



STATE OF MARYLAND

DHMH

Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

Lawrence J. Hogan, Jr., Governor – Boyd K. Rutherford, Lt. Governor – Dennis R. Schrader, Secretary

March 27, 2017

Dear Colleague:

We are writing to notify you of updated information from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) that aligns with recently updated guidance from the World Health Organization (WHO) regarding Zika virus. We acknowledge that this is complicated information, but nonetheless we hope that you find it useful for evaluating and providing guidance to your patients.

Updated Zika Travel Guidance

CDC has broadened their travel guidance and now recommends that pregnant women **not** travel to any area where there is a risk of Zika virus infection, including:

- areas where the virus has been newly introduced or reintroduced and local mosquito-borne transmission is ongoing
- areas where the virus was present before 2015 (endemic) and there is no evidence that transmission has stopped; and
- areas where the virus is likely to be circulating but has not been documented

To help pregnant women and others identify areas of Zika risk, CDC published a new interactive [World Map of Areas with Zika Risk](#) that allows people to search for location-specific Zika information and travel recommendations.

Updated Zika Testing Guidance

WHO has created a new Zika country classification scheme, which assigns geographical areas of the world to four different categories based on Zika transmission characteristics. Zika testing is still only recommended for pregnant women (**regardless of whether they have symptoms of Zika virus infection or not**) and people who have symptom onset within 14 days of their most recent exposure. As outlined in the attached table, as of the date of this letter, the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) will continue to perform Zika testing for the following persons who have traveled to or who have had condomless sex with travelers to the countries listed in WHO Categories 1–3:

- Pregnant women, regardless of whether they have Zika symptoms or not
- Symptomatic non-pregnant women and men

DHMH will perform Zika testing for the following persons who have traveled to or who have had condomless sex with a traveler to WHO Category 4 countries:

- Pregnant women with symptoms of Zika virus infection
- Pregnant women without symptoms of Zika virus infection but with possible fetal abnormalities

All other persons for whom Zika virus testing is desired should be referred to commercial laboratories.

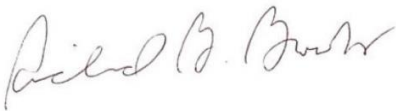
Please note that there is no CDC guidance advising against travel to some countries included in WHO Category 4. Countries may be reclassified among the different WHO Categories, so it would be best practice to routinely check the latest [WHO situation report](#) to verify the information you are using for each individual patient.

Yellow Fever Outbreak in Brazil

We also wanted to take this opportunity to make you aware of a travel notice issued by CDC due to an ongoing yellow fever outbreak in the Brazilian states of Minas Gerais, Espirito Santo, and Sao Paulo. In response to this outbreak, health authorities have recently expanded the list of areas in which yellow fever vaccination is recommended for travelers. Anyone 9 months or older who travels to these areas should be vaccinated against yellow fever. People who have never been vaccinated against yellow fever should not travel to areas with ongoing outbreaks. Detailed, updated recommendations regarding appropriate vaccination for yellow fever can be found at <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices/alert/yellow-fever-brazil>.

Please continue to contact your local health department or the Infectious Disease Epidemiology and Outbreak Response Bureau at (410) 767-6700 if you have questions or concerns.

Sincerely,



Richard B. Brooks, MD, MPH
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Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

Attachment: 1) WHO Zika Virus Country Classification and Associated Testing Scheme