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Zika Virus Outbreak: Update #3

Key Points and Recommendations:

- Clinicians should remain aware of multiple new guidelines and resources regarding Zika virus
- CDC has now published timeframes regarding preventing sexual transmission from a male partner to a female partner:
 - Couples who include a man who has been diagnosed with Zika or had symptoms of Zika should consider using condoms or not having sex for at least **6 months after symptoms begin**.
 - Couples who include a man who traveled to an area with Zika but did not develop symptoms of Zika should consider using condoms or not having sex for at least **8 weeks after their return**.
 - Couples who include a man who lives in an area with Zika but has not developed symptoms of Zika should consider using condoms or not having sex **while there is Zika in the area**.
- Non-pregnant women who traveled to an area with Zika are now recommended to avoid pregnancy for at least 8 weeks after their return.
- Additional details regarding timeframes for preventing sexual transmission are available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/transmission/sexual-transmission.html>
- Other guidelines, publications and resources are available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/resources/index.html>
- Healthcare providers should call the NH DPHS to request testing for Zika virus infection, or with questions. For efficiency and to facilitate appropriate counseling, please do not direct your patients to call NH DPHS directly. NH DPHS's number is 603-271-4496 (after hours 1-800-852-3345 ext.5300).

Zika Transmission & Prevention:

Zika virus is mainly transmitted through the bite of an infected *Aedes* mosquito (most commonly *Aedes aegypti*). These mosquito vectors are not present in New Hampshire, but individuals traveling to countries in South America, Central America, and the Caribbean where Zika virus is spreading are at risk and should take strict precautions to avoid mosquito bites as outlined by the CDC: <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/prevention/index.html>.

Zika virus can also transmit sexually from a man to a woman. Preliminary studies suggest that the virus persists in semen longer than in blood, but duration is not known. It is not known whether men who are asymptotically infected have virus in their semen or can transmit Zika virus through sexual activity. Any person who had condomless sex (i.e., vaginal, anal, or oral intercourse) with a male partner who traveled to an area of ongoing Zika virus transmission and who has had symptoms of Zika virus disease during travel or within 2 weeks of return as potentially exposed.

NH DHHS-DPHS

Zika Virus Transmission Update #3

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Because of the accumulating evidence of an association between maternal Zika virus infection and adverse fetal outcomes, including congenital microcephaly, healthcare providers should counsel **pregnant** women to:

- Postpone travel to a Zika affected area, if possible.
 - If they must travel to a Zika affected area, follow strict precautions to avoid mosquito bites
- Abstain from sexual activity or consistently and correctly use condoms during sex (vaginal, anal, or oral intercourse) for the duration of pregnancy if a male sexual partner recently traveled to a Zika affected area.

Healthcare providers should counsel **non-pregnant** women who:

- Have either traveled OR have a male sexual partner that traveled to a Zika affected area but **did not develop symptoms of Zika** to consider using condoms or not having sex for at least **8 weeks after their return**.
- Did not travel but have a male sex partner that traveled to a Zika affected area and was **diagnosed with Zika or had symptoms of Zika** to consider using condoms or not having sex for at least **6 months after symptoms begin**.

Testing:

Healthcare providers should consult with NH DHHS DPHS if a patient meets criteria for testing based on the algorithm outlined in the previous HAN dated February 5, 2016:

http://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dphs/cdcs/alerts/documents/zika_update1.pdf

For any questions regarding the contents of this message, please contact NH DHHS, DPHS, Bureau of Infectious Disease Control at 603-271-4496 (after hours 1-800-852-3345 ext.5300).

To change your contact information in the NH Health Alert Network, contact Thom Flynn at 603-271-7499 or email tdflynn@dhhs.state.nh.us

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