

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Total Confirmed Zika Cases Now 410 In Territory

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ST. THOMAS -- The number of confirmed Zika cases continue to climb on a weekly basis, with the territory [seeing 45 additional confirmed cases this week](#), bringing the islands' total to 410.

St. Thomas continues to be the island being affected the most with 330 confirmed cases, followed by St. Croix with 60, and St. John with 20 confirmed cases.

The Department of Health, which publishes the weekly report, says the amount of pregnant women infected by the disease remained steady from last week, with 33 confirmed cases and another 7 probable, meaning D.O.H. has evidence to believe they are infected, but is awaiting more evidence from the Centers for Disease Control and

Prevention.

D.O.H. Commissioner Michelle Davis [said in August that the territory was at the high point of the disease](#), and once that stage had passed, the number of cases should start to decrease.

“We are in the exponential phase of the epidemiological curve of the outbreak, which means every week we will have more positive results coming back. At some point the results will peak and then we will be on the other side of the outbreak and will then see a reduction in cases,” Ms. Davis said.

“To date, three women who tested positive for Zika during pregnancy have delivered healthy infants. The Department of Health is monitoring these infants for up to 12 months to ensure they meet all developmental milestones. Based on current research, greater than 90 percent of all pregnant women who test positive for Zika will deliver an infant free from the development of microcephaly. Additionally, over 1,500 individuals have been tested for Zika in the territory and the majority of the lab results have been negative,” she added.

Zika is spread primarily through the bite of an infected *Aedes* species mosquito. The most common symptoms of Zika are fever, rash, joint pain, and conjunctivitis (red eyes). The illness is usually mild with symptoms lasting for several days to a week after being bitten by an infected mosquito. People usually don't get sick enough to go to the hospital, and they very rarely die of Zika. For this reason, many people might not realize they have been infected or may be infected and have no symptoms. Zika can also be spread sexually.

The World Health Organization and the C.D.C. have urged pregnant women against travel to more than 45 countries in which the Zika virus is spreading, mostly in the Caribbean and Latin America. All pregnant women who have been to these regions should be tested for the infection, health officials have said, and should refrain from unprotected sex with partners who have visited these regions.