

Zika and Tennessee: A history of events and actions

Zika virus disease was first identified in rhesus monkeys in the Zika Forest of Uganda in 1947, and was first reported in humans in 1952. In the ensuing years, the virus was found in Micronesia, French Polynesia and New Caledonia. **In early 2015**, people with symptoms similar to dengue fever were tested in Brazil and found to have Zika virus disease.

In **September of 2015**, health authorities in Brazil began to receive reports about an increase in the number of infants born with microcephaly, a birth defect in which the head does not develop normally.

10/01/15 Case Count:
0 travel associated cases in the U.S.
0 locally acquired cases in the U.S.
0 cases in Tennessee

In **December of 2015** the Pan American Health Organization reported Zika virus found in amniotic fluid samples from two pregnant women whose fetuses were found to have microcephaly. These findings prompted alerts from the Brazilian Ministry of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention concerning the possible connection between Zika and microcephaly.

12/31/2015 Puerto Rico Department of Health reported the first locally acquired case of Zika virus disease in a jurisdiction of the United States.

By **January of 2016**, there was confirmed localized transmission of Zika virus in 19 additional countries in South and Central America. To see the most current list of countries with active Zika virus transmission, visit <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/geo/active-countries.html>

01/15/16: The CDC issued a travel advisory to women traveling to countries where Zika was spreading. The Tennessee Department of Health monitored reports from CDC and other organizations on the evolving information and began to take steps in January to address the emerging threat.

01/15/16: CDC confirms first birth of a baby in the U.S. with microcephaly associated with Zika virus disease; baby is born in Hawaii.

01/20/16: TDH used the Tennessee Health Alert Network, the T-HAN system, to provide recommendations for health and medical professionals to respond to questions about recognizing, managing and reporting Zika virus infections in travelers.

01/26/16: The Tennessee Department of Health issued its first Zika-related news release, urging travelers to have heightened awareness about the disease and to use personal protection measures to prevent themselves from mosquito bites. See news release - <http://tn.gov/health/news/23650>

01/27/16: Zika virus disease became a reportable condition in Tennessee. By adding Zika to the list of conditions clinicians must report when they encounter them in patients, the Tennessee Department of Health can gather information to track the illness when it affects people in Tennessee.

02/01/16: The World Health Organization declared a public health emergency of international concern as a result of the possible link between Zika virus infection during pregnancy and microcephaly.

02/01/16: TDH activated the State Health Operations Center February 1 to address the emerging threat of Zika and had its first meeting of the TDH Zika mission command staff.

02/04/16: The TDH website introduced a new Zika information section, allowing the general public and clinicians to have the most current information available.

02/05/16: TDH conducted a telephone conference call with key health private sector health partners who compose the Health Joint Information Center. That same day, CDC published updated interim guidelines on sexual transmission of Zika and guidelines on care for pregnant women and women of reproductive age.

02/09/16: TDH used the Tennessee Health Alert Network to provide 28,000+ clinicians information about Zika virus disease and to ask for their assistance in helping monitor women who had traveled to countries where Zika is present during their pregnancy – and in evaluating fetuses/infants of women infected during pregnancy. See news release - <http://tn.gov/health/news/24132>

02/09/16: TDH learned of the first imported case of Zika in Tennessee, affecting a resident who had traveled to a country where the disease was being transmitted; a news release was issued to inform the public: <http://tn.gov/health/news/24132>

02/26/16 Case Count:

107 travel associated cases in the U.S.
0 locally acquired cases in the U.S.
1 case in Tennessee

02/29/16: TDH issued a news release advising those planning spring break or mission trips to countries where Zika is known to exist to have heightened awareness and protect themselves – and others – by safeguarding themselves. See news release - <http://tn.gov/health/news/37893>

03/07/16: TDH issued a news release on birth defects prevention which also provided information about prevention of Zika virus disease. See news release - <http://tn.gov/health/news/38060>

03/08/16: TDH extended an invitation to all county mayors in Tennessee, requesting their participation in a **03/15/16** conference call to discuss Zika prevention strategies. That call was audio recorded and is available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Oj71z-m8MyU&feature=youtu.be>

03/12/16: TDH sent an email letter to faith based communities across Tennessee, asking them to share Zika information with any groups planning mission trips to affected countries.

