

LEE COUNTY SCHOOLS STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES
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Dear Parent/Guardian,

At the recommendation of the Commissioner and State Health Officer of the Georgia Department of Public Health, I am writing to share concerns about Zika virus infection in hopes that you will take all recommended precautions to protect yourself and your family.

Many popular spring break destinations throughout the Caribbean, Central America, South America, Pacific Islands, and Mexico have 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.

As of this date, no locally transmitted Zika cases have been reported in Georgia or anywhere in the United States, but cases *have been* reported in returning travelers. Zika virus is transmitted primarily through the bite of infected Aedes species mosquitoes, which **can** be found in Georgia. Sexual transmission of Zika has also be documented.

Pregnant women should not travel to areas where there is ongoing Zika virus transmission because of a link between Zika virus and birth defects. Studies are underway to determine if there is a connection between Zika virus infection and Guillain-Barré syndrome (GBS) and other serious neurological disorders.

There is no vaccine to prevent or medicine to treat Zika. Travelers should check [CDC travel advisories](#) for their destinations and take precautions to protect themselves from mosquitoes:

- 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

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 bite mostly 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.

For more information about Zika, log on to dph.georgia.gov/zika.

Very Truly Yours,



Dana Leverett, RN
School Nurse Coordinator