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Texas announces first local Zika case (Update)

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Texas has announced its first case of local Zika virus, making it the second US state after Florida to say it likely has mosquitoes spreading the disease that can cause birth defects.

The case involves a woman who is not pregnant and has not recently traveled anywhere that Zika is spreading, according to the Texas Department of State Health Services.

The case is considered "likely" a result of local transmission, until officials find evidence of mosquitoes carrying the disease.

The woman was "was confirmed last week by lab test to have been infected," said the statement.

"She reported no recent travel to Mexico or anywhere else with ongoing Zika virus transmission and no other risk factors."

Texas health officials said there are no other cases of suspected local transmission at this time, but vowed to continue surveillance.

"We knew it was only a matter of time before we saw a Zika case spread by a mosquito in Texas," said John Hellerstedt, Department of State Health Services commissioner.

"We still don't believe the virus will become widespread in Texas, but there could be more cases, so people need to protect themselves from

mosquito bites, especially in parts of the state that stay relatively warm in the fall and winter."

Florida was the first state to report the local spread of Zika, and has reported 238 such cases as of last week, as part of more than 1,200 infections statewide so far this year.

The virus has swept mainly across Latin America and the Caribbean, and can cause birth defects if pregnant women are infected.

A series of brain and skull malformations are associated with Zika, including a condition called microcephaly, in which babies are born with unusually small heads.

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