

CUYAHOGA COUNTY
BOARD OF HEALTH
YOUR TRUSTED SOURCE FOR PUBLIC HEALTH INFORMATION

May, 2016

Re: Zika Virus information for distribution to your residents

The Cuyahoga County Board of Health continues to work closely with the Ohio Department of Health and conducts surveillance to monitor for mosquitoes that may transmit disease, including the Zika virus. Although local transmission of Zika virus through the bite of a mosquito has not been identified in the continental United States, the U.S. mainland does have two species of mosquitoes that can become infected with and spread Zika virus. The primary vector for transmitting Zika, the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito, is not established in Ohio and is found in the Southeastern States. A possible second vector, the *Aedes albopictus* mosquito, is also known as the Asian Tiger mosquito and is rarely found in Northeast Ohio.

These species of mosquitoes do not breed in storm water control basins or woodland pools. They prefer to breed in water that collects in artificial containers (tires, buckets, garbage cans, flower pots, children's toys, etc.). Residents can help reduce the local mosquito population by removing any type of container that can hold enough water for a week or more.

U.S. travelers who visit a country where Zika is found could become infected if bitten by a mosquito. Any spread of the Zika virus in the U.S. would have to start with the introduction of infected persons, who would need to be once again bitten (within a week of becoming ill) by the specific mosquito species mentioned previously. These infected mosquitoes could then transmit the virus when they bite and feed on others. Although very limited local transmission could potentially occur in the U.S., it is extremely unlikely that we will see any widespread local transmission of Zika here in Northeast Ohio.

Please keep in mind that nearly every year we continue to have local human cases of West Nile virus and/or LaCrosse encephalitis. We need to be aware that these mosquito-borne diseases are still here and that we must take necessary precautions to help prevent mosquito bites, especially in mid-to-late summer and early fall.

We ask the public to help prevent mosquito breeding in your neighborhood by:

1. Disposing of containers that collect water (tires, buckets, cans, flower pots, etc.)
2. Eliminating areas of stagnant water

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3. Repairing leaky outdoor faucets that leave puddles
4. Emptying and refilling bird baths at least once a week
5. Cleaning, draining and covering pools or hot tubs if not in use
6. Covering rain barrels and unclogging all gutters so they drain properly
7. Filling tree holes with tar or cement
8. Tightly screening all openings of your home
9. Keeping children indoors during times of peak mosquito activity
(1 hour before and 1 hour after sunset)

We also ask the public to help prevent personal exposure to mosquitoes by using insect repellents containing DEET, picaridin, or lemon eucalyptus oil and following label directions.

You can also visit our website, www.ccbh.net, for more information.

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