

Health Advisory

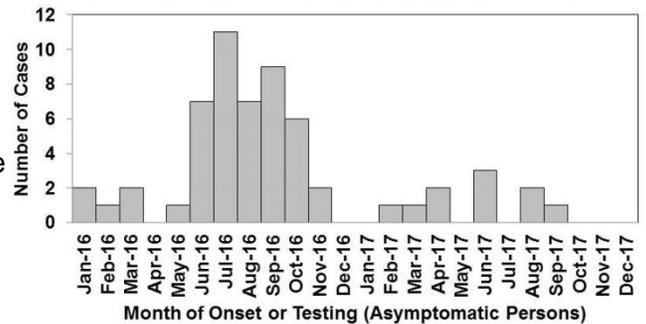
Zika Virus Evaluation and Testing: Changes to Recommendations for Pregnant Women and Infants in 2018

January 2, 2018

Starting January 1, 2018, the Philadelphia Department of Public Health (PDPH) and the Pennsylvania Department of Health (PADOH) recommend that area healthcare providers discontinue Zika virus testing for:

- Asymptomatic, pregnant women who reside in or recently moved to the Philadelphia-area with a recent Zika exposure through travel or sexual contact with a returning traveler
- Well-appearing newborns whose mothers were exposed to Zika during pregnancy and tested negative or were not tested for Zika

Figure. Travel-related Zika Cases, Philadelphia, PA, 2016–2017



In July 2017, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) initially recommended these changes due to the declining outbreak in the Americas and increased potential for false positive Zika virus IgM results. In Philadelphia, fewer travel-related Zika infections were reported in 2017 compared with 2016 when the outbreak abroad peaked (Figure). Evidence that the Zika virus IgM response can sometimes be prolonged has also been documented, making it difficult to determine when infection was acquired.

Zika Virus Testing: Continue to order Zika virus diagnostic testing for the following patients:

- Pregnant and non-pregnant persons who develop Zika-specific symptoms (mild fever, rash, arthralgia, or conjunctivitis) during or within 2 weeks of a possible Zika exposure (travel or sex with a returning traveler)
- Exposed, pregnant women (symptomatic and asymptomatic) who have a fetal loss or prenatal ultrasound findings consistent with congenital Zika virus syndrome (i.e., intracranial calcifications, microcephaly)
- Newborns with possible maternal exposure and clinical findings consistent with congenital Zika syndrome (i.e., microcephaly, sensory deficits, etc.)
- All newborns whose mothers have laboratory evidence of possible Zika virus infection during pregnancy

Philadelphia-area healthcare providers are encouraged to utilize commercial laboratories when ordering Zika virus testing for exposed, symptomatic persons with health insurance. PDPH will continue to coordinate approval and testing at the PADOH Bureau of Laboratories for 1) uninsured or under-insured symptomatic patients; 2) any exposed, pregnant woman with a fetal loss or ultrasound abnormality; and 3) newborns with possible Zika-related birth defects or those born to mothers with evidence of Zika infection during pregnancy regardless of insurance status. Further information on specimen collection and appropriate Zika virus test selection is available at: <https://hip.phila.gov>. For Zika virus testing requests and inquiries, contact PDPH at (215) 685-6742.

Resources for the Evaluation of Pregnant Women and Infants:

- *Pregnant women:* At each prenatal visit, providers should ask patients about Zika virus exposure before and during the current pregnancy. Zika prevention education (i.e., avoiding travel to affected areas, condom use throughout the pregnancy when the partner has traveled) also should continue to be provided. Further information is available at: <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/66/wr/pdfs/mm6629e1.pdf>. This guidance includes additional testing recommendations for pregnant women with ongoing Zika exposure (patient or their current sex partner lives in or travels daily or weekly to an area with ongoing transmission).
- *Infants:* Detailed clinical evaluation and management guidance for pediatricians caring for infants with possible Zika-related birth defects as well as infants born to mothers with laboratory evidence of Zika infection during pregnancy is available at: <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/66/wr/mm6641a1.htm>.