

ONEIDA COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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News Release

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Zika Virus

Oneida County Health Department (OCHD) has received its first notification of a confirmed case of Zika virus in the County; the person acquired the disease while travelling to South America and at this time, there is no threat to public health in Oneida County. It is important to keep in mind that the infection occurred, not locally, but in a country where the Zika virus is prevalent. In fact, to date, no local transmissions (person who has not traveled recently gets bitten by an infected mosquito where they live) have been reported in the U.S.

Zika virus disease is spread to people primarily through the bite of an infected mosquito. People usually don't get sick enough to go to the hospital; however, Zika virus infection during pregnancy can cause a serious birth defect called microcephaly as well as other severe fetal brain defects. Moreover, Zika virus can also be transmitted during sex by a male partner infected with the virus. CDC is also investigating the link between Zika and Guillain-Barré syndrome (GBS) which has been found in a small proportion of people infected with the Zika virus. GBS is a sickness of the nervous system in which a person's own immune system damages the nerve cells, causing muscle weakness, and sometimes, paralysis.

Therefore, there are important precautions that both *men and women* traveling to these areas need to be aware of before traveling:

1. **Areas with Zika:** Consult the CDC website for a current listing of areas reporting active Zika virus transmission.
2. **Pregnant women and those considering becoming pregnant** should consider postponing trips to those areas at this time due to the risk of giving birth to babies with birth defects.
3. **Mosquito bite prevention:** Know how and what to safely use to prevent mosquito bites.
4. **Sexual transmission:** Know how Zika virus can be spread during sex by a male partner infected with Zika virus and how to prevent it

Individuals may find more details and tips for each of the items listed above at www.cdc.gov/zika/ . Travelers should see their healthcare provider if they develop the symptoms for Zika (listed on CDC website) and have recently visited an area where Zika is found.