

March 2016

Dear Parents and Community Members:

As we approach spring break and think about seasonal weather changes, our Student Health Services Department shares with you the following information about the Zika virus, which is transmitted primarily through the bite of infected *Aedes* species mosquitoes which are also found in Georgia. We realize that many parents and students will travel during spring break and therefore urge you to take precautions to protect you and your family. Many popular spring break destinations throughout the Caribbean, Central America, South America, Pacific Islands, and Mexico have experienced outbreaks of Zika virus. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has issued [Zika travel notices](#) with recommendations for travelers to these destinations. Because Zika virus is primarily spread by mosquitoes, travelers to any destination with Zika outbreaks should protect themselves from mosquito bites.

Currently, there is no vaccine to prevent or medicine to treat Zika. Travelers should take precautions to protect themselves from mosquitoes including the following:

- Wear long-sleeved shirts, long pants, and socks
- Use EPA-registered insect repellents containing DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus (OLE), or IR3535 (during travel and for **three weeks after returning home**)
- Use [permethrin-treated](#) clothing and gear (such as boots, pants, socks, and tents)
- Stay and sleep in screened-in or air-conditioned rooms or sleep under a mosquito net
- Pregnant women should not travel to areas where there is any ongoing Zika virus outbreaks

Upon returning home from travel to Zika-affected countries, individuals should continue to use EPA-registered insect repellents for **three weeks** and follow precautions to prevent additional mosquito bites. The mosquitoes that spread Zika mostly bite during the daytime and tend to live around homes. They breed in containers so removing anything that holds water or dumping out standing water around the home after it rains will help reduce the number of these mosquitoes.

If you have questions or need additional information, please see the [CDC's Spring Break Flyer](#) or contact Student Health Services at 470-254-2177.

Thank you.