

Bromeli Advisory

September 2016



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BromeliAdvisory

Stop and Smell the Bromeliads

September 2016

WEBPAGE: <http://www.bssf-miami.org/>

 http://www.facebook.com/groups/BromeliadSSF/?bookmark_t=group

 <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Bromeliad-Society-of-South-Florida/84661684279>

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What	Who
Sales Table	Alex Bello/Mike Michalski

MEETING: September 20, 2016
SPEAKER: Peter Kouchalakos – Steve Correale’s hybrids
RAFFLE TABLE: Alex Bello
FOOD: Usual Suspects

About the Speaker

Peter Kouchalakos is a native son and life member to the BSSF. Having been active in the BSSF for decades, he has held most every office of the BSSF – including president.

A recovering attorney, Peter has left his preparation of briefs for bromeliads, and even their upper class cousins, orchids. In 2004, he and his wife Clara created PCK Orchids. Somehow, the word bromeliads was overlooked in the fictitious name filing.



Steve Correale

Peter sells, aids in raising, and lectures on bromeliads and orchids. Now a ripened senior in the trade show sales, he can be seen perennially at the Coral Gables Farmers’ Market and many of the plant sales in Miami-Dade and neighboring counties.

Peter is going to speak about bromeliads hybridized and crated by Steve Correale. Steve, another life member of the BSSF, has plants which have grown in his yard for decades – some older than members of the society. Steve’s plants, among those in the know, are renowned. For those in the area, they are healthy and prolific plants derived from the intrepid youth of Steve who explored and gathered from south-of-the-border excursions years and years ago.

If you are not coming for the enjoyable and always cheerful presentation of Peter, come to see the plants, many of which may be delivered to the back table for sale.

President's Message

by Robert Meyer

EVEN MORE INFORMATION ABOUT ZIKA

Just when the zoo-antics of the government attempts to address Zika fell to the greatest depth of embarrassment, it got even worse. Our short term memories will probably have forgotten, and because of such the truth becomes increasingly hazed.

So what have we not done so far? Not passed a bill. Originally, House Republicans sabotaged the bill by adding off-the-wall provisions to punish Planned Parenthood and honor the Confederate flag – really. And, then The House in May pushed through a \$622 million bill that was financed by taking funds intended to combat Ebola. In the Senate, Roy Blunt (R., Mo.) and Patty Murray (D., Wash.) brokered a deal that cleared the chamber in providing \$1.1 billion in emergency spending to battle Zika. Democrats say the House should pass the Senate bill, which was negotiated with some GOP lawmakers and avoids controversial policy riders.

Democrats, after seeing endless provisions affecting Planned Parenthood tied into a Zika Bill, blocked the bill. Then it was quote time.

“It is one of the most cynical ploys I’ve seen on a life and death issue in the time that I’ve served in Congress,” said Dick Durbin of Illinois, the No. 2 Senate Democrat. “As the Republican leadership fails to act in Washington, there are victims appearing all over the United States and certainly in Puerto Rico.”

And the result? Stalemate.

Then comes alternative politics. Dr. John Bergman goes online and lectures to anyone willing to listen that Zika is something not be worried about. The odds are on your side that you will not be harmed. “It does not make any sense.” He asks, “What is the motivating factor?” The pharmaceuticals, he concludes. The lobbyists for the pharmas are leading this worry with a multi-billion campaign. And, ends that “there has no been no link ever . . . Zika epidemics did not cause birth defects.” Same for Ebola, he espouses. So, he is right and the hordes of other scientists are wrong? Oh, and did I forget to tell you – he is a chiropractor from Burbank, California who graduated from Cleveland Chiropractic College in Los Angeles.

Back to serious medical opinion. After numerous laboratory reviews, under a larger-than-life budget provided by the United States government, the Center for Disease Control (“CDC”) concluded,

“after careful review of existing evidence, that Zika virus is a cause of microcephaly and other severe fetal brain defects. In the report published in the New England Journal of Medicine, the CDC authors describe a rigorous weighing of evidence using established scientific criteria.” April 13, 2016 CDC press release.

But, that conclusion was soon defeated by the stalemate of the government: We spend for scientific review and deliver the news, but after receipt of the news, Congress chooses to do nothing because of tagged items in a health bill which affect politically charged issues – e.g. Planned Parenthood funding.

As of August 24, 2016, there were 29 locally acquired cases (all in Florida), and 2,487 travel-related cases. Those numbers balloon to 8,968 locally acquired cases in territories. Get it? Once the travel-acquired gets domesticated, the locally acquired can take over – fast.

