FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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HEALTH DEPARTMENT ISSUES SPRING BREAK TRAVEL TIPS FOR AVOIDING ZIKA VIRUS

The City of Lubbock Health Department is encouraging people who are traveling to Central America, the Caribbean, Mexico or the Pacific Islands to be aware of the transmission of Zika Virus. Zika virus is transmitted to humans primarily through the bite of an infected mosquito. Mosquitoes can live indoors and will bite at any time, day or night. Pregnant women should be especially cautious if traveling to these areas. Zika virus can be transmitted from a pregnant mother to her unborn baby anytime during pregnancy. There have been reports of microcephaly, a condition where a baby’s head is much smaller than expected, in babies of mothers who were infected with Zika virus when pregnant.

Protect yourself and your family from mosquito bites when you travel. Pregnant woman should consider postponing travel.

- Choose lodging with air conditioning and window and door screens to keep mosquitoes out.
- Wear long-sleeve shirts and long pants.
- Wear an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) - registered insect repellent and reapply repellent following product label instructions.
- When using sunscreen, apply sunscreen before applying insect repellent.
- Consider taking EPA-registered insect repellent with you.
- Sleep under a mosquito bed net if you are outside or in a room that is not well screened.

If you develop signs and symptoms of Zika virus within 2 weeks of travel, please contact your health care provider immediately and tell him or her that you traveled to an area with Zika. Signs and symptoms of Zika virus include:

- Fever,
- Rash,
- Joint Pain, or
- Conjunctivitis (red eyes).
- Other symptoms include muscle pain and headache.
- The illness is usually mild with symptoms lasting for several days to a week.
Sexual transmission of Zika virus is possible. Males who travel to a country with active Zika transmission may be able to transmit Zika to their female partner. Condoms should be used if the female partner is pregnant or could become pregnant. Using latex condoms the correct way every time can reduce the chance of Zika virus transmission. Not having sex is the best way to be sure that someone does not get sexually transmitted Zika virus.

Specific areas where Zika is spreading are likely to change over time. Travelers should check the CDC’s Zika travel notice (http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/page/zika-travel-information) for an updated list and the most up-to-date recommendations. For more information on Zika visit the CDC website at: http://www.cdc.gov/zika/index.html

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