Zika Virus Research and Engagement at Emory
Updated April 29, 2016

Conferences, Presentations

March 11: Congressional conference call with Mark Mulligan on Zika virus research, arranged by Emory’s Office of Government and Community Affairs.

March 3: Isabella Danel, deputy director of the Pan American Health Organization Regional Office of the World Health Organization for the Americas, spoke at Emory on “Responding to Zika.” Her talk was part of the Center for the Study of Human Health’s 2015-16 speaker series.
http://news.emory.edu/stories/2016/02/er_take_note_zika_virus_talk/campus.html

March 24: Public Health Grand Rounds with Uriel Kitron, professor of environmental health
http://mediasite.sph.emory.edu/Mediasite/Play/ee0657c2b9c047f8941c0db251a07bf31d

May 1-3, Emory Conference Center Hotel
Zika Virus Scientific Conference
“Bridging the Sciences: Zika Virus”
An international conference at the Emory Conference Center Hotel, led by Raymond Schinazi and colleagues from the Emory Vaccine Center and the Global Virus Network, includes scientists from U.S., European and Brazilian academic institutions, global health organizations, government agencies and the biotech industry

May 1: ARVO: Ophthalmologic Complications
Steven Yeh from Emory Eye Center and Ian Crozier, Ebola survivor and a former Emory patient, are speaking at the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology (ARVO) meeting in Seattle along with Paul Farmer from Partners in Health and other experts. The panel is titled “The global ophthalmic threat of Ebola, Zika and other viruses.”

May 11: The Georgia Chamber of Commerce will host a webinar with Mark Mulligan to discuss the clinical and policy aspects of the Zika virus. The webinar, arranged by the Office of Government and Community Affairs, is expected to have about 150 attendees and will include the Chamber’s HR business leaders and tourism and travel associated members. Click the following link to view the webinar on May 11:
June 15: Emory Alumni Association Webinar with Dabney Evans: Zika virus in Brazil

Dabney P. Evans, 98PH, assistant professor in the Hubert Department of Global Health will discuss the ways in which the disease places women and government officials at a crossroads between reproductive and disability rights.


Environmental Sciences Research in Brazil

Uriel Kitron and Gonzalo Vazquez-Prokopec from Emory’s Department of Environmental Sciences, are disease ecologists working with experts in Brazil to support that country’s research strategies and control efforts for the outbreak. The two researchers have had ongoing projects studying dengue virus, which is spread by the same species of mosquito that transmits the Zika virus, and are now translating their dengue projects to focus on Zika.

http://news.emory.edu/stories/2016/01/esc_zika_virus/campus.html
http://www.emory.edu/EMORY_MAGAZINE/issues/2016/spring/of_note/Zika.html
http://news.emory.edu/stories/2016/03/esc_super_spreaders/campus.html

Drug and Vaccine Research

NIAID-Sponsored Study on Returning Travelers and Zika Virus

The National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) is sponsoring a study of Zika virus natural history in infected returned travelers, in preparation for upcoming vaccine clinical trials. The contract is led Mark Mulligan and Alison Beck (Hope Clinic of the Emory Vaccine Center), through the NIAID-supported Vaccine and Treatment Evaluation Units (VTEU).

Fundamental Immunology, Virology, and Vaccine Research

The Emory Vaccine