2016 Rye Zika Virus Information

About the Mosquito Vectors:

The Zika Virus is currently transmitted by two mosquitoes – Aedes aegypti and Aedes albopictus.

NH does not currently have either mosquito. Aedes aegypti (the primary vector) is a tropical species not found in states north of Georgia. This is unlikely to become established in NH.

The second species, Aedes albopictus (The Asian Tiger Mosquito) has been found in Massachusetts and could become established in NH in the future. Albopictus is an invasive species, first found in Houston, Texas in 1985. Since then it has been found in New Jersey (1995) through Massachusetts (2013). They breed in artificial containers such as tires. It's believed that the used tire trade has spread the species since its initial discovery.

Albopictus is an aggressive day biter, primarily feeding on humans. They typically bite on the legs and are active throughout the day, but worst at dusk and dawn. Albopictus are weak flyers typically remaining within 200 meters of their breeding sites.

Albopictus can be found in artificial containers: plastic and rubber solid waste, tires, gutters, flower pots, cemetery urns, recycle and garbage bins, discarded appliances, food and drink containers, pails, swimming pool covers, abandoned swimming pools, kiddie pools, septic tanks. They can also be found in stormwater wetlands: catch basins, roadside ditches and swales, retention and detention ponds. As a result, the best control is reducing yard waste that potentially breeds albopictus.

They are a competent vector of 22 viruses including WNV, EEE, Dog Heartworm and Zika Virus.

These are not frequently attracted to the CDC light traps used for disease surveillance. As a result, NH Department of Health and Human Services is using grant money to provide Swamp Inc. with new traps, called BG Sentinel Traps, to monitor possible albopictus breeding in NH. These will be utilized in Rye as soon as they are delivered.

About the Zika Virus

Zika was first discovered in the Zika Forest, in Uganda in 1947. The first human cases were discovered in 1952. First human outbreaks were discovered in Africa and Southeast Asia, and Pacific islands.

The current outbreak is primarily in South and Central America, Caribbean Islands, and Puerto Rico and Costa Rica. Recently local transmission has been found in mosquitoes in southern Florida.

Zika Virus is transmitted by infected mosquitoes, in utero from mother to fetus, and through sexual transmission.

Unlike other mosquito-borne diseases, Zika can be spread using only human hosts. An Aedes mosquito can become infected from biting a person with the virus and upon infection, spread it directly to other humans.

Symptoms are typically mild and include fever, rash, joint pain, conjunctivitis and in some cases muscle pain and headache.

Most healthy adults will have mild or no symptoms, but more serious effects can occur in pregnant women. Contracting the virus during pregnancy has lead to birth defects including microcephaly. To prevent this, the CDC is advising pregnant women to avoid areas with Zika outbreak and to use personal protection. As sexual transmission has occurred, they also recommend abstinence or protected intercourse during pregnancy if you or your partner has travelled to affected areas.

There is currently no vaccine for Zika, and treatments are limited to typical flu treatment. Rest, remaining hydrated and anti-inflammatory meds (over the counter pain medicines) are typically recommended. Those potentially affected should seek a doctors advice and blood test to confirm the virus.

Prevention of Zika virus is similar to prevention methods for West Nile and EEE; wearing long sleeves and pants, using personal repellant and avoiding mosquitoes at peak feeding times. Reducing breeding sources is also important, especially tires and other artificial sources. There is no vaccine at present, and those most susceptible are advised to avoid areas of infection if possible.

For more information contact: Michael Morrison, President of Swamp, Inc.

21 River Road, Newington NH (603) 431-0008 swampfixer@swamp-inc.com

Source: US CDC (http://www.cdc.gov/zika/index.html)