover" at home, but also when you are traveling, particularly to areas where mosquitos are prevalent such as the Caribbean, Central America and South America.

Drain standing water to stop mosquitoes from multiplying. Eliminate all sources of standing water on your property, including in flower pots, old car tires and buckets. Empty and clean birdbaths and pet's water bowls at least once or twice a week. Protect boats and vehicles from rain with tarps that will not accumulate water. Maintain swimming pools in good condition and appropriately chlorinated. Be sure to empty plastic swimming pools when not in use.

Cover skin with clothing or repellent. Wear shoes, socks, long pants and long sleeves. Apply mosquito repellent to bare skin and clothing. Always use repellents according to the label. Repellents with DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus and IR3535 are effective.

Cover doors and windows with screens to keep mosquitoes out. Keep mosquitoes out of your house. Repair broken screens on windows, doors, porches and patios.

Zika fever illness is a generally mild illness with a rash, fever and joint pain. Researchers are examining a possible link between the virus and unborn babies exposed during pregnancy.

The department has a PSA video that media partners are welcome to share regarding “Drain and Cover” and preventing mosquito bites. The video can be accessed here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AE6tkoWanXk>

The CDC has issued a travel notice for Zika virus in Puerto Rico, the Caribbean, Mexico, Central America and South America. More information about the CDC’s notices can be found here: <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices>. Questions regarding the CDC travel notices should be directed to the CDC’s media team.

For more information on mosquito-borne diseases, click [here](#).

About the Florida Department of Health

The department works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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