



**TO:** NS Perinatal Care Providers  
**FROM:** Reproductive Care Program  
**DATE:** December 1, 2017  
**RE:** Zika Virus in Pregnancy

Recommendations for screening pregnant women with potential exposure to Zika virus are evolving. The current screening recommendations are summarized below. Included with this memo are copies of the Nova Scotia ZIKA TESTING ALGORITHM – INTERIM GUIDANCE and the Nova Scotia ZIKA CLINICAL INFORMATION DATA SHEET – INTERIM GUIDANCE.

- **All pregnant women with a potential exposure to Zika virus** require assessment, regardless of whether they develop symptoms. Potential exposure is defined as personal travel to a Zika area any time after the date of the woman's LMP or unprotected sexual contact with a male who has traveled to a Zika area in the last 6 months. For the most recent Zika Virus Travel update refer to the PHAC website at <http://travel.gc.ca/travelling/health-safety/travel-health-notice>
- **Symptomatic pregnant women** should be referred to the Fetal Assessment & Treatment Centre (FATC) at the IWK. These women will need blood and urine specimens collected and sent to the Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine, Central Zone as described in the ZIKA TESTING ALGORITHM. The ZIKA CLINICAL INFORMATION DATA SHEET must be completed and sent with the specimens.
- **Asymptomatic pregnant women** who have traveled to a Zika area since their last LMP, or have had unprotected sexual contact with a male who has traveled to a Zika area in the last 6 months, should be referred to the FATC for triage. All should be offered Zika virus serology as described in the ZIKA TESTING ALGORITHM and the ZIKA CLINICAL INFORMATION DATA SHEET must be completed and sent with the specimens. Consultants in the FATC will determine the best timing and location for ultrasound surveillance based on the woman's individual circumstances, such as timing of exposure and gestational age.
- **The FATC referral form should include** the woman's LMP, the circumstances of her exposure in the context of gestational age (include travel history or history of unprotected sexual contact with a male who may have been exposed to Zika virus), the presence or absence of symptoms consistent with Zika virus in the woman or her partner, the timing of the appearance of symptoms (if relevant), whether or not a blood sample has been sent for Zika serology and, if so, the date the sample was collected.
- **The timing of Zika serology is important.** Zika serology for an asymptomatic pregnant woman should be done **NO SOONER** than three weeks following the last exposure. At this time Zika serology for male partners of pregnant women is not being offered in Canada. Because all testing is done at one lab in Winnipeg the priority is pregnant women. In addition, the interpretation of a negative test in this context is difficult.
- **The FATC referral form can be found at:** [http://www.iwk.nshealth.ca/sites/default/files/IWK\\_MAFE.pdf](http://www.iwk.nshealth.ca/sites/default/files/IWK_MAFE.pdf) or on the IWK website under the tab, 'For Health Professionals' and the option 'Referral Forms for External Physicians'. A new form must be printed for each referral (due to the barcode) and the form must be faxed to FATC at 902-470-7987.
- **Remind each pregnant woman** that her male partner should use condoms for the duration of the pregnancy.
- **Remind each woman who could become pregnant**, that her male partner should use condoms for 6 months from the time of travel to a Zika area. If a woman becomes pregnant within two months of personal travel to a Zika area, or within 6 months of her male partner traveling to a Zika area, the need for testing must be assessed on an individual basis through the FATC.
- **More detailed information**, including links to all current national and international recommendations for pregnant women with regard to Zika virus exposure, is available from the Society of Obstetricians and Gynecologists of Canada at: <https://sogc.org/news-items/index.html?id=135>

**Nova Scotia recommendations related to pregnancy and Zika virus exposure will be updated on the RCP website as new information becomes available. Please check back regularly at <http://rcp.nshealth.ca>**