

Singapore reports first locally transmitted Zika case

August 27 2016

Singapore on Saturday reported the first locally-transmitted case of the Zika virus, with three other suspect infections pending confirmation.

Authorities identified the confirmed patient as a 47-year-old Malaysian woman residing in the city-state.

"As she had not travelled to Zika-affected areas recently, she was likely to have been infected in Singapore," the Ministry of Health (MOH) and the National Environment Agency said in a joint statement late Saturday.

The woman developed fever, rash and conjunctivitis on Thursday and tested positive for the [virus](#) two days later at a local hospital, where she has since been under observation, the statement said.

"The patient is currently well and recovering," it added.

The health ministry is screening the woman's close contacts and is carrying out tests on other people living and working in the area exhibiting symptoms of fever and rash.

The statement said three other suspect cases—two from a family who live in the area and another individual who works nearby—had preliminarily tested positive for the mosquito-borne virus based on their urine samples.

The results, however, are being confirmed through further tests, the statement added.

"I encourage those who are unwell and with these symptoms to visit their doctors for medical attention," said Health Minister Gan Kim Yong.

The Zika virus outbreak began in Brazil in early 2015 and has spread to neighbouring countries.

Singapore in May reported the first imported case of Zika virus infection—a 48-year-old male Singapore resident who had travelled to Sao Paulo in Brazil earlier in the year.

In the United States more than 2,500 people have been diagnosed with Zika, most of them infected while travelling abroad.

Until now, global [health](#) authorities have been primarily concerned with the danger Zika poses to [pregnant women](#) and their foetuses.

Zika causes only mild symptoms for most people. But in pregnant women, it can cause microcephaly, a deformation in which babies are born with abnormally small brains and heads.

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