

本署檔號 Our Ref. : (1) in DH SEB CD/8/97/1 Pt.3

16 February 2016

Dear Doctor,

Interim guideline endorsed by The Hospital Authority COC (O&G) and Hong Kong College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists for the management of a pregnant woman with a travel history to an area with Zika virus transmission

I write to draw your attention to the interim guideline endorsed by The Hospital Authority COC (O&G) and Hong Kong College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists which can be accessed at the following link today ([http://www.hkcog.org.hk/hkcog/Download/Interim_guidelines_on_Mx_of_a_pregnant_woman_with_a_travel_history_to_area_with_Zika_virus_transmission_\(20160211\).pdf](http://www.hkcog.org.hk/hkcog/Download/Interim_guidelines_on_Mx_of_a_pregnant_woman_with_a_travel_history_to_area_with_Zika_virus_transmission_(20160211).pdf)) for the management of pregnant woman with travel history to an area with Zika virus transmission. You may wish to take reference from this guideline on management of pregnant women with travel history to an area with Zika virus transmission.

As earlier announced by the World Health Organization (WHO) (12 February), there are 34 countries and areas with reported autochthonous Zika virus transmission or locally acquired infection, six with indication of viral circulation and one with a locally acquired case without vector borne transmission. Of note, six countries, namely Brazil, French Polynesia, El Salvador, Venezuela, Colombia and Suriname, have reported an increase in the incidence of cases of microcephaly and/or Guillain-Barré syndrome (GBS) in conjunction with a Zika outbreak. Puerto Rico and Martinique have reported GBS cases associated with Zika without an increase of incidence. Yet, there is no scientific evidence confirmed a link between Zika virus and microcephaly or GBS.

As long as there is international travel, there is always risk of introduction of Zika virus to Hong Kong. As asymptomatic infection is very common and the potential vector, *Aedes albopictus*, is present locally, there is also risk of local spread in case Zika is introduced to Hong Kong. In view of this, I would like to take this opportunity to remind you of the following health advices to prevent the disease:



1. To prevent mosquito-borne diseases, wear loose, light-coloured, long-sleeved tops and trousers, and use DEET- containing insect repellent on exposed parts of the body and clothing. Take additional preventive measures when going outdoor activities:

- Avoid using fragrant cosmetics or skin care products;
- Re-apply insect repellents according to instructions.

2. Special notes when travelling abroad:

- If going to affected areas or countries, travellers, **especially people with immune disorders or severe chronic illnesses**, should arrange a consultation with doctor at least 6 weeks before the trip, and to have extra preventive measures to avoid mosquito bites;
- During the trip, if travelling in rural affected areas, carry a portable bed net and apply permethrin (an insecticide) on it. Permethrin should NOT be applied to skin. Seek medical attention as early as possible if feeling unwell;
- Travellers who return from affected areas **should apply insect repellent for 14 days after arrival to Hong Kong**. If feeling unwell e.g. having fever, should seek medical advice as soon as possible, and provide travel details to doctor.

3. Special notes for pregnant women and women preparing for pregnancy:

- **Pregnant women and women preparing for pregnancy should consider deferring their trip to affected areas.** Those who must travel to any of these areas should seek medical advice from their doctor before the trip, adopt contraception if appropriate, strictly follow steps to avoid mosquito bites during the trip, and consult and reveal their travel history to their doctor if symptoms develop after the trip;
- Women preparing for pregnancy are advised to continue to **adopt contraception for 28 days** after returning from these areas.

4. Special notes for prevention of sexual transmission*:

If a female partner is at risk of getting pregnant, or is already pregnant, **condom use** is advised for a male traveller:

- for 28 days after his return from an active Zika transmission area if he had no symptoms of unexplained fever and rash;
- for 6 months following recovery if a clinical illness compatible with Zika Virus Infection or laboratory confirmed Zika Virus Infection was reported.

**This is a precaution and may be revised as more information becomes available. Individuals with further concerns regarding potential sexual transmission of Zika virus should contact their doctor for advice.*

As the scientific evidence of the disease is evolving, please refer to the Centre for Health Protection (CHP)'s dedicated mini web http://www.chp.gov.hk/en/view_content/43086.html for latest information and health advice.

For information about the latest epidemiology of the disease and the updated travel health information on Zika virus transmission, please visit the following websites:

- World Health Organization (WHO):

www.who.int/emergencies/zika-virus/situation-report/en

- the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):

<http://www.cdc.gov/zika/geo/index.html>

- the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC):

http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/healthtopics/zika_virus_infection/zika-outbreak/Pages/Zika-information-travellers.aspx

- Travel Health Service of the Department of Health (DH)

<http://www.travelhealth.gov.hk/eindex.html>

Zika Virus Infection has been added to the list of infectious diseases specified in Schedule 1 to Cap. 599 since 5 February 2016. So far, no human Zika cases have been reported to CHP. Nevertheless, CHP is keeping a close watch over the latest situation and will inform you of any new development and updates. Medical practitioners are reminded to report **confirmed** cases immediately to the Central Notification Office (CENO) of CHP, DH via fax (2477 2770) using the reporting form, phone (2477 2772) or CENO On-line (https://cdis.chp.gov.hk/CDIS_CENO_ONLINE/ceno.html). The reporting form and the case definition are available on CENO On-line website. If it is outside office hour, please also call our Medical Control Officer at 7116 3300 a/c 9179 for prompt investigation, isolation and treatment.

Please draw the attention of the healthcare professionals and supporting staff in your institution/ working with you to the above. Thank you for your continuous support in combating infectious diseases.

Yours faithfully,



(Dr. SK CHUANG)

for Controller, Centre for Health Protection
Department of Health