



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

WOMEN SHOULD AVOID TRAVEL TO ZIKA IMPACTED AREAS BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER PREGNANCY

March 16, 2016, Chapel Hill, North Carolina: VIGILINT, an international health protection company, announced today that women who are pregnant or considering pregnancy should cancel or postpone travel to Zika infected destinations due to the risk of birth defects.

The primary transmission route of the Zika virus is through mosquitos. However, mounting evidence has shown that sexual transmission of Zika is possible and more common than previously assumed. There is a great deal of concern regarding the association between the Zika virus infection and adverse pregnancy and fetal outcomes, including microcephaly, neurological complications and Guillain-Barré syndrome.

"Available studies have detected Zika in saliva, urine, semen, blood and breast milk," said Dr. Sean Siler, VIGILINT President and Chief Medical Officer. "It is crucial, for both women and men, to be overly cautious with this rapidly evolving health threat."

Sexual transmission of the Zika virus has been documented in several countries. To reduce the risk of sexual transmission and potential pregnancy complications, sexual partners of pregnant women returning from areas where local transmission of Zika virus has occurred should practice safer sex, including using condoms, or abstain from sexual activity throughout the pregnancy. Travelers returning from areas impacted by the virus should practice safer sex practices or abstain from sex for at least 8 weeks after their return, even if they don't have symptoms. If men experience Zika virus symptoms they should practice safer sex practices or consider abstinence for at least 6 months. Women planning to get pregnant should wait at least 8 weeks before trying to conceive if no symptoms of Zika virus infection appear, or 6 months if one or both members of the couple are symptomatic.

VIGILINT'S team of physicians and pandemic planning experts continue to monitor the Zika virus within the emergency response framework.

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