

YOUR GOOD HEALTH

Keeping mosquitoes at bay



[PIXABAY]

By The Columbus Dispatch

Mosquitoes are considered the world's deadliest animals, spreading such diseases as the Zika, West Nile and Chikungunya viruses, plus dengue and malaria in various parts of the world.

"Anything that holds even a small amount of water for a few days is a perfect place for mosquitoes to breed," Joe Mazzola, a health commissioner in Franklin County, Ohio, said in a statement.

"Once eggs are laid, a new crop of mosquitoes can hatch, grow and emerge from the water as adults in as little as one week," he said.

Public-health agencies offer these tips for keeping the bugs at bay:

- Empty, remove, cover or turn over containers that can hold water.
- Treat rain barrels with

mosquito dunks every month.

• Change the water in wading pools weekly; store indoors when not in use.

• Dispose of old tires.

• Empty planters and bird baths often.

• Empty and refill pets' watering dishes daily.

• Use sand to plug holes in trees where water can collect.

• Repair leaky pipes and outside faucets.

• Make sure that gutters and downspouts are free of leaves and debris and are properly draining.

• Drain or fill low areas on your property that hold water for more than five days.

• Use insect repellent containing DEET.

• Wear protective clothing at dawn or dusk.

• Repair window screens.

It's important to take measures now, said Columbus Public Health Commissioner Dr. Teresa Long.

"Mosquitoes can carry diseases such as Zika and West Nile, so it's important to eliminate standing water as soon as possible to reduce their growth," Long said in a statement.

"What residents do today will be critical to the number of mosquitoes ... this summer."

Funding for state-level Zika tracking may end soon

By Ana B. Ibarra

Kaiser Health News

Money that has helped states with Zika tracking and education may come to an end by this summer, putting at risk efforts to better understand the mostly mosquito-borne virus and the devastating birth defects associated with it.



[CDC]

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention told state health officials in a recent meeting that Zika funding is running out and that additional support should not be expected, according to a news report. An agency spokeswoman declined to confirm the report, saying in an email that the CDC did not yet have a budget for the next fiscal year and could not speculate on how funding for Zika might be affected.

Last year, Congress provided \$1.1 billion to the CDC for Zika response and preparedness that was mostly passed on to local and state public health departments.

In California, the federal money helped to expand mosquito surveillance, tracking of birth defects related to Zika and programs to educate residents about the disease, among other efforts. The money has been distributed to states through different grants for different purposes.

As of April 21, 534 Zika virus infections have been reported in California since October 2015, according to state data.

According to the CDC, 58 babies in the U.S. were born with birth defects related to Zika as of April 11. Those defects include microcephaly, a condition in which a baby's head and brain are smaller than normal, causing developmental delays and other problems.

The potential end of federal funds may affect states' ability to track Zika-related birth defects, said Cindy Pellegrini, the senior vice president of public policy and government affairs at the March of Dimes.

Before Zika emerged, microcephaly was so rare that most states did not track it. If states can no longer afford to do so, it will be difficult for health officials to know for certain which cases of birth defects were triggered by Zika, Pellegrini said.

The CDC and the March of Dimes recently launched Zika Care Connect, a website in which the public can search for providers who are qualified and willing to treat women and children with Zika.



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