



News From

Cheryl Dinolfo

Monroe County Executive

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MONROE COUNTY HEALTH OFFICIALS DISCUSS ZIKA RISK AND PREVENTION OF OTHER MOSQUITO-BORNE ILLNESSES

Monroe County Executive **Cheryl Dinolfo** today joins Interim Monroe County Public Health Commissioner **Dr. Michael Mendoza** to educate Monroe County residents on the risk and prevention of Zika and other mosquito-borne illnesses. With warmer weather having arrived, together with occasional rain, mosquitoes have begun to emerge. As worldwide attention continues to focus on the health effects of the Zika Virus, Monroe County health officials are seeking to clarify what is currently known about the level of risk for Zika locally and steps that residents can take to avoid more common mosquito-borne illnesses such as West Nile (WNV) and Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE).

“Ensuring the well-being of Monroe County residents is one of my top priorities as County Executive,” said **Dinolfo**. *“In order to minimize exposure to the Zika Virus and all mosquito-borne illnesses, Dr. Mendoza and our Public Health Department are working diligently to provide our community with the best prevention resources possible.”*

“Currently, the greatest risk of Zika infection is for people traveling to various locations in Central and South America and many of the Caribbean Islands. While there has been an appropriate level of attention to the risks of Zika, as of now, there has not been a single instance where Zika has been transmitted by a mosquito anywhere in the continental United States,” said **Dr. Mendoza**. All known cases in the US have been travel-related, in one form or another.

There are over 70 species of mosquito in New York State. The species of mosquito that transmits Zika is not believed to thrive in Monroe County due to our cold climate. *“While we believe the Zika carrying mosquito does not circulate here, we will be doing some mosquito trapping to confirm it,”* said **Dr. Mendoza**. *“We do, however, know that mosquitoes in our area carry West Nile and Eastern Equine Encephalitis. Whether or not Zika ever gets established here, there are currently very real risks of other such illnesses,”* he added.

Health officials recommend the following to reduce risk of Zika and other known mosquito-borne illnesses such as WNV and EEE:

- If you are pregnant, or seeking to become pregnant, do not travel to a location where Zika Virus is circulating (visit www.cdc.gov/zika for current list).

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- If you travel to a Zika-affected area, use an EPA registered insect repellent whenever you are outside. The mosquito that transmits Zika is active both day and night time.
- If you have traveled to a Zika-affected area, or had sexual contact with someone who has, and develop a fever, rash, joint pain, or red eyes during the trip, or within 2 weeks after traveling to a location with Zika, see your doctor to be evaluated.
- Most mosquitoes in our area are active at dusk and dawn. Use insect repellent containing DEET to prevent bites. Wash the repellent off once inside for the evening.
- Mosquitoes do not travel far from where they hatch. Empty any containers on your property that hold water after each rain to reduce mosquito populations around your home.

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