Since the CDC did its job, and Congress failed to keep its end of the bargain, the problem shall only escalate. Pharmaceutical-lobbyist conspiracy theories cannot ignore the numbers reflected above. And, as the cases grow exponentially, seemingly isolated in the far south peninsular Florida, reaction by the other 49 states is mum. But, that too will end. Travelers to the humid areas of the confederate south, coupled with winter-free California, may make the problem *their* issue tomorrow as much as it is *our* issue today.

Because of one simple fact – you cannot eradicate a mosquito population, even if it is of one genus – the only attack is suppression combined with vaccination. The latter, amazingly, is moving at warp speed. The former is trudging through hip depth mud because of Congressional inaction. In the meantime, the north prays for an early winter. And, we Floridians meander along. Watch tourism ebb. See bromeliads, not Congress, be proclaimed the fault.

Read other parts of this issue to see how scapegoating bromeliads affected one of our members. The villagers are getting out of control.

Robert

In Case You Missed it

by Leonard Goldstein

We locals are hard-pressed to understand it, but Andy Siekkinen seems to love Miami in August. For the second time in two years, the Californian traveled to our steamy Green Hell by the Sea to make a presentation to the BSSF, and we're happy if he's happy.

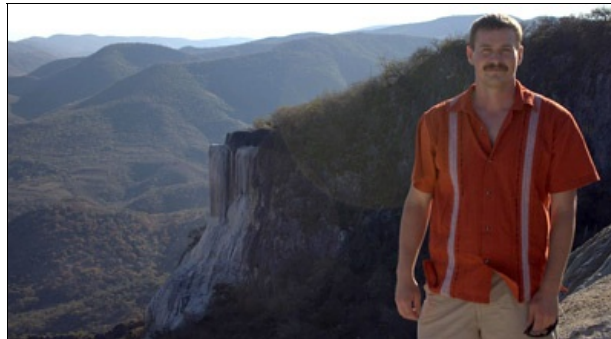
In his 2014 appearance, Andy featured hechtias from the Mexican state of Oaxaca. For his program last month, he shifted his attention far to the southeast to present "Brazil's Bromeliads, Samples of Diversity, Part 1: Pernambuco." The occasion for his visit to Brazil was his attendance—funded in part by the BSSF—at BromEvo 2015, the First World Congress on Bromeliaceae Evolution, hosted by the Federal University of Pernambuco, located in Recife. One of nearly 150 registrants, among whom were more than 25 researchers, Andy was the only participant from the U.S.A. But he was more than an attendee; he also presented the preliminary results of his genetic research into the genus *Hechtia*, a subject that will become the focus of his work toward a master's degree from Claremont Graduate University. (For a look at the abstracts of all the presentations made at BromEvo 2015, please see <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/280563662>.)

As an interesting aside, Andy noted the philosophical differences between New World Latin and Old World European researchers. The former, with living plants close at hand, emphasize field work, while the latter hone in on lab work, focusing on genetics. That has led to some tension between the groups, which Andy has dealt with by straddling the divide in his professional work.

Following BromEvo 2015, Andy was part of a group of 15 or so conference participants who conducted a two-day excursion into the Caatinga, the mostly-dry inland area of northeastern Brazil, a region that he found reminiscent of the xeric forest of Mexico. Their first stop was in an area dominated by granite outcroppings. The surrounding flatlands were

heavily disturbed, their original plant communities probably long-gone. But, of course, the steep rock formations are not tillable, so in those places there was much in the way of flora left to survey. *Tillandsia tenuifolia*, both dark purple and green forms, was abundant in a mix with orchids. The rock faces, which at first glance appeared to be charred, turned out instead to be covered with dead tillandsias, victims of goat predation. There were also orthophytums, possibly *O. disjunctum*, a water-loving species. The population demonstrated some variation in color, and many were small—2-

in. in diameter. In bloom, they produced inflorescences ranging from 6 to 20 in. in length. Andy is convinced that if more water were available to these plants, they would grow larger.



Also present with the orthophytums were melocactus, and another bromeliad, *Encholirium spectabile*. Encholiriums build soil habitat, and their dark inflorescences were impressive. Most encholirium species produce offsets, but a few have to be propagated from seed. Also in the vicinity were populations of *Aechmea leptantha*. Andy found that some of their inflorescences varied greatly, even among plants in close proximity. There were also red-leafed forms that provided a pleasing contrast to their orange inflorescences. In addition, he encountered a true specialist in the plant world—an anthurium species that lives in the tanks of bromeliads!

