



May 2, 2017

Dear Clinicians in Baltimore City:

We would like to provide you recent updates on Zika virus travel and testing guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the World Health Organization (WHO).

### *Updated Zika Travel Guidance*

CDC has expanded 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 Zika virus has been newly introduced or reintroduced and local mosquito-borne transmission is ongoing;
- Areas where Zika virus was present before 2015 and there is no evidence that transmission has stopped; and
- Areas where Zika virus is likely to be circulating but has not been documented.

To help pregnant women, travelers and clinicians assess the risk of Zika virus infection, the CDC developed an interactive tool [World Map of Areas with Risk of Zika](#) to search for location-specific Zika information and travel recommendations.

### *Updated Zika Testing Guidance*

WHO has created a new Zika country classification scheme that assigns countries into four different categories based on Zika transmission characteristics (see attached). As a reminder, Zika testing is only recommended for pregnant women, regardless of whether they have symptoms of Zika virus or not, and people who have *symptom onset within 14 days* of their most recent exposure. The Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) continues to perform Zika testing for the following persons with a travel history to or who have had condomless sex with travelers to:

*Countries listed in WHO categories 1-3*

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

*Countries listed in WHO category 4*

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

Other persons requesting Zika testing should be referred to commercial laboratories.

Please regularly check the latest [WHO situation report](#) to ensure the most updated information on countries.

*Yellow Fever Outbreak in Brazil*

We want to make you aware of an ongoing yellow fever outbreak in Brazilian states of Minas Gerais, Espirito Santo, and Sao Paulo. CDC issued a travel notice and recommend that travelers 9 months or older to the affected areas should be vaccinated against yellow fever, or otherwise should not travel to these areas. Additional information on the outbreak and vaccine recommendations can be found at <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices/alert/yellow-fever-brazil>.

We recommend that you **regularly check the CDC Zika Virus website ([www.cdc.gov/zika/](http://www.cdc.gov/zika/)) for the most recent updates**. We will also have updates on the BCHD website ([health.baltimorecity.gov/zika-virus](http://health.baltimorecity.gov/zika-virus)).

**Zika virus is a required reportable disease in Maryland.** Please contact the Office of Acute Communicable Diseases at 410-396-4436 to request Zika testing or if you have any questions.

Thank you for your continued excellent care of patients in Baltimore City.

Sincerely,



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