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Public Health & Environmental Services

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Travel-Related Zika Virus Infection Has Been Identified in the Harris County Area

Harris County, Texas - Harris County Public Health & Environmental Services (HCPHES) has received confirmation from the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) that the Zika virus has been confirmed in a traveler who recently returned from Latin America. The individual developed symptoms that are often associated with the Zika virus which include: fever, rash, and joint pain.

Zika virus is spread through the bite of the *Aedes* species mosquito. “Prevention is key to reducing the risk of Zika virus infection”, stated Umair A. Shah, MD, MPH, Executive Director of HCPHES. “Zika virus infections occur throughout the world. We encourage individuals [traveling to areas where the virus](#) has been identified to protect themselves against mosquito bites, and to contact their healthcare provider immediately if they develop Zika virus-like symptoms.”

According to CDC, illness from Zika is usually mild with symptoms lasting several days to a week. Severe disease requiring hospitalization is uncommon and deaths are rare. There is no vaccine to prevent or medicine to treat Zika virus infection. The CDC recommends that all people, especially pregnant women, who are traveling to areas where Zika virus is found, should take precautions to avoid mosquito bites to reduce their risk of infection of Zika virus as well as other mosquito-borne viruses such as dengue and chikungunya.

HCPHES recommends before traveling abroad, individuals contact their healthcare provider who may recommend vaccines or important preventive medication for [travel-related diseases](#).

To learn more about the Zika virus, please visit: www.hcphe.org and www.cdc.gov.

HCPHES is the local public health agency for the Harris County, Texas jurisdiction. It provides a wide variety of public health activities and services aimed at improving the health and well-being of the Harris County community. For more information, please visit HCPHES at www.hcphe.org.

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