



Oakland County releases Zika virus prevention plan

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NEWS RELEASE

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Oakland County releases Zika virus prevention plan

Pontiac, Mich., Feb. 19, 2016 – Oakland County Health Division has mapped out a strategy to help prevent Zika virus should the mosquito carrying the disease come to Michigan. County Executive L. Brooks Patterson previewed some of the steps already being taken in his Feb. 10 State of the County address.

“I am not waiting for the Zika virus to be identified in Michigan,” Patterson said in his speech. “Proactively, Oakland County is committing a portion of its budget to combat the virus by continuing to monitor for mosquito-borne disease and informing our residents.”

Upcoming plans include:

- The Health Division will meet with representatives from Oakland County’s municipalities on March 4 to provide an update on mosquito borne disease prevention and control, including the very latest on Zika virus.
- In June, the Health Division will begin monitoring for the Aedes species mosquito

by using appropriate mosquito traps, in addition to the routine monitoring that is done for other mosquito species.

- Ongoing distribution of educational posters to all OB/GYN providers, Oakland County parks, camps and outdoor facilities throughout the county.
- Continue to share up-to-date information on Zika virus and mosquito borne-disease prevention targeting pregnant women, and alerting them of travel advisories through Health Division's website at oakgov.com/health, on Facebook at Public Health Oakland, on Twitter @publichealthOC, and through the physician portal.

To date, the Health Division has accomplished the following:

- Established a procedure to coordinate screening and testing of all suspect cases with healthcare providers and the state of Michigan laboratory.
- Developed a Zika virus information page, fact sheet, and educational posters at oakgov.com/health.
- Provided information on Zika virus to healthcare and community groups throughout the county.
- Shared Zika virus guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) with physicians through the Health Division's Internet physician portal, email and fax.
- Distributed educational messages regarding Zika virus, travel advisories, and mosquito-borne disease prevention via the Health Division's Facebook and Twitter accounts.

"These cautionary efforts will help ensure communities know the best ways to prevent mosquito-borne illnesses," said George Miller, director of Oakland County's Department of Health and Human Services. "The Health Division will continue to remain vigilant in educating the community on the Zika virus."

Zika is a mosquito-borne disease that is spread to individuals mainly from the bite of an infected Aedes species mosquito. It also can be spread from a pregnant woman to her fetus. There have been reports of a serious birth defect of the brain called microcephaly in babies of mothers who had contracted the Zika virus while pregnant. Microcephaly is a condition where a baby's head is much smaller than expected. Information about the link between Zika and poor birth outcomes is evolving. Until more information is known, however, the CDC recommends special travel precautions for pregnant women.

Women who are pregnant in any trimester should consider postponing travel to any area where Zika virus transmission is ongoing. Those who must travel to one of these areas should consult their doctor first and strictly follow steps to prevent mosquito bites during the trip. Women who are trying to become pregnant should speak to their doctor about their plans to become pregnant and the risks of Zika virus infection before

travelling to an area that has a Zika virus travel advisory.

FOR MEDIA INQUIRIES ONLY: Contact George Miller, director, Oakland County Department of Health and Human Services, at 248-858-1293.



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