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ZIKA VIRUS ALERT

Texas residents remain unaffected by Zika virus.

Dallas, Fort Worth, Texas—March 2016—As Zika virus reaches pandemic level in some areas of Central and South America, Cantu Pest Control would like to take this opportunity to share some pertinent information with our customers concerning the transmission of the virus and the ways in which they can protect themselves in the coming months.

What is Zika virus?

Zika virus is an illness native to Africa and is spread through the feeding activities of mosquitoes. Symptoms are usually mild and include fever, red eyes, joint pain, headache, and maculoplanar rash, and fatigue. In most cases, symptoms will begin to fade within two to three days. There have been no recorded fatalities and only one in five people actually exhibit symptoms after contracting the virus.

Zika virus can be treated with rest, fluids, aspirin, and nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs.

Should I be concerned?

Very recently, Zika virus had reached pandemic levels in Central and South America, as well as some areas of the South Pacific. As of February of this year, Hawaii governor David Ige declared a state of emergency in an attempt to fight the joint outbreaks of Zika virus and dengue fever. According to the CDC, Hawaii's mosquito control and entomology staff was significantly decreased during the economic recession, and, at this time, the state is scrambling to acquire funding to rebuild their mosquito-fighting capabilities. Government officials stress that Hawaii is still a safe to visits, and add that tourism is already off to a strong start in 2016.

There have been a small number of travel-associated cases of Zika virus in the continental United States, but the number of locally acquired cases remains zero.

At this time, Cantu Pest Control Vice President and General Manager, Tony Rios, would like to stress that "there is no reason for Texas residents to be concerned about the spread of Zika virus here in the United States," adding that it was "extremely unlikely that the virus would spread to even the Westernmost shores of the US."

Are there steps I can take to prevent infection while traveling?

There is currently no vaccine for Zika virus.

The National Pest Management Association suggests a number of precautions for curtailing the spread of the virus, including wearing insect repellent with at least twenty percent DEET, as well as wearing longs clothing and closed-toed shoes. Likewise, travelers should be aware of travel advisories in effect in foreign countries. If an individual should fall ill upon returning to the United States, they should seek immediate medical attention.

In the same way that homeowners would take precautions against ordinary mosquitoes, they should eliminate areas where standing water might collect, like flowerpots, bird baths, baby pools, and grill covers, as mosquitoes only need about half an inch of water to breed. Also, be sure to make sure that windows and porches are screened, if possible, and be sure to repair any tears that you may notice.

Can Zika virus effect pregnancies?

It is possible for a woman to pass the virus to her fetus during pregnancy. Experts are currently studying the exact effects of Zika virus on fetuses, but it has been theorized that the virus could lead to the development of certain birth defects including congenital microcephaly, which effect the size of a baby's head relative to its age and sex. This is significant because microcephaly is a common indicator of abnormal or impaired brain development during pregnancy.

Because of this theorized connection between Zika virus and the development of these birth defects, it's recommended that pregnant women take special care to abide by the mosquito control tips listed above.

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns about Zika virus and the ways in which you can protect your home and loved ones, please feel free to call Cantu Pest Control at 972-885-3618 (Dallas and Fort Worth areas) or 713-999-3495 (Houston area.)

For more information about Cantu Pest Control:

Web: www.CantuPestControl.com

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