

The Virgin Islands Consortium

11 Cases Of Pregnant Women With Zika Added To D.O.H. Report; Total Now 282

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The Department of Health's latest report on the Zika virus brings the total number of pregnant women with the disease to 282, an increase of 11 cases [week-over-week](#). However the department said those cases were old cases formerly listed as "probable" that were then added to the confirmed cases list.

"The D.O.H. was waiting for confirmatory testing before they could be categorized as confirmed," wrote Nykole Tyson, D.O.H.'s director of public relations in a message sent to the media. She said the results take between one and two months to return.

Even so, recent weeks have seen steady increases in the number of pregnant women confirmed to be Zika positive in the territory. During the week of July 12, 15 additional women [were confirmed to be infected](#) compared to the week prior, while 17 more women were confirmed infected [during the week of July 28](#).

The general category only saw 2 new cases territory-wide. St. Thomas now stands at 683 confirmed cases, up by 1 from last week, while St. Croix has 252 confirmed cases, also up by 1 from last week. St. John remained steady in the general category with 89 confirmed cases, according to D.O.H. data.

In May, D.O.H. made known that [a child in the territory was born with the Zika-related birth defect microcephaly](#) — the first and so far only recorded case in the U.S. Virgin Islands — which was confirmed by Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (C.D.C.) testing, according to D.O.H. Health officials did not reveal on which island the baby was born.

However, five percent of pregnant women with a confirmed Zika infection in the United States territories, went on to have a baby with a related birth defect, according to the most comprehensive report to date from federal officials.

The report, published on June 8 by the C.D.C. (via The New York Times), also provided for the first time preliminary estimates of this risk by trimester. Previously, there were not enough births following exposure to the Zika virus to make such estimates.

This new report reviewed nearly 2,550 cases of women with possible Zika virus infection who completed pregnancies — meaning they gave birth, miscarried or experienced stillbirth — from Jan. 1, 2016 to April 25, 2017.

Roughly 1,500 of those women had Zika infection actually confirmed by laboratory testing.

Eight percent of offspring of pregnant women in U.S. territories with a positive nucleic acid test for Zika infection in the first trimester had birth defects linked to the virus. By contrast, 5 percent of these infants did when infection occurred in the second trimester, and 4 percent in the third trimester.