

# El Salvador confirms first Zika-linked birth defect

June 15 2016

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El Salvador on Tuesday confirmed its first case of microcephaly in a baby that was linked to a Zika infection in the mother.

Microcephaly is a birth defect that causes an abnormally small head and deformed brain.

Health Minister Violeta Menjivar said the infant was born in April to a family living in the country's central La Paz province, and the Zika connection was proved "a short while ago."

Zika, a virus typically carried by mosquitos, was first detected in the Central American country in November and 10,476 cases of infection have been recorded.

Among them, the health ministry counted 274 pregnant women suspected to have been infected with Zika. Of those, 118 gave birth to babies without [microcephaly](#).

Menjivar noted that cases of babies with microcephaly believed caused by Zika have also occurred in countries including Brazil, Colombia, Martinique, Panama, Puerto Rico and the United States.

Abortion is illegal in El Salvador, a predominantly Christian country.

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