

# News



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## ***DPH UPDATES ZIKA TEST RESULTS: MORE THAN HALF TESTING POSITIVE TRAVELLED TO THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC***

**Hartford** – The Department of Public Health and Commissioner Dr. Raul Pino today announced updated Zika figures and hundreds of thousands of dollars in new funding to combat the virus. According to test results released today by the state Department of Public Health (DPH), of 25 Connecticut patients who have tested positive for the Zika virus, 16 have travelled to the Dominican Republic. One other patient who travelled to the Dominican Republic tested positive for Flavivirus, meaning the patient could have contracted Zika or another related virus, like Dengue fever, but the test was inconclusive for the specific virus. Additionally, of patients who travelled to Haiti, the Dominican Republic’s island neighbor, one tested positive for Zika and three tested positive for Flavivirus.

“Today’s results are another reminder to Connecticut residents travelling not just to the Dominican Republic, but to any Caribbean island or areas in Central or South America, that Zika virus remains a serious health threat, especially for pregnant women,” said DPH Commissioner Dr. Raul Pino. “We continue to urge pregnant women, women who are trying to conceive and their male partners to avoid travelling to Zika-affected areas. If travel is unavoidable, please follow all precautions to reduce the risk of infection, both during and after your trip.”

“It is critical to remember that the vast majority of people infected with Zika never show symptoms of the virus. Therefore, it is important for pregnant women who travel to a Zika-affected area to consult with their physician when they return, and equally important for their male partners and the male partners of women who would like to conceive to follow guidelines for sexual activity whether they exhibit symptoms or not,” added Commissioner Pino.

According to CDC guidelines, pregnant women and their male partners who have travelled to a Zika-affected area should either abstain or consistently use condoms for the duration of the pregnancy. Women who would like to conceive should wait at least eight weeks from either the onset of Zika symptoms or the date of last possible exposure, if asymptomatic. The male partners of women who would like to conceive must wait at least six months before trying to conceive if they have symptoms of the virus, or eight weeks after last possible Zika exposure, if they show no symptoms.

The DPH also announced today that it has received \$320,564 in federal emergency preparedness funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to address the Zika virus in Connecticut. The funds will be used to continue implementing the state’s Zika Surveillance & Response Plan, which was drafted at the request of Governor Dannel Malloy in January to deal with the threat of Zika virus. Funding will also be used to track Zika-positive pregnant women and their babies to monitor for microcephaly, other serious birth defects and adverse pregnancy outcomes linked to Zika.

As of today, 25 patients have tested positive for Zika virus, including 3 pregnant women. An additional 12 patients have tested positive for Flavivirus, including 8 pregnant women. The 37 patients who have tested positive for these viruses have travelled to 12 countries or U.S. territories; most frequently they travelled to the Dominican Republic (17), Puerto Rico (5) and Haiti (4).

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