

# First case of Zika virus detected in Philippines since 2012

March 6 2016

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An American woman was infected with the Zika virus while visiting the Philippines, health department officials said Sunday, the first case detected in the country for several years.

Health Secretary Janette Garin said the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (US-CDC) had informed her that a US resident who stayed in the Philippines for four weeks in January had apparently developed symptoms in her last week before returning to America.

"We were informed that shortly after returning home to the US, an evidence of Zika virus infection was detected from the patient," Garin said in a statement.

"Currently, we are coordinating with US-CDC for the profile of the patient, including information on places she visited in the Philippines," Garin said without giving details of the patient.

Health department officials said they still had no clue how the American was infected while in the Philippines.

The only previous known case of Zika in the country was a 15-year-old boy infected in 2012. He recovered after three weeks.

The mosquito-borne disease is usually not life-threatening but has been linked to a rise in birth defects in other countries, where hundreds of babies have been born with unusually small heads in recent years.

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