

News



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CTDPH: Two More Female Patients, One Pregnant, Test Positive for Zika

HARTFORD – The state Department of Public Health (DPH) today announced that two female Connecticut residents, one of them pregnant, have tested positive for the Zika virus. The non-pregnant patient returned from Puerto Rico in late April and became ill on April 29th with a rash, conjunctivitis and other symptoms associated with Zika. The other patient, nine weeks pregnant, returned from the Dominican Republic also in late April and became ill on April 28th with a rash. Both patients and their physicians have been informed of the test results.

“As we head into the summer travel months, it is very important for travelers to Zika affected areas to take precautions to avoid mosquito bites. This is particularly critical for pregnant women or women planning to become pregnant, who should postpone travel to these areas if at all possible,” cautioned DPH Commissioner Dr. Raul Pino.

The State Laboratory confirmed both test results using PCR testing. This level of testing is used for patients who are actively experiencing symptoms of the virus. The State Laboratory was approved by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in March for PCR testing, after Governor Malloy directed DPH to develop and begin testing for Zika. Prior to this approval, specimens were sent to the CDC for testing, resulting in long wait times for results. The State Laboratory has also been approved by the CDC to provide a second type of testing for patients who are no longer actively sick or who never had symptoms of the virus. Both of these tests are conducted using blood specimens from the patients. Based on new guidance released by the CDC earlier this week, the State Public Health Laboratory can also perform PCR testing on urine specimens collected within 14 days after onset of symptoms in patients with suspected Zika virus.

In Connecticut, 252 patients, including 221 pregnant women, have been tested for Zika virus. Six of the patients tested have been positive for travel-related Zika, including today’s two patients. Of the six, the first four have fully recovered from the virus. The two pregnant patients will continue to be monitored for the duration of their pregnancies for signs of birth defects, like microcephaly, which have occurred in some babies whose mothers contracted Zika while pregnant. The countries visited by the eight Zika positive patients where they became infected with Zika virus are Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic, Honduras, Colombia and Ecuador.

To date, 503 cases of travel-related Zika have been reported in the continental United States. Of those, 48 were pregnant women and 10 were sexually transmitted.

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