NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE
Mary T. Bassett, MD, MPH
Commissioner

2016 DOHMH Advisory #3 (revised): Testing and Reporting Persons with Possible Zika Virus Infection

Please share with your colleagues in Obstetrics/Gynecology, Internal Medicine, Family Medicine, Emergency Medicine, Urgent Care, Pediatrics, Infectious Disease, and Neurology:

- **Health care providers should offer laboratory testing for Zika virus to:**
  - **All persons who develop compatible symptoms during or within 4 weeks of travel to an area with Zika virus transmission.**
  - **Pregnant women who traveled to an area with Zika virus transmission while pregnant.**
  - **Neonates with microcephaly or intracranial calcifications born to women who traveled to an area with Zika virus transmission while pregnant.**
  - **All persons who traveled to an area with Zika virus transmission who present with Guillain-Barré syndrome.**
- **Providers should report to the New York City Health Department (1-866-692-3641):**
  - **All cases of microcephaly or intracranial calcifications diagnosed prenatally or at birth if the mother traveled to an area with Zika virus transmission while pregnant and**
  - **All cases of Guillain-Barré syndrome who recently traveled to an area with Zika virus transmission.**
- **Providers should refer to the guidance below to collect and submit specimens to the New York City Public Health Laboratory for testing.**

February 17, 2016*

Dear Colleagues,

New York City is home to many people who travel to areas with ongoing Zika virus transmission (visit http://www.cdc.gov/zika/geo/index.html for the most recent list of affected areas). As information on Zika virus is rapidly evolving, New York City clinicians, especially those who care for pregnant patients, should remain alert to current recommendations for reporting and testing of persons with possible Zika virus infection (See Resources below).

The New York State Department of Health announced on February 4th, 2016 and CDC on February 5th, 2016 that Zika virus testing is now available to all pregnant women who traveled to an area with ongoing Zika virus transmission during pregnancy, regardless of symptoms. Testing is also available for any person with an appropriate travel history and compatible symptoms, regardless of pregnancy status or gender. Symptoms of Zika virus infection include acute onset of fever, maculopapular rash, arthralgia, or conjunctivitis. Note that clinical illness is usually mild with symptoms lasting for several days to a week.

Health care providers should offer laboratory testing for Zika virus to:

- **Pregnant women who traveled an area with Zika virus transmission while pregnant**. Priority should be given to women who had symptoms compatible with Zika virus infection. Follow recommendations from the CDC at Update: Interim Guidelines for Health Care Providers Caring for Pregnant Women and Women of Reproductive Age with Possible Zika Virus Exposure — United States, 2016.
- **Fetuses and infants diagnosed with microcephaly and or intracranial calcifications at or after birth, regardless of their mother's symptoms.** Guidelines are outlined in the document from the

*Revised from the February 5th version. See February 12th Health Alert for most up to date information on laboratory testing for Zika.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Interim Guidelines for the Evaluation and Testing of Infants with Possible Congenital Zika Virus Infection.

- **All persons who traveled an area with Zika virus transmission who presents with Guillain-Barré syndrome, regardless of pregnancy status or gender.**
- **All persons who develop compatible symptoms during or within 4 weeks of travel to an area with Zika virus transmission, regardless of pregnancy status or gender.**

Reporting requirements for Zika virus infection

Providers should report to the New York City Health Department all cases of microcephaly or intracranial calcifications diagnosed prenatally by fetal ultrasound or at birth for an infant or fetus whose mother traveled to or resided in an area with Zika virus transmission while pregnant **and all cases of Guillain-Barré syndrome who recently traveled to an area with Zika virus transmission**. Cases should be reported to the New York City Health Department Provider Access Line at 1-866-692-3641. For such cases, the Health Department will provide assistance in arranging all appropriate testing for Zika virus infection.

How to obtain testing for Zika virus infection for New York City residents

At this time, testing for Zika virus infection is not available through commercial laboratories. **If testing is indicated, clinicians should collect appropriate specimens and arrange for transportation of specimens to the New York City Public Health Laboratory.** Specimens should be sent Monday through Friday; specimens collected on weekends should be stored under appropriate conditions. Please visit the New York City Health Department website for detailed instructions for collection of specimens, completion of forms, and storage and transport conditions: http://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/providers/reporting-and-services.page

The following specimens should be collected:

- **Adults and children:**
  - 2 tubes of serum
  - Urine in a sterile urine cup
- **Fetuses and neonates – Collection should be done in consultation with the Health Department by calling 1-866-692-3641**
  - Serum (direct or from umbilical cord) collected within 2 days of birth.
  - Urine in a sterile cup
  - Amniotic fluid
  - Frozen and fixed placental tissue obtained at delivery
  - Cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) if already collected for other reasons
  - Maternal serum should also be collected if Zika virus testing was not done previously.

For assistance with arranging testing and transportation of specimens to the New York City Public Health Laboratory, contact the New York City Health Department at 1-866-692-3641.

For non-NYC residents, see the NYS Department of Health website on the NYS Department of Health Zika Virus Webpage.

Resources

New York City Health Department: http://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/health/health-topics/zika-virus.page
New York State Health Department: http://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/zika_virus/
CDC: http://www.cdc.gov/zika/

As always, we appreciate your continued collaboration with our efforts in New York City.

Sincerely,

Jay K. Varma, MD
Deputy Commissioner
Division of Disease Control, New York City Health Department