03/16/16 Case Count:

258 travel associated cases in the U.S.
1 travel associated case in Tennessee
0 locally acquired cases in the U.S.
0 locally acquired cases in Tennessee

03/23/16: TDH announced a series of regional meetings for health professionals to learn more about Zika. These included:

Cookeville **04/15/16**
Johnson City **04/19/16**
Columbia **04/25/16**
Knoxville **04/27/16**
Jackson **04/27/16**
Chattanooga **04/28/16**
Nashville **04/28/16**

03/30/16: TDH issues news release urging travelers to protect themselves against mosquito bites. News release - <http://tn.gov/health/news/12628>

04/04/16: To improve the speed of testing Tennessee patients for Zika virus disease, the TDH state laboratory added the capability to do this testing. Prior to that, clinicians in Tennessee had to send blood samples to the CDC laboratory in Atlanta. Having the capacity to do this important testing in Tennessee can speed diagnosis, an important measure in thwarting the spread of any illness which can be transmitted by mosquitoes.

04/06/16: TDH confirmed its second case of imported Zika virus disease.

04/15/16: CDC announces investigation of male-to-male sexual transmission of Zika involving Texas residents.

04/20/16 Case Count:

388 travel associated cases in the U.S. (8 sexually transmitted)
2 travel associated cases in the in Tennessee (0 sexually transmitted) 0 locally acquired cases in the U.S.
0 locally acquired cases in Tennessee
3 travel associated cases in the U.S. territories
500 locally acquired cases in the U.S. territories

04/22/16: TDH issues advisory on media information session about Zika. See news release - <http://tn.gov/health/news/39779>

5/12/16 Case Count:

503 travel associated cases in the U.S. (10 sexually transmitted/48 pregnant women)
2 travel associated cases in Tennessee
0 locally acquired cases in the U.S.
0 locally acquired in Tennessee
3 travel associated cases in the U.S. territories
698 locally acquired in the U.S. territories

05/16/16: TDH issues advisory on media information session. See news release - <http://tn.gov/health/news/42323>

05/19/16: TDH confirms its third case of imported Zika virus disease; conducts a media information session to provide an overview of ongoing actions in Tennessee.

05/31/16: First case of microcephaly in the continental U.S. associated with Zika is announced by CDC. Baby is born in New Jersey.

06/03/16: TDH issues a news release, "Stay Safe and Healthy at Upcoming Warm Weather Events," that includes information about prevention of mosquito bites. Geared to summer events across Tennessee. See news release - <http://tn.gov/health/news/42787>

06/27/16 Case Count:

819 travel associated cases in the U.S.
11 sexually transmitted
0 travel associated case in Tennessee
0 locally acquired cases in Tennessee

07/05/16 Case Count:

934 travel associated cases in the U.S.
13 sexually transmitted
10 travel associated case in Tennessee
0 locally acquired cases in Tennessee

07/15/16: New York City Health Department reports first female to male transmission of Zika.

07/18/16: CDC confirms it is assisting in the investigation of a death of a Utah resident who may be the first Zika-related death in the continental U.S.

07/25/16 Case count

1,403 travel associated cases in the U.S.
0 locally acquired, 15 sexually transmitted
17 travel associated cases in Tennessee
0 locally acquired in Tennessee

07/29/16: CDC issues news release linking four Zika cases to local transmission – this is believed to be the first occurrence of local mosquito-borne transmission of Zika in the continental United States.

08/01/16 Case Count

1,657 travel associated cases in the U.S.
0 locally acquired, 15 sexually transmitted
23 travel associated cases in Tennessee
0 locally acquired in Tennessee