At some point in the initial part of the field trip, a large bromeliad appeared. It was apparently *Hohenbergia ramageana*, but looked different from the way it grows in cultivation. It featured a tall inflorescence with white-blue flowers. However, the woolly inflorescence stems were typical of the species. Also appearing were *Tillandsia gardneri*, which turned out to be very widespread and variable in Brazil. A similarly widespread and variable tillandsia, probably *T. stricta*, was also found. It does not clump readily.

The explorers next went to Pedra do Cachorro, situated further inland and at a higher elevation—about 1,000 ft. There they found *Bromelia laciniosa*, which boasts a beautiful inflorescence, and *Tillandsia loliacea*, a small plant—2 in. tall, including inflorescence. As earlier, the bromeliads were mixed with cacti, among which was a species whose spines can pierce denim and inflict an irritant on its unfortunate victims. A more pleasant cactus was *Tacinga inamoena*, resembling a miniature opuntia and featuring nice orange flowers. As with earlier-observed plant species, the encholiriums present in Pedra do Cachorro were characterized by great variation in the population.

Hohenbergia catingae was another denizen of the area. Andy reported that while it has 3-4 described subspecies, he believes that they're distinct species. They feature open rosettes and pups which appear in the leaf axils. *Aechmea lingulatoidea* was found higher on the granitic outcrops, and *Hohenbergia ramageana* showed up again, about 50 miles from the first location. As before, the surrounding plains were disturbed.

Further up into Pedra do Cachorro, *tillandsias* began to appear. *T. streptocarpa*, with its soft, flexible leaves, was found growing on the rock, but not strongly affixed to it, and Andy saw more *T. tenuifolia*. Also making another appearance was *Orthophytum disjunctum*, though better-looking than its counterparts at lower elevation. The dark variant of this species is reminiscent of *T. surinamensis* or

'Amethyst.' Melocactus was also found, along with some tough begonias.

A bromeliad which Andy believed to be *Tillandsia piauiensis* appeared, roughly 400 miles from Piauí state, for which it was named. It is a heavier species than *T. gardneri* and it contributes a dense silvery presence to the granite. Individual plants stay small until they can root in the debris that collects in depressions in the rock.

The explorers finally reached a point where ropes were needed to ascend the steep rock. Once on top of the formation, they found a 6-in. diameter vriesea, possibly *V. limae*, along with a small philodendron species, a woolly-leaved begonia, and an amaryllis that grew in very little soil. The excursion into Pedra do Cachorro was not for the faint of heart. It involved a strenuous climb on a hot day, so the party took 3-4 hours to hike up, stopping frequently for breaks.

Andy collected a lot of seeds during the field trip, allowing him to capture much of the variation he observed. His photography allowed him to capture the images of those same variations. For that he relied on a Canon camera, his favorite point-and-shoot brand.

We look forward to seeing Part II of Andy's program surveying the bromeliads of Brazil. It covers his excursion into Bahia, the large state lying to the southwest of Pernambuco and the home to many *hohenbergias*, *neoregelias*, and *orthophytums*

How to Remedy the Mosquito in BSI Issue

by Alan Herndon

reprinted from BSI Journal --J. Bromeliad Soc. 65(4). 2016

1) Methoprene. This is an insect juvenile hormone analog. It interferes with development of insect larvae so they die before they reach the adult stage. It does the same to immature crustaceans (shrimp, crab, lobster) but has no effect on vertebrate animals including people and pets. Buy Altosid (a trade name) methoprene mosquito granules and sprinkle them by hand into the water in your bromeliad axils. Their effect is supposed to last up to

30 days. You can order them online under the name



DoYourOwnBestControl.com

Altosid methoprene mosquito granules. Read the directions.

2) *Bacillus thuringiensis serovar israelensis.* This is a bacterium that kills larvae of aquatic flies (mosquitoes, black flies, and chironomids). This strain (*israelensis*) is specialized to aquatic fly larvae. Other strains are specialized to caterpillars of butterflies and moths and beetles. It is harmless to vertebrate animals



including people and pets). You can buy this product as Bayer Advanced Garden Mosquito Preventer as granules in 1lb plastic containers at garden stores. Directions for larger containers: “sprinkle one teaspoon per 25 square feet” – so obviously a tiny amount per bromeliad leaf axil if you intend to apply by hand.



