

Peru declares Zika emergency across half of country

July 13 2016

Peruvian officials on Wednesday declared a Zika health emergency across the northern half of their country after confirming that 102 people have been infected with the virus.

The 90-day emergency was announced in the official gazette *El Peruano*, which said the health ministry and [local authorities](#) were working to prevent the spread of the disease, which is principally transmitted by mosquitos.

The cases detected so far include 34 [pregnant women](#). Zika is seen as a cause of microcephaly—abnormally small heads and brains—in babies.

A major Zika outbreak in neighboring Brazil, where nearly 1,600 babies have been born with the birth defect, has prompted concerns for athletes and visitors ahead of the Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro next month.

There is growing evidence that in limited cases Zika can also be transmitted sexually.

In adults and children it usually causes only mild, flu-like symptoms and a rash. But it has been linked to neurological problems such as a potentially fatal paralysis known as Guillain-Barre Syndrome.

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Citation: Peru declares Zika emergency across half of country (2016, July 13) retrieved 5 May

2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2016-07-peru-declares-zika-emergency-country.html>

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