



DCHHS

Safe families, healthy lives.

Dallas County Health and Human Services

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DCHHS Reports First Zika Virus Case in Dallas County Acquired Through Sexual Transmission

DALLAS (Feb. 2, 2016) – Dallas County Health and Human Services (DCHHS) has received confirmation from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) of the first Zika virus case acquired through sexual transmission in Dallas County in 2016. The patient was infected with the virus after having sexual contact with an ill individual who returned from a country where Zika virus is present. For medical confidentiality and personal privacy reasons, DCHHS does not provide additional identifying information.

“Now that we know Zika virus can be transmitted through sex, this increases our awareness campaign in educating the public about protecting themselves and others,” said Zachary Thompson, DCHHS director. “Next to abstinence, condoms are the best prevention method against any sexually-transmitted infections.”

Zika virus is transmitted to people by mosquitoes and through sexual activity. The most common symptoms of Zika virus are fever, rash, joint pain, and conjunctivitis (red eyes). The illness is usually mild with symptoms lasting several days to a week.

DCHHS advises individuals with symptoms to see a healthcare provider if they have visited an area where Zika virus is present or had sexual contact with a person who traveled to an area where Zika virus is present. There is no specific medication available to treat Zika virus and there is not a vaccine. The best way to avoid Zika virus is to avoid mosquito bites and to avoid sexual contact with a person who has Zika virus.

“Education and awareness is crucial in preventing Zika virus,” said Dr. Christopher Perkins, DCHHS medical director/health authority. “Patients are highly encouraged to follow prevention recommendations to avoid transmitting and spreading Zika virus.”

DCHHS recommends the following to avoid Zika virus:

Use the **4Ds** to reduce the chance of being bitten by a mosquito.

- **DEET** All Day, Every Day: Whenever you’re outside, use insect repellents that contain DEET or other EPA approved repellents and follow instructions.
- **DRESS**: Wear long, loose, and light-colored clothing outside.
- **DRAIN**: Remove all standing water in and around your home.
- **DUSK & DAWN**: Limit outdoor activities during dusk and dawn hours when mosquitoes are most active.

Travelers can protect themselves by doing the following:

- Choose a hotel or lodging with air conditioning or screens on windows or doors.
- Sleep under a mosquito bed net if you are outside or in a room that is not well-screened.

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First case of Zika virus through sex, continued.

Sexual partners can protect each other by using condoms to prevent spreading sexually-transmitted infections.

There are currently no reports of Zika virus being locally-transmitted by mosquitoes in Dallas County. However, imported cases make local spread by mosquitoes possible because the mosquitoes that can transmit the virus are found locally. DCHHS advises recent travelers with Zika virus symptoms as well as individuals diagnosed with Zika virus protect themselves from further mosquito bites.

For more information on Chikungunya, Dengue and Zika viruses, go to the [DCHHS website](#).

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