Zika Virus Facts:

1. Zika virus is transmitted by Aedes aegypti and Aedes albopictus mosquitoes. Both of these mosquitoes have been identified in Baytown.

2. Controlling these types of Aedes mosquitoes is not as simple as using regular mosquito control methods. These species are very active during the day and mosquito control can rarely spray during daytime hours due to chemical label restrictions and other beneficial insects (bees) which may be present.

3. Aedes aegypti, the primary Zika vector is nearly always found in or around residential homes. This is because we provide the habitats for them to breed, such as: discarded tires, rain gutters that are clogged, rain barrels that are not constructed and screened properly and other small containers that catch and hold water that are not emptied. Please visit the Galveston Bay Foundation for information and workshops on how to properly construct a closed system rain barrel.

4. Symptoms of Zika virus include: fever, skin rashes, conjunctivitis, headache, and muscle and joint pain. These symptoms can last from a few days, up to a week. It is suspected that Zika virus causes microcephaly (a neurological condition that causes an infant's head to be smaller than average) though this is not 100% definitive; however, continued research is making this suspicion more plausible.

5. No vaccine is available for Zika virus. Only supportive care can reduce the symptoms.

6. Self protection is the best method to reduce mosquito bites. Find out how, here!

Zika Concern

Zika virus has not been identified in any local transmissions in the U.S., meaning—persons that have had the virus were not bitten by an infected mosquito here in the United States. Those that have been infected have possibly traveled to an area listed here.

The chance of Zika virus becoming more widespread or endemic in the United States is contingent on a variety of factors. The primary influence may depend on if a person is infected abroad and then gets bit by one of the Aedes mosquitoes when returning home while the person is still infected with Zika virus. This in turn makes the mosquito infected with the virus and a possibility of biting someone else.