

CITY OF BALTIMORE

STEPHANIE RAWLINGS-BLAKE, Mayor



HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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Dear Clinicians in Baltimore City:

Today, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Florida State Department of Health reports the first four confirmed Zika virus cases by local mosquito borne transmission in the contiguous United States. Zika virus transmission likely occurred from an infected *Aedes aegypti* mosquito to individuals around early June in the downtown Miami area. Since *Aedes aegypti* is found in Maryland, we continue to encourage clinicians to counsel patients, especially pregnant women to take preventive measures from mosquito bites and reduce mosquito breeding sites around their property. Currently in Maryland, there are 48 lab-confirmed Zika cases associated with a history of travel to an area with ongoing Zika transmission.

We want to draw your attention to the CDC's updated interim guidelines on prevention of sexual transmission of Zika virus as well as updated interim guidelines on the care of pregnant women with possible exposure to Zika virus. The updated guidelines for sexual transmission reflect a recent case in New York, where a woman with Zika virus passed it to her male partner who did not have a travel history.

The updated guidelines for prevention of sexual transmission specify that:

- Pregnant women with sex partners (male or female) who have traveled to an area with ongoing Zika virus transmission should abstain from sex or use a barrier method consistently and correctly for the duration of the pregnancy
- Asymptomatic individuals should abstain from sex or use a barrier method consistently and correctly for 8 weeks after leaving an area with ongoing Zika virus transmission
- Symptomatic women should abstain from sex or use a barrier method consistently and correctly for 8 weeks after onset of symptoms
- Symptomatic men should abstain from sex or use a barrier method consistently and correctly for 6 months after leaving an area with ongoing Zika virus transmission

The guidelines for care of pregnant women were updated to expand testing guidelines and to identify more pregnant women with a definitive diagnosis for Zika infection, based on new evidence that Zika virus RNA can be detected for longer periods in some pregnant women, even up to 10 weeks after symptom onset.

The full testing algorithm is on the following page, but changes of note include:

- Every pregnant women should be tested for Zika virus exposure at each prenatal visit
- Test pregnant women or symptomatic man or woman with travel to Florida since July 1, 2016
- Updates to Maryland's Zika virus exposure testing algorithm are as follows:
 - All persons being tested should submit both serum and urine

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- PCR testing for symptomatic persons on both serum and urine will be extended to 3 weeks after onset of symptoms or last possible Zika virus exposure
- If the pregnant woman is within 3-12 weeks of symptom onset or possible exposure, they should receive Zika and dengue IgM testing.
 - If the Zika IgM test is positive or equivocal, reflex rRT-PCR should be performed due to the extended RNA detection period in some pregnant women.
 - If the rRT-PCR test is negative, PRNT testing should be performed
- Collect both cord blood and infant serum for infants born to women with possible Zika virus or unspecified flavivirus infection

Furthermore, the CDC advises that serial ultrasounds are considered every 3-4 weeks for women who are positive or presumptive positive for Zika virus infection and that after birth, cord blood and infant serum should be tested for Zika virus by rRT-PCR and IgM. Please see the attached table for the full clinical management recommendations.

Please contact the Baltimore City Health Department Office of Acute Communicable Diseases to request Zika virus testing approval at 410-396-4436. We will discuss with you regarding details of the case.

Please remember that Zika is a required reportable disease to the Health Department. Even if you elect to use private testing companies, you must notify the Health Department of the possible case.

The CDC updated interim guidance and other recommendations for health care providers can be viewed at the CDC website (http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/65/wr/mm6529e2.htm?s_cid=mm6529e2_w and http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/65/wr/mm6529e1.htm?s_cid=mm6529e1_w).

