

CDC Finds Babies Born to Women With Zika Virus Developed Health Problems Not Apparent at Birth

Local Health Departments Provide Essential Services to Affected Moms and Their Babies

WASHINGTON, DC, UNITED STATES, August 14, 2018 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A newly released [Vital Signs report](#) revealed about 1 in 7 babies now 1 year or older who were born to women with Zika virus infection during pregnancy had one or more health problems possibly caused by exposure to the virus before birth. Some of these problems were not apparent at birth. These striking results show Zika remains a threat.

The [National Association of County and City Health Officials](#) (NACCHO), representing the nations nearly 3,000 local governmental health departments, has worked closely with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), to provide its members with the support they need to keep their communities safe from Zika infection.

“This report raises new alarm about the potential for devastating health impacts to develop in babies born with Zika virus months after birth. Follow-up care is crucial for all babies who may have been exposed to the virus during pregnancy, whether mom was tested or not,” said NACCHO CEO Lori Tremmel Freeman, MBA.

How Local Health Departments Help

- Local Health departments work with healthcare providers to collect and report medical information about babies in the US Zika Pregnancy and Infant Registry (USZPIR).
- They can share clinical guidance for mothers and babies affected by Zika, and CDC’s resources for checking development: <https://bit.ly/2sViQ0q>
- Local health departments will continue to raise awareness about the risks of Zika during pregnancy and how people can protect themselves.
- Local health departments can connect families affected by Zika with support groups and services and encourage communication between healthcare providers and families.

CDC recommends that all babies born to mothers with Zika virus infection during pregnancy receive a variety of screenings and care even if they appear healthy at birth. CDC scientists analyzed the most current data reported from the US territories and freely associated states to the USZPIR to examine the follow-up care of these babies. This surveillance network is monitoring infants from over 7,300 pregnancies with lab evidence of Zika in the US states and territories combined. To date, this is the largest monitored group of women with Zika during pregnancy in the world and continues to help answer questions about the full impact of Zika. NACCHO recommends that Congress fund ongoing surveillance work at CDC as proposed in the FY2019 President’s Budget and House and Senate Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations bills.

CDC further recommends that men with possible Zika virus exposure who are planning to

conceive with their partner wait at least 3 months after symptoms or possible exposure (travel to or residence in an area with risk of Zika). This shortened timeframe also applies for men who are not planning to conceive with their partners but who want to prevent passing of Zika virus through sex. These updated recommendations are based on emerging data, which suggest that risk of infectious Zika virus in semen appears to decline substantially during the 3 months after onset of symptoms. Male to female transmission of Zika is of greatest concern among couples who are trying to conceive, or might conceive unintentionally. It is critical that such couples are counseled to use condoms or abstain from sex for the recommended duration of 3 months. All other Zika guidance remains unchanged. CDC continues to recommend people with a pregnant partner who have possible exposure to Zika use condoms or not have sex for the entire pregnancy. This is to reduce the risk of sexual transmission of Zika virus during pregnancy, given the very serious birth defects that can result.

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About NACCHO

The National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) represents the nation's nearly 3,000 local governmental health departments. These city, county, metropolitan, district, and tribal departments work every day to protect and promote health and well-being for all people in their communities. For more information about NACCHO, please visit www.naccho.org.

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