New information for February 5th, 2016:

Dear UMass Boston community,

The Travax News Alert Service has offered the following updated information on the Zika virus outbreak to include considerations from evolving guidelines and events.

**Sexual transmission of Zika virus appears rare at present. A very cautious approach would be for male condom use for 4 weeks after risk travel and for the duration of pregnancy when the female partner is pregnant.** Symptomatic travelers should ideally abstain from sex pending test results and seek expert advice if Zika infection is proven.

Placental and perinatal transmission of Zika virus has been demonstrated, but frequency is unknown. Transfusion-derived and sexual transmissions occur uncommonly, but frequency is unknown. The exact circumstances of a confirmed sexual transmission from a male to an unknown partner in Dallas, U.S. in February 2016 are unclear at present.

Insect precautions and personal protection measures against day-biting mosquitoes are the main prevention strategy, especially for pregnant women who choose to travel to affected areas.

U.S. CDC is expected to issue additional advice on considerations on sexual transmission to woman who are pregnant or who may be pregnant but not directly for all woman of child-bearing age.

New information for January 29th, 2016

Dear UMass Boston community,

As you may know from the extensive media coverage of the Zika virus, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has issued a travel alert to regions with Zika virus outbreaks, including parts of South America, Central America, the Caribbean, Mexico, Puerto Rico, Samoa, and Cape Verde.

There have been several documented cases of Zika virus suspected to be related to microcephaly (a condition where the brain and head do not grow normally) in infants in the affected regions. For this reason, the CDC advises women who are pregnant, or trying to become pregnant, to postpone travel to these areas.

Zika virus is spread through infected mosquitoes, and all travelers should take precautions to prevent mosquito bites. Zika symptoms are typically mild and may include fever, rash, joint pain, and red eyes. There is currently no vaccine.

Specific areas where Zika virus transmission is ongoing are likely to change over time. Please visit the CDC Travelers' Health site for the most updated information.
Our UHS TravelWell service is available to students, faculty and staff who are planning travel or have traveled to the affected regions. Schedule an appointment by calling 617-287-5660.

**CDC Recommendations for Pregnant Women Considering Travel to an Area of Zika Virus Transmission**

- Use insect repellents to prevent Zika, dengue and chikungunya. These mosquitoes bite mostly in daytime hours.
  - When used as directed, insect repellents are safe and effective for everyone, including pregnant and nursing women.
  - Most insect repellents can be used on children. Do not use products containing oil of lemon eucalyptus in children under the age of three years.
  - Repellents containing DEET, picaridin, IR3535, and some oil of lemon eucalyptus and para-menthane-diol products provide long lasting protection.
  - If you use both sunscreen and insect repellent, apply the sunscreen first and then the repellent.
  - Do not spray insect repellent on the skin under your clothing.
  - Treat clothing with permethrin or purchase permethrin-treated clothing.
  - Always follow the label instructions when using insect repellent or sunscreen.
- When weather permits, wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants.
- Use air conditioning or window/door screens to keep mosquitoes outside. If you are not able to protect yourself from mosquitoes inside your home or hotel, sleep under a mosquito bed net.
- Help reduce the number of mosquitoes inside and outside your home or hotel room by emptying standing water from containers such as flowerpots or buckets.

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