

Message from Sara H. Cody, M.D., Santa Clara County Health Officer

Zika Update



Many of you have heard about Zika in the news recently. This update will provide information regarding Zika and local actions the Santa Clara County Public Health Department is taking to keep our residents and medical providers informed.

What we know:

- Zika is a disease caused by the Zika virus. Symptoms of Zika include fever, rash, joint pain, and conjunctivitis (red eyes). Zika virus is transmitted through a bite from a Zika-infected mosquito to a person. Only about one in five people who are infected with Zika virus will experience symptoms, and the illness is usually mild and does not require hospitalization.
- The type of mosquitoes that are able to transmit Zika virus are *Aedes aegypti* (the yellow fever mosquito) and *Aedes albopictus* (the Asian tiger mosquito). These mosquitoes are small with black and white striped legs, and they bite during daytime, especially around dawn and dusk. At this time, these mosquitoes have not been detected in Santa Clara County.
- Currently, there are no documented cases of local transmission of Zika virus from a mosquito to a person in California or the United States. However, there are over 40 countries with local Zika virus transmission, mostly in Central and South America, the Caribbean, and some parts of Mexico. Click here to see a map and list of countries with Zika transmission: www.cdc.gov/zika/geo.
- At this time there is no vaccine or treatment for Zika.

The main reason that Zika has caused concern is because of its association with birth defects. In early April, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) concluded that women who are infected with Zika virus during their pregnancy are at increased risk for having babies with birth defects such as microcephaly (abnormally small head). Because of this increased risk, the CDC advises pregnant women to postpone travel to areas with local Zika virus transmission. For more information about Zika and pregnancy, visit www.cdc.gov/zika/pregnancy.

Cases of sexual transmission of Zika virus have been documented from men who are symptomatic with Zika to their sexual partners. Therefore, the CDC recommends that men who live or have traveled to a Zika-affected area should abstain from sex or use condoms if their partner is pregnant for the entire duration of their partner's pregnancy.

And finally, Zika has been associated with a small number of cases of Guillain-Barré syndrome and other neurologic conditions. Whether or not Zika virus truly causes these conditions is under investigation.

With the summer months approaching, some parts of the United States may see an increase in the *Aedes* mosquitoes that can carry and transmit Zika virus. *Aedes* mosquitoes are not currently present in Santa Clara County, but they could enter our county in the future. Additionally, anyone who travels to a country with local Zika virus transmission should take every precaution to avoid mosquito bites. We recommend that:

- When outdoors, wear long pants and long-sleeved shirts.
- Apply insect repellent containing DEET according to label instructions.
- Make sure that doors and windows have tight-fitting screens. Repair or replace screens that have tears or holes.
- On a weekly basis, dump or drain standing water in bird baths, plant pots and their saucers, vases, and buckets. Keep a clean yard and discard tires, bottles, cans, etc. that can hold water. *Aedes* mosquitoes lay eggs in anything that holds a little water.
- The Santa Clara County Vector Control District offers free home/yard inspections. Please call 408-918-4770 or visit www.sccvector.org for additional information.
- Report any small daytime biting mosquitoes with black and white striped legs to the Santa Clara County Vector Control District.

The Santa Clara County Public Health Department is closely monitoring Zika and will update our website with Zika information for Santa Clara County residents. Our website also includes health alerts and guidance for healthcare providers to keep them informed of the latest CDC guidance. We have a strong partnership with the Santa Clara County Vector Control District and will continue to share information and resources.

For more about Zika, please visit:

- Santa Clara County Public Health Department: <https://www.sccgov.org/sites/sccphd/en-us/Residents/DiseaseInformation/zika/Pages/zika.aspx>
- California Department of Public Health (CDPH): www.cdph.ca.gov/HealthInfo/discond/Pages/Zika.aspx

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): www.cdc.gov/zika.