

The Virgin Islands Consortium

New Case Of Zika Virus On St. Croix Brings Total Confirmed Cases To Seven

Health / **Published On March 08, 2016 10:20 PM /**

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ST. CROIX -- The Virgin Islands Department of Health confirmed today that the territory saw one new case of the Zika virus this week -- a tropical disease that may lead to babies being born with abnormally small heads -- bringing the total count in the territory for 2016 to seven.

The new data was released in D.O.H.'s [weekly Zika report](#), which also confirmed that all cases so far have been on this island, with St. Thomas and St. John tests results returning negative.

To date, five females and two males have been infected with the disease. The report also revealed that 75 suspected cases have been reported, 30 have returned negative and 65 are pending.

D.O.H. recently [distributed](#) Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Zika prevention kits to pregnant women across the territory, in its ongoing effort to curtail the rise of the devastating virus in the islands.

“The kits include health education materials and prevention tools to help prevent Zika transmission to pregnant women. We know that Zika virus can be passed from a mother to her fetus during pregnancy. We are studying more about how Zika affects pregnancies, but because of the association between Zika infection and microcephaly (a birth defect in which the size of a baby’s head is smaller than expected for age and sex), pregnant women should take steps to prevent mosquito bites,” stated Deputy Health Commissioner Kimberly Jones

Items in the kits include educational materials in English and Spanish, EPA-registered insect repellent, permethrin spray repellent for treating clothing, condoms to avoid sexual transmission of Zika, a thermometer for women to screen themselves for symptoms, treatment tabs for preventing mosquitoes from breeding in standing water, and a bed net, according to a press release D.O.H. issued this afternoon.

The best way to prevent diseases spread by mosquitoes is to protect yourself and your family from mosquito bites, D.O.H. advised. Following recent rainfall in territory, D.O.H. is urging residents to check their property for standing water, where mosquitoes can breed, and repair window screens. The department also urged residents to eliminate any standing water in and around their homes, as well as taking the following preventive steps: