

**NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
AND MENTAL HYGIENE**

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Commissioner

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**HEALTH DEPARTMENT UPDATES GUIDANCE ON ZIKA VIRUS
PREVENTION**

February 4, 2016 — Today the City's Health Department updated its guidance for New Yorkers regarding prevention of the Zika virus. Our main message remains: pregnant women or those considering becoming pregnant should postpone travel to affected countries. Additionally, while we await further guidance from CDC on the role of condoms in preventing transmission of Zika virus, we remind New Yorkers that condoms are highly effective at preventing HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases. The City also urges New York City healthcare providers to offer laboratory testing for Zika and ultrasound examinations to pregnant women who traveled to affected areas. The Health Department's new guidance incorporates the most up to date recommendations from the state Health Department and CDC. As new information becomes available we will update our guidance accordingly.

The new recommendations include:

- All men, women, and children who travel to Zika-affected regions should employ measures to avoid mosquito bites. If returning from travel during New York City's mosquito season (April through November), returned travelers should employ similar measures for 14 days after arrival in NYC to prevent transmission to mosquitoes, which otherwise could infect other NYC residents.

- Women who are pregnant or considering becoming pregnant should postpone travel to Zika-affected regions until further notice
 - For Pregnant Women: Until we know more, if a male sexual partner has traveled to or lives in an area with active Zika virus transmission, the male and female partners should abstain from sex or use condoms the right way every time they have vaginal, anal, and oral sex for the duration of the pregnancy.
- Obstetricians caring for women who traveled while pregnant or became pregnant while in a Zika-affected region, whether or not they have symptoms consistent with Zika virus infection, should consider offering their patients
 - Laboratory testing for Zika virus infection
 - Regular ultrasound examinations

Measures to prevent mosquito bites in areas with active mosquito infestations:

- Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants.
- Stay in places with air conditioning or that use window and door screens to keep mosquitoes outside.
- Use Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-registered insect repellents. All EPA-registered insect repellents are evaluated for effectiveness.
 - Always follow the product label instructions.
 - Reapply insect repellent as directed.
 - Do not spray repellent on the skin under clothing.
 - If you are also using sunscreen, apply sunscreen before applying insect repellent.
- If you have a baby or child:
 - Do not use insect repellent on babies younger than 2 months of age.
 - Dress your child in clothing that covers arms and legs, or
 - Cover crib, stroller, and baby carrier with mosquito netting.
 - Do not apply insect repellent onto a child's hands, eyes, mouth, and cut or irritated skin.
 - Adults: Spray insect repellent onto your hands and then apply to a child's face.
- In especially mosquito-dense areas, consider treating clothing and gear with permethrin or purchase permethrin-treated items.
 - Treated clothing remains protective after multiple washings. See product information to learn how long the protection will last.
 - If treating items yourself, follow the product instructions carefully.

- Do NOT use permethrin products directly on skin. They are intended to treat clothing.
- Sleep under a mosquito bed net if you are overseas or outside and are not able to protect yourself from mosquito bites.

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