
Five cases of Zika virus confirmed in C'bean territory, Jamaica ruled out

The Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) is not naming the Caribbean Community territory in which five cases of the Zika virus have been confirmed.

But speaking on Nationwide Radio Thursday afternoon, Dr James Hospedales, CARPHA's Executive Director said Jamaica was not the affected country. This is the first time Zika has been detected in the region and Hospedales says there will be more cases. "This is a virus like chikungunya that the population has not met before so there is wide spread susceptibility and lack of resistance so we expect it to spread," Hospedales said. Earlier this year, CARPHA warned the region to brace for the Zika virus after it was detected in Brazil. "It was just a matter of time before it arrived in the Caribbean Community," said Hospedales noting that there is often travel between the region and Brazil. He said CARPHA will soon launch a mobile game called Zap-a-quito to help in educating the public, particularly children, on the Aedes aegypti mosquito, which transmits the virus.

HOW YOU CAN HELP TO PREVENT MOSQUITO BREEDING:

1. Inspect your home and yard weekly
2. Eliminate potential mosquito breeding sites indoors and outdoors
3. Keep water drums and barrels tightly covered
4. Throw out stagnant water from flower vases, old tyres, and other containers.