

The Virgin Islands Consortium

New Case Of Zika Confirmed In St. Croix

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ST. CROIX -- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (C.D.C.) on Tuesday confirmed one new case of Zika here, Department of Health has said. The total confirmed cases of the virus have increased to 13; 12 of which are in St. Croix and one in St. Thomas.

D.O.H. says it continues to test pregnant women without symptoms of Zika free of charge. As of this week, 426 samples have been received from pregnant women, 385 of which have tested negative. Four pregnant women have been confirmed with dengue; however no cases of Zika have been confirmed in pregnant women, D.O.H. says.

“Pregnant women are at higher risk of severe complications from dengue fever, and any pregnant woman experiencing symptoms should see their healthcare provider for evaluation. Avoid ibuprofen, aspirin, or aspirin-containing drugs until dengue can be ruled out to reduce the risk of hemorrhage. In particular, pregnant women who have a fever should be treated with acetaminophen (Paracetamol or Tylenol®.) People infected with Zika, chikungunya, or dengue virus should be protected from further mosquito exposure during the first few days of illness to reduce the risk of spreading the disease to others,” said D.O.H. Commissioner Nominee Dr. Michelle Davis. D.O.H. said Mosquito control efforts are also in progress around the homes of pregnant women in the territory.

Pregnant women who have been tested for Zika virus are eligible for a free exterior home inspection as part of the department's mosquito control and Zika management program. These inspections and any needed treatments are being provided free of charge to eligible homeowners. Representatives from C.D.C. and Vector Disease Control International are in the process of contacting homeowners to schedule free home inspections. These inspections do not mean that a positive Zika test result has been confirmed, D.O.H. said.

Pregnant women are reminded that Zika Prevention Kits are still available for free at multiple locations across the islands. As of this week, 339 kits have been distributed. 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.

For local information about Zika virus, call the Department of Health Emergency Operations Center at (340) 712-6205. For more general information about the Zika virus call toll free: 1-800-CDC-INFO.