



**DALLAS COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
EPIDEMIOLOGY**

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To: **Dallas County Medical Providers and Laboratory Staff**

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HEALTH ADVISORY: Chikungunya

Dallas County Health and Human Services (DCHHS) has confirmed Dallas County's first travel-associated human case of chikungunya for 2014. The patient recently returned to Dallas County from a trip to the Caribbean where the chikungunya virus has been causing large outbreaks of human disease since late 2013. To date, 7 travel-associated chikungunya cases have been reported in Texas. Although no local spread has yet been reported in Texas, imported cases make local spread possible because the mosquitoes that can transmit the virus are found locally.

Clinicians should maintain a high index of suspicion for chikungunya virus in patients with acute onset of fever and polyarthralgia who have recently traveled to the Caribbean. The incubation period is typically 3–7 days (range, 2–12 days). In addition to severe joint pains, other symptoms may include headache, myalgia, arthritis, or rash. Persons at risk for more severe disease include neonates (aged <1 month) exposed intrapartum, older adults (e.g., ≥65 years), and persons with underlying medical conditions (e.g., hypertension, diabetes, or cardiovascular disease).

Testing for chikungunya is currently available through one commercial laboratory, Focus Diagnostics. *Serum can be tested by RT-PCR to detect viremia within the first 8 days of illness, and/or by serology to detect IgM and IgG after the first 4 days after illness onset.* Test results can be confirmed through public health laboratories. Because of similar geographic distribution and symptoms, persons with suspected chikungunya infections should also be evaluated for possible dengue infection.

Please report suspected cases of chikungunya to our health department by fax (214) 819-1933, or phone (214) 819-2004.

Resources for further information about chikungunya include:

- CDC Health Advisory to Clinicians: Recognizing, Managing and Reporting Chikungunya Virus Infections (12/13/13): <http://emergency.cdc.gov/han/han00358.asp>
- CDC Travelers Health Notice: Chikungunya in the Caribbean (7/1/14): <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices/watch/chikungunya-saint-martin>
- CDC Information for Healthcare Providers (July 2014): http://www.cdc.gov/chikungunya/pdfs/CHIKV_Clinicians.pdf