Bayer may no longer make the product. Summit does and can be found at Galloway and other nurseries.

3) Sweeper nozzle on a garden hose. Blasts from a hose thus fitted should wash out debris (including the food of mosquito larvae) from bromeliad axils

and perhaps some mosquito larvae and pupae, too. Sweeper nozzles can be bought at garden stores

4) Hydrogen peroxide. Dave Johnston, our speaker on 22 June, recounted how he buys small (8 oz) bottles of hydrogen peroxide at CVS, dilutes with water in a 4-gal spray tank, and sprays the tank content on his bromeliads. The concentration should not be above 3% because higher concentrations (e.g., 10%) have been used to kill weeds. This is perhaps the easiest method if you have thousands of bromeliads. Please try these methods and learn which one works best for you. The test is: How many black and white mosquitoes (*Aedes albopictus* or *Aedes aegypti*) bite you at (say) 6 pm a biting hour in the shade near your plants in the summertime.

One Member Forced to Move Over 1000 Bromeliads

by Robert Meyer

Imagine a bromeliad grower’s worst nightmare – e.g. snow in Miami. Then imagine something even worse. Longtime member Julio Odey Lopez recently experienced the latter – and all because of a misperception of Zika.

Julio is the first BSSF casualty to Zika overreaction. More could follow

Julio resides at Misty Points Villas. Been there since 1997 when the units were first developed and sold. Loves it there. Been the president of the homeowners’ association (“HOA”) five years. Recently, Julio left the HOA board only because of a business venture on Miami Beach usurped too much of his spare time.



Last August, Julio sold his Miami Beach business and took the cash to buy some properties in Okeechobee. Fixed a few that needed fixing, and has become a landlord. Has four units with six rentals. Life was seemingly easier. Julio was able to

see more of the kids. And, Misty Points Villas, over the next several years would receive more benefits as Julio’s increased leisure time could focus upon his planted and cared for collection of more than than 1,000 bromeliads on the association’s five (5) acres. “Neighbors appreciated it. I got a lot of nice compliments.”

Then the worst came. First, the HOA president asked Julio’s wife why they had not removed the bromeliads. They had received mail about this, they were told. “The condo hasn’t contacted you about removing your bromeliads?” they asked Julio and his wife were clueless.

Julio met the HOA president, and was told to remove the plants immediately. “You need to give me ten days to remove them.” Julio responded “I am about to go on vacation for 10 days in a week.” Urgency was implored upon Julio by the HOA. The HOA represented that someone had called 311 and the

condo was going to be fined if bromeliads stayed there any longer. No letter ever shown. No letter produced. The editor reviewed the county records, no fine exists.

“The HOA represented that someone had called 311 and the condo was going to be fined if bromeliads stayed there any longer.”

It appears someone made a call to 311. Asserted issues of the bromeliads creating Zika problems, regardless of the fact that the condo borders a lake where still waters occur every rainfall, which cause severe health or Zika-related concerns. This escalated to the demand for removal. Or, such was communicated to Julio.

The landscapers told Julio that if the bromeliads were not removed the county would be fining the HOA \$5,000.00 per day. So, Julio packed the plants in large vehicles and sent them off to his homes in Okeechobee where the homes do not have HOA's. And as title owner, he has autonomy to plant, landscape and handle his yard without threat – or no such threat exists as of now. And, while engaging in this arduous activity of removing and replanting, Julio observed that the landscapers had removed many of the plants already, for whose benefit he did not know. Requests for return of the plants fall upon deaf ears.

Now, Julio can see his children much more often. No more dreary drives to and from Hialeah Gardens to Miami Beach. But, his other children, the 1,000 or more bromeliads which once adorned Misty Points Villas can only be seen after a two-hour drive to Okeechobee.

Upcoming Events

**September 9-11
Sarasota Bromeliad Society Show and Sale**

1131 Boulevard of the Arts
Sarasota, FL 34236
10:00-5:00

<http://sarasotabromeliadsociety.org/pages/shows.php>



**September 10-11, 2016
Mounts Botanical Garden
Orchid Sale and Shady Affair**

559 N. Military Trail
West Palm Beach, FL
More Info: 561-233-1757
<https://www.mounts.org/>



**November 11-13
FTBG Ramble**

10901 Old Cutler Road
Coral Gables, FL 33156
<http://www.fairchildgarden.org/events-community-outreach/fall-garden-festival>



November 19-20, 2016

Key West Garden Club Show
West Martello Tower by Higgs Beach
www.keywestgardenclub.com/index.html

December 3-4, 2016

Orchid Festival
Bonnet House
900 N. Birch Rd
Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33304
<http://www.bonnethouse.org/news/orchid-festival/>



MURDER IN CORBIN A

© by Robert Meyer

PREVIOUS CHAPTERS MAY BE SEEN IN
<http://www.bssf-miami.org/>

143.

