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News Release

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CA Department of Public Health Warning

Here in California, the Zika virus remains a serious public health concern. Californians, particularly pregnant women residing in the state, are at risk of contracting the Zika virus, which could have devastating impacts on a developing baby.

As of Dec. 1, 2017, there have been 619 cases in California—10 just this month. So far in California, Zika virus infections have been documented only in people who were infected while traveling to areas with ongoing Zika transmission, through sexual contact with an infected traveler, or through maternal-fetal transmission during pregnancy.

While the species of mosquito that carries the Zika virus, is not native to California, it has been detected in an increasing number of counties throughout the state.

Zika is mosquito-borne virus that can infect both men and women. Most concerning of all, the virus can have detrimental effects on pregnant women and their babies. This is why it is up to all of us to stay vigilant.

There are three main ways to contract the virus: (1) from mosquitoes in infected areas, (2) through unprotected sex, and (3) from an infected mother to her developing baby.

First, the CDPH advises men and women of childbearing age to not go to areas with Zika. As you make travel plans, you can find out where Zika is present by visiting the following site: <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/page/zika-information>.

If you or your partner must travel to an area with Zika presence, it is important to note that the virus is spread through sexual intercourse and can live in men for

up to six months; women, 8 weeks. The only way to avoid the virus entirely is to abstain from sex entirely. Otherwise, safe sex should always be practiced. Couples planning pregnancy when either has been exposed to the Zika virus should speak with their health care provider about a safe time to try to get pregnant.

Otherwise, when traveling, be sure to use EPA-registered insect repellent for 3 weeks after you return to prevent the spread of Zika back home. See your doctor right away if you have Zika symptoms like fever, rash, red eyes or joint pain.

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