

ADVISORY: Zika Virus Travel Health Advisory

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Peterborough County-City
HEALTH UNIT
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To all Healthcare Providers:

The Public Health Agency of Canada has recently confirmed travel-related cases of Zika virus from Central and South America. **Since Zika virus is spread through mosquito bites, travellers to Central and South America, particularly pregnant women or those considering becoming pregnant, should protect themselves from mosquito bites, including using insect repellent, protective clothing, mosquito nets, screened doors and windows.** There is no vaccine or medication that protects against Zika virus infection.

While the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) is not advising any travel restrictions related to this event at this time, a Travel Health Notice has been posted to provide advice to Canadian travellers.

Mosquitoes known to transmit the virus to humans are not present in Canada and thus, the risk to Canadians is low. To date, there have been no reported cases of locally-acquired Zika virus in Canada. The risk of virus establishment in Canada is low. Current evidence suggests that Zika virus is likely to persist and spread in the Americas and the South Pacific and thus, there is ongoing risk to Canadians travelling to these endemic regions.

As links to microcephaly are currently being studied, it is recommended that pregnant women and those considering becoming pregnant discuss their travel plans with their healthcare provider to assess their risk and consider postponing travel to areas where the Zika virus is circulating in the Americas. If travel cannot be postponed, then strict mosquito bite prevention measures should be followed to protect themselves against bites.

As symptoms of Zika are often mild, infection may go unrecognized or be misdiagnosed as dengue. If symptoms similar to Zika virus infection occur while travelling or after return, the PHAC recommends that a healthcare provider should be consulted and travel history provided. Aspirin and other non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) should be avoided until dengue can be ruled out to reduce the risk of hemorrhage.

For more information and links to additional resources, please visit our website at www.pcchu.ca and click on the "For Professionals" heading, then "Health Professionals" to access the "[Alerts](#)" webpage.

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