Zika Virus – Occupational Health and Safety Information for Researchers

2016

Revised 03/2016
Zika Virus

- Flavivirus related to dengue.
  - Previously found in Africa, southern Asia and the Pacific Islands.
  - Current outbreak (late 2015-present) is in South America.

Zika Virus

• Transmitted by mosquitoes that are active during the day.
• Only supportive treatment is available.
**Symptoms**

- Symptoms are usually mild, and only seen in 18% of cases
- Similar to influenza
  - Low-grade fever
  - Joint pain
  - Swollen joints
  - Headache
  - Rash
  - Fatigue, weakness

Revised 03/2016
Potential High Risk Complication

- In adults, unconfirmed reports of increased incidence of Guillain-Barre syndrome (GBS) in previous outbreaks
  - Development of GBS may require co-infection with Zika and Dengue viruses
  - Paralysis
  - Loss of muscle function

Revised 03/2016
Potential Reproductive Hazard

- Infection with Zika virus may pose developmental hazard to fetuses exposed in utero
  - Data seems to indicated increased microcephaly risk

- Possible sexual transmission
  - Zika virus may persist in semen and other body fluids (e.g. urine, feces, saliva)

- Possible male to female transmission
  - http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/65/wr/mm6508e2.htm?s_cid=mm6508e2_e

Revised 03/2016
Recommendations

• Personnel handling cultures or animals infected with Zika virus should be aware of the potential reproductive hazard for:
  – Women of childbearing age or who are or plan to become pregnant
  – Potential transmission of infection via semen

Revised 03/2016
Recommendations

• Laboratories where Zika virus is in use should be posted with signage indicating use of a reproductive hazard

• Personnel with questions or concerns are encouraged to contact Employee Health Services and/or their personal physician

• Any potential exposure must be reported immediately to Employee Health Services

Revised 03/2016
Additional Resources

CAUTION

Zika virus in use

Potential reproductive hazard

Questions: Contact Principal Investigator
PI Name:
PI Phone Number:

Department of Environmental Health and Safety
(412) 624-9505