



Cameron County Department of Health and Human Services

1390 W. Expressway 83 • San Benito, Texas 78586 • (956) 247-3632 Office • (866) 326-3316 Fax

Esmeralda Guajardo, MAHS, Health Administrator  *James W. Castillo II, MD, Health Authority*

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Contact: Esmeralda Guajardo at (956) 247-3685

Four Additional Locally Transmitted Zika Virus Disease Cases Confirmed in Cameron County

Cameron County Department of Health and Human Services announced today four additional locally transmitted Zika virus disease cases have been confirmed. All of the cases were identified as a result of the door-to-door surveillance activities conducted by the department last week as a response to the first locally transmitted Zika virus disease case in Brownsville.

“Based on the information we have all of the patients live in very close proximity to the first case. There is no evidence indicating there is Zika outside their area,” states Dr. James W. Castillo, Cameron County Health Authority. “We have completed the necessary door to door surveillance in this area and we will continue monitoring the situation closely.”

Zika virus is transmitted to people primarily through the bite of an infected mosquito, though it can also spread by sexual contact. The four most common symptoms are fever, itchy rash, joint pain and eye redness. While symptoms are usually minor, Zika can also cause severe birth defects, including microcephaly, and other poor birth outcomes in some women infected during pregnancy.

“Although none of the additional cases were pregnant, women who are pregnant should discuss the risk of Zika with their physician and get the appropriate screenings to ensure a healthy pregnancy,” states Esmeralda Guajardo, Health Administrator. “If a woman is pregnant or is considering becoming pregnant, she should be evaluated for possible Zika virus exposure during each prenatal care visit.”

Cameron County Department of Health and Human Services has been working with the City of Brownsville to address the vector control activities in the area. Mosquito traps continue to be set up to test mosquitoes for Zika and the City of Brownsville will also continue to conduct mosquito spraying in the city.

“We want to remind the public that while the weather is not permitting spraying for mosquitoes at this time, it is important that individuals take preventive measures to avoid being bitten,” states Dr. Castillo.

CCDHHS continues to emphasize the importance of the following prevention methods:

- Apply EPA-registered mosquito repellent that contains **DEET** (N, N-diethyl-m-toluamide), picaridin, or oil of lemon eucalyptus. Spray exposed skin and clothing with repellent. Be sure to read label instructions on any repellent and use as directed. Dress protectively by wearing long-sleeved shirts, long pants, socks, and shoes when you are outside. Drain standing water in your backyard and neighborhood.
- Use air conditioning or window/door screens to keep mosquitoes outside. Stay indoors to prevent mosquito bites.
- Keep in mind that mosquitoes that spread the Zika virus bite mostly during the daytime so county residents should use precautions throughout the day. If you are not able to protect yourself from mosquitoes inside your home or hotel, sleep under a mosquito bed net.
- Use protection during sex especially if your partner traveled to an area with Zika or if you are pregnant or considering getting pregnant. Women and men who are considering starting or expanding their family should talk to their healthcare provider to inform their decisions about timing of pregnancy.

The Cameron County Department of Health and Human Services will continue working with the City of Brownsville, Texas Department of State Health Services and Center for Disease Control and Prevention in the education, surveillance and vector activities and will alert the public with any necessary updates.