

# Possible case of sexual transmission of Zika virus

## Media release

03 March 2016

Investigations are underway into a possible case of sexual transmission of Zika virus in New Zealand.

A man became ill after visiting a country where Zika virus is currently being actively transmitted, and has tested positive for the virus. His female partner, who has not recently travelled to a Zika-affected country, has also tested positive for Zika. Both have now fully recovered and suffered only mild symptoms.

Two potential modes of transmission are being considered – whether the virus was transmitted through unprotected sex, or the woman may have been bitten by an infected mosquito brought into the country in her partner's luggage.

There is limited scientific evidence to suggest the virus can be sexually transmitted - it's very rare.

Surveillance of the property is being carried out to check for any exotic mosquitos. At this stage, none have yet been detected.

The risk to the wider public is extremely low. The species of mosquito that can spread Zika are not native to New Zealand.

The local public health service is continuing to investigate how the woman became infected.

No further details on the cases will be released at this time to protect the privacy of the individuals involved.

This statement may be attributed to Ministry of Health spokesperson, Dr Don Mackie.

## What you need to know about the Zika virus

- For the latest advice and information see:
  - [Zika virus advice for the public](#)
  - [Zika virus advice for health professionals](#)
  - [the Travel Safe website](#)
- We recommend anyone travelling to Zika-affected countries should protect themselves against mosquito bites.
- Anyone who is pregnant or plans to become pregnant should consider delaying travel to an affected area.
- While there is a limited scientific evidence to suggest the Zika virus can be sexually transmitted – the best way to reduce the risk is to practice safe sex and use condoms for at least four weeks after returning from a Zika-affected country. Anyone with concerns should seek advice from a health professional.

- Women returning from Zika-affected areas should avoid getting pregnant for four weeks after leaving the affected country.
- Anyone wanting more information should contact Healthline on 0800 611 116 to speak to a registered nurse. The Healthline service has access to interpreters for 44 languages - 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

## **Contact**

For further information, contact;

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