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## News Release

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John R. Kasich/ Governor  
Richard Hodges/ Director

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Contact: Office of Communications (614) 644-8562

## **Protect Yourself Against Zika Virus During Spring Break Travel**

*Take precautions when traveling south to warmer climates*

COLUMBUS, OHIO – Spring Break has started across the state of Ohio and the Ohio Department of Health (ODH), and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), is reminding Ohioans to take special precautions if you are traveling to countries with active Zika virus transmission. Zika has spread to about 28 countries and territories that include popular Spring Break destinations such as Mexico and Puerto Rico. For the latest list of the current CDC travel advisories [click here](#).

"We want you to have a safe Spring Break which includes taking precautions and keeping yourself protected from mosquitoes," said Dr. Mary DiOrio, medical director of ODH. "If you are pregnant, you may want to postpone your trip."

So far there are 193 travel-associated Zika virus disease cases across the United States. Ohio has 7 confirmed cases. The primary mosquito that transmits Zika virus is found in the tropics and southern U.S., but it is not established in Ohio.

Zika virus is primarily transmitted through a mosquito bite, and there is no indication that it can spread from person to person through casual contact. Of people infected with the Zika virus, 80 percent do not have any symptoms. When symptoms occur, they are often mild, lasting from several days to a week, and include fever, rash, joint and muscle pain, conjunctivitis (red eyes), and headache. Severe disease requiring hospitalization is uncommon.

"Prevention of mosquito-borne Zika virus transmission is the same as prevention of any other mosquito-borne diseases," Dr. DiOrio said. "You will want to use EPA-registered insect repellents and wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants where and when mosquitoes are most active. There is no vaccine available for Zika virus."

Zika virus can also be spread through a man to his partners by sexual transmission. Men who have traveled to an area of active Zika virus transmission should use condoms every time during sex or abstain from sexual activity if their partner is pregnant. At this time, there is no evidence that women can transmit Zika virus to their sex partners.

ODH started a social media campaign to bring awareness and education to college students and families. The ads will run on the agency's Facebook, Twitter and Instagram accounts through the month of March. The messages provide important information on items to bring on vacation and where the Zika virus is being transmitted.

Go to the ODH website at <http://www.odh.ohio.gov/zika> for more information about Zika virus.

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