

Sharp rise of dengue on Chile's Easter Island

21 February 2016

Chile's remote Easter Island over the past two weeks has seen a dramatic increase in dengue, with a total now of 16 confirmed cases, including one serious enough to require hospitalization.

Health officials in Santiago said two new dengue cases were confirmed Saturday on Easter Island in two women, ages 20 and 52.

"One of them required hospitalization after displaying serious symptoms," Chile's health department said in a statement, who said the woman at present is in good condition.

Authorities said they are also monitoring the population for Zika virus, and that about a dozen people suspected of having the disease are under observation.

Both dengue and Zika are transmitted by the same mosquito, *aedes aegypti*.

Officials worry that the [dengue](#) outbreak could hurt tourism, a major source of revenue.

Several nations in Latin America and the Caribbean have seen serious outbreaks of Zika, which officials suspect of causing birth defects in infants, and other potentially serious health concerns.

Easter Island, a Chilean Pacific territory of just 5,761 people, is a volcanic outcrop of Polynesian culture some 3,500 kilometers (2,200 miles) from the Latin American continent.

It is famous for its archaeological sites, including some 900 mammoth ancient statues of human figures, which are a major tourist attraction.

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