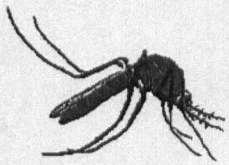


ZIKA VIRUS

FACT SHEET

The Virus

- First discovered in 1947 in Africa, Zika is a virus that is transmitted by the *Aedes* ssp. mosquito.
- Zika is usually present in the blood of an infected person for a few days during which a mosquito may acquire the infection by bite and possibly transmit the virus by biting another person.
- There is no evidence that Zika is being transmitted by mosquitoes in Florida.
- Recently, there have been cases of travelers infected with the virus returning to Miami-Dade, Hillsborough, Lee, Santa Rosa, and Broward counties from areas where the virus is transmitted.
- Zika is a mild illness that resolves itself within a week.
- Only about 1 in 5 infected will develop symptoms - fever, rash, joint pain, and conjunctivitis.
- Reports of birth defects associated with Zika have been made in South America.
- There is currently no vaccine to prevent or medicine to treat Zika.

The Mosquito

- *Aedes* mosquitoes are commonly found throughout the world and are the same mosquitoes that spread dengue and chikungunya viruses.
- *Aedes* mosquitoes have adapted to live in close association with humans living and breeding in water holding containers as small as a bottle cap.
- *Aedes* mosquitoes are most active during the day and tend to stay close to their breeding site.
- Because *Aedes* mosquitoes do not live or reproduce in ditches, swales, lakes, marshes, or swamps, ground and aerial insecticide spraying has a limited effect for controlling populations.

Prevention

- Palm Beach County's Mosquito Control Division takes a proactive approach to reduce mosquito populations and to educate the public on a daily basis.
- As with all mosquito-transmitted diseases, the best way to prevent exposure is to limit your chances of being bitten by a mosquito.
- First and foremost, safeguard yourself by wearing protective clothing such as long pants and sleeves and applying an approved mosquito repellent, preferably one containing DEET.
- Second, remove potential mosquito breeding sites by emptying water from flower pots, garbage cans, recycling containers, wheelbarrows, aluminum cans, boat tarps, old tires, toys, and buckets - any item that can hold water.
- Prevent water containers from getting stagnant by flushing ornamental bromeliads, birdbaths and wading pools weekly, clean roof gutters, change the water in outdoor pet dishes regularly, keep pools and spas chlorinated and filtered, stock ornamental ponds with mosquito-eating fish, cover rain barrels with screening, and check for standing water under houses, near plumbing drains, under air conditioner drip areas, around septic tanks and heat pumps.

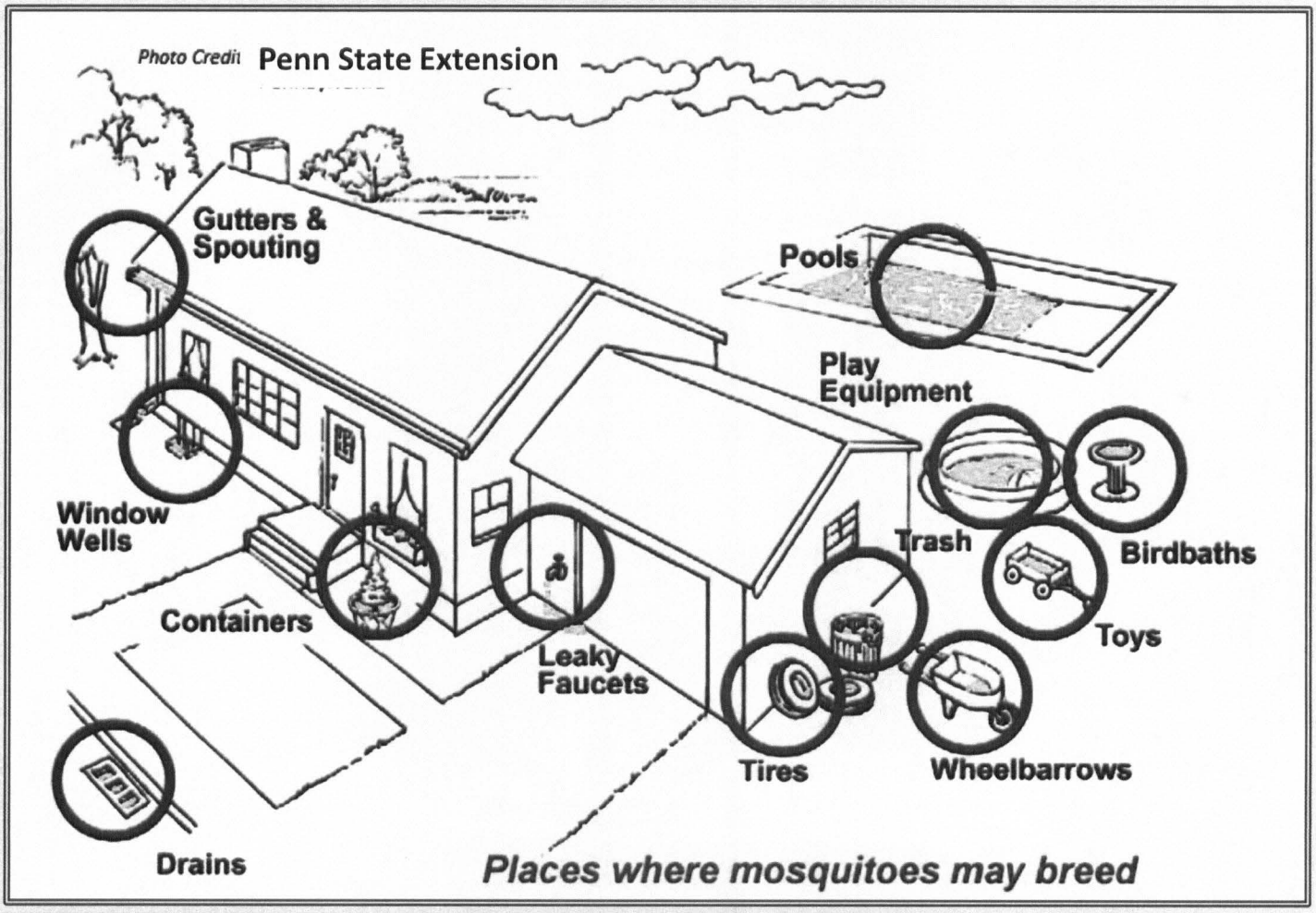
References and Additional Information

- Palm Beach County Mosquito Control Division
- Florida Department of Health
- Centers for Disease Control

Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners
Department of Environmental Resources Management
561.233.2400 www.pbcgov.com/erm/

FIGHT the BITE to PREVENT the SPREAD

- Did you know that the Zika Virus is spread by the mosquito *Aedes* that lives and reproduces in containers of water?
- Spraying with insecticide is ineffective with "container mosquitoes" making it everyone's responsibility to prevent Zika Virus by emptying containers of water where *Aedes* can breed.
- Perform weekly inspections of your home and yard to remove any standing water that is accumulating to prevent the transmission of mosquito-borne diseases like Zika Virus.



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Mosquito Control Division
www.pbcgov.com/erm/mosquito/