

## The University of Alabama System Zika Virus Travel Advisory

As our students, faculty and staff prepare for international travel this summer, we ask you to monitor developing alerts regarding the Zika virus. Currently, the CDC has issued a Level 2 travel alert (***Practice Enhanced Precautions***) for designated areas. Students, faculty, staff and trip leaders who are planning to travel to Zika-active areas should check the CDC, WHO and ADPH websites for the latest information and recommendations:

[U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#)

[World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#)

[Alabama Department of Public Health](#)

Any personnel or students who are pregnant or considering becoming pregnant and are scheduled for university-affiliated travel to an area impacted by the Zika virus should discuss the situation with their supervisor as well as their health care provider to determine the appropriate course of action.

### Background Information

- The Zika virus disease is spread to people primarily through the bite of an infected *Aedes* species mosquito.
- The most common symptoms are fever, rash, joint pain and conjunctivitis (red eyes). The illness is usually mild with symptoms lasting for several days to a week after a bite from an infected mosquito.
- Although people rarely become acutely ill from the virus, pregnant women should delay travel to Zika-active areas. Acquiring the infection during pregnancy can cause a serious birth defect called [microcephaly](#), as well as other fetal brain defects.
- There is new evidence of a link to serious neurological impact on a tiny fraction of exposed people.

### Protection

The CDC advises that the best protection is to prevent mosquito bites:

- Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants.
- Treat clothing and gear with permethrin or purchase permethrin-treated items, and follow instructions regarding washing and use.
- Use EPA-registered insect repellents containing DEET (20-40% recommended), picaridin or IR3535, and apply in accordance with the label directions and follow precautions.
- Stay and sleep in screened-in or air-conditioned rooms, or use mosquito nets, preferably permethrin-treated.
- Avoid potentially contaminated water.
- If you become ill or develop symptoms, visit a healthcare provider right away.

### For More Information

Louise O'Keefe  
Director, Faculty and Staff Clinic  
[louise.okeefe@uah.edu](mailto:louise.okeefe@uah.edu)  
256 824-2445

Katie Rhodes  
Director, Student Health Services  
[katie.rhodes@uah.edu](mailto:katie.rhodes@uah.edu)  
256 824-6775