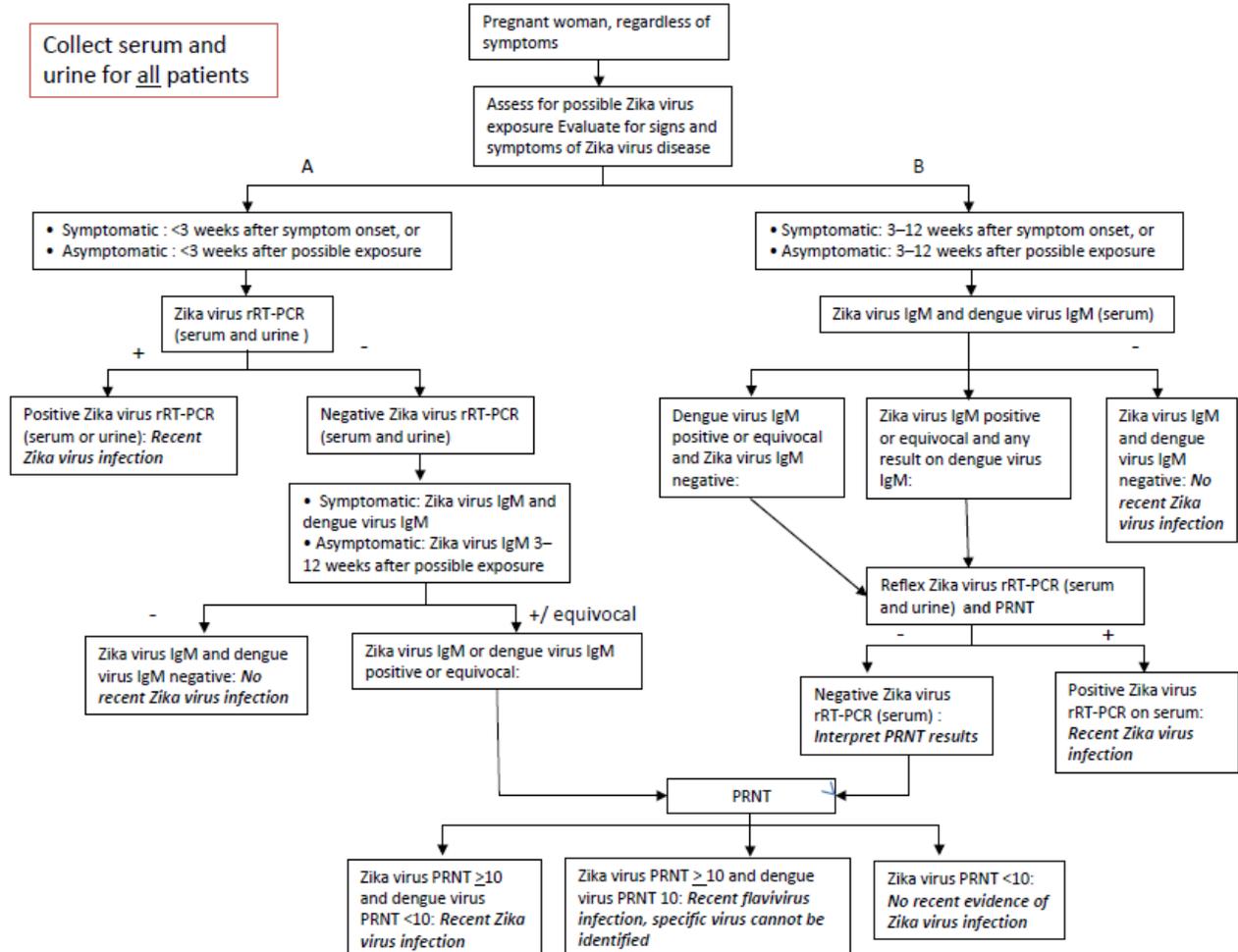
We recommend that you **regularly check the CDC Zika Virus website** (<http://www.cdc.gov/zika/index.html>) **for the most recent updates**. We will also have updates on the BCHD [website](#). Please contact the BCHD Office of Acute Communicable Diseases at 410-396-4436 with any questions.

Sincerely,



Leana Wen, M.D., M.Sc.
Commissioner
Baltimore City Health Department

Maryland Zika Virus Testing Algorithm



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