“Ladies and gentlemen” blurted loudly over the speaker system “my name is Isaac Rodrigo Pelaez. I am the agent for the state of Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. We are here to tell you that the recent outbreak of the Zika virus has been ruled by our agency to be of grave concern. No plant purchased today can leave this venue without full inspection by the Department. If there is any reason that any of our 20 officers find that the plant may be harboring Zika-like larvae, we will confiscate the plant and not release it to the buyer until the quarantine period expires. Please take this into consideration when buying your plants.”

The large auditorium, full of hundred or more people, suddenly was silent. Many baskets, filled to the brim with plants, suddenly were dropped to the floor and deserted. The announcement literally separated the die-hard bromeliad buyer from the casual customer. The casuals left within minutes of the announcement, most in a huff as they had to pay \$5 for parking on an excursion with no reward.

The word Zika was a terror to anyone with a bromeliad love. Turbines within the mind churned to conceive of reasons why the villagers' hatred to the defenseless plant had to end. As the Zika problem "over there" became a problem "near here" and eventually was a problem in Miami, the concern evolved into a fear and ultimately into a fright which kindled a hysteria that sought any resolution, including the eradication of bromeliads from the Miami landscapes.

Any scientist could tell you that Zika was a problem which could not be totally stayed. Scientists new that the best they could do was suppression until the laboratories finalized the true resolution: inoculation. In the meantime, scapegoating bromeliads was a favorite topic of discussion by the wary and uneducated. Politicians, with the pocketbooks which could parlay and pay for the suppression as well as the development of the vaccination, inexcusably defeated funding by earmarking pet projects in any bill which provided the money. Local politicians, without pocketbooks or resources of any kind, had to open their mouths to have their opinions heard, and proclaimed bromeliads as a culprit; and, upon their evacuation from the landscaped, the billions of mosquitoes would somehow be without refuge and die. And, unfortunately for all, people believed this mularky without one second's repose to understand that the issue of suppression would involve spraying the

a i r s ,
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g o o d , i f n o t
b e t t e r , f a c i l i t i e s
f o r t h e e g g s .

But governments are what they are. And, from the same came marching orders. And, those marching

orders included storm trooping the largest Florida symposium for bromeliads. Then came the calls.

144.

Cell phone ringing is a background sound which becomes more acceptable each year. Increasingly common in the white noise, the quixotic computer generated noise alerts most, but does not cause alarm.

When the ringing touches most every phone in the area, the overwhelmingly pronounced effect becomes puzzling. The discussions between those eye-to-eye succumbs to the conversations with the unseen. And, the vulume of speech greatens on the cellular that to the pedestrian in conversation. "Hell" on vendor said while keeping an alert gaze on the Department's crew encroaching on the scene with their uniforms , clip boards and assorted clear plastic bags.

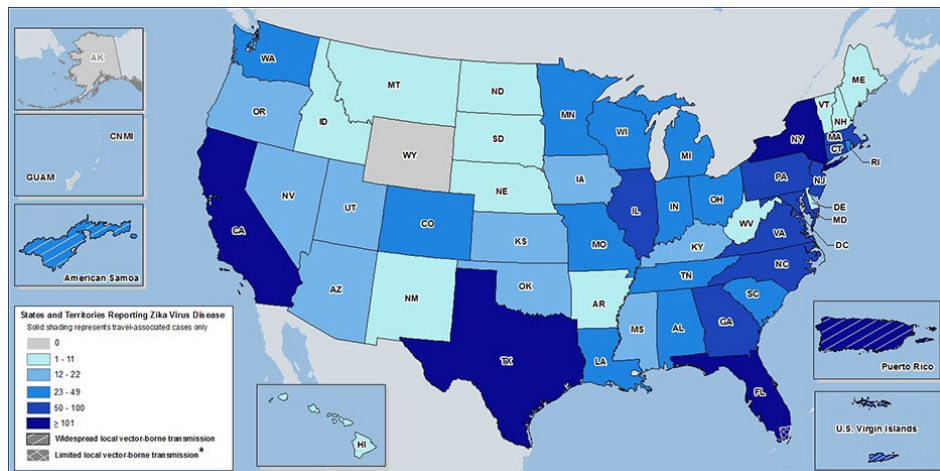
"What?" the vendor continues and then ends with silence while still watching the Department's people, but with apparent less intense stare.

"What?" says the vendor next to him, and then that single word is repeated again by another and another, in a domino-like effect, each seeming as surprised as the previous. And, soon the stares by the vendors of the Department's people dissipated and the vendor's faces looked puzzled, foreheads

w r i n k l e d ,
e y e s
s t r a i n e d , a n d
n o n e s m i l i n g .

"Who is it that spoke to you?" one of the vendors a s k e d .
A g a i n , t h i s
c o m m e n t
w a s f o l l o w e d
b y a n o t h e r
r e p e a t i n g t h e

same phrase or something nearly identical. "What did they say?" "What is the cause?" Why is this happening?" "What does the governor have to do with this?" What is the governor doing?" "What is the government saying?"



But governments are what they are. And, from the same came marching orders. And, those marching

Some knew it was going to happen. Others knew it was going to happen but refused to admit to it. Others were plain caught by surprise. But, no matter who you were, Zika was something which had affected the bromeliad grower' like. And, whatever was happening was perhaps inevitable.

“Hey Boss, this show is going to the dogs. Government authority has ended it. We are waiting here for a sting, and look who is handling the sting – not us. Looks like the Department has this one. What should we do?”

“Captain?” the diminutive officer asked his superior.”Call the troops or stay on this?”

“Abort.” the Captain responded immediately. And no other words were recited.

“Susan” Boss asked on his radio “abort.” “That goes for of you.” Boss ordered. And, then he and a few other Tommy Bahama -clad men walked out the door. But, Susan, Joshua, and Emily did not follow.

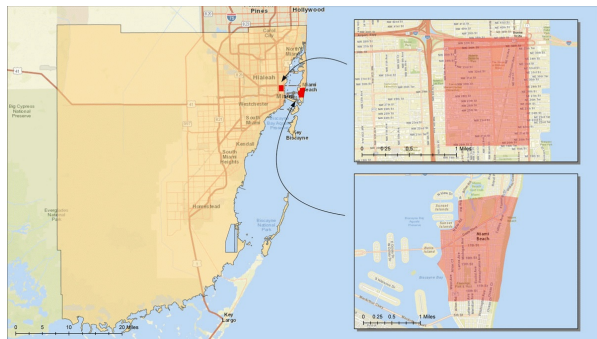
“Hey where is Susan?” Martinez asked.

“I have no idea. But, go find her.” Boss ordered. Aborting the job was one embarrassing act, losing an officer in a very expensive embarrassment was even more catastrophic for reputation. The incident in the Miami Beach gay bar was still a topic of conversation among peers. Boss did not want this disaster to be equally problematic.

“Everyone. Go find Susan.” Boss ordered

ZIKA INFORMATION – FACTOIDS: SOURCE CDC

<https://www.cdc.gov/zika/intheus/florida-update.html>



Couples thinking about getting pregnant

Women with Zika should wait at least 8 weeks after symptoms began before trying to get pregnant, and men with Zika should wait at least 6 months after symptoms began.

Women and men who live in or frequently travel to these areas should talk to their healthcare provider.

Women and men who traveled to these areas should wait at least 8 weeks before trying to get pregnant.

If you feel sick and think you may have Zika: Talk to your doctor if you develop a fever with a rash, joint pain, or red eyes. Tell him or her about your travel.

Take acetaminophen (paracetamol) to relieve fever and pain. Do not take aspirin, products containing aspirin, or other nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, such as ibuprofen, until dengue can be ruled out

Get lots of rest and drink plenty of liquids.
Prevent Mosquito Bites

Everyone living in or traveling to areas with Zika should take steps to prevent mosquito bites:

Cover exposed skin by wearing long-sleeved shirts and long pants.

Use EPA-registered insect repellents that contain one of the following active ingredients: DEET, picaridin, IR3535, or oil of lemon eucalyptus or para-menthane-diol. Always use as directed.

Pregnant and breastfeeding women can use all EPA-registered insect repellents according to the product label.

Use permethrin-treated clothing and gear (boots, pants, socks, tents). You can buy pre-treated items or treat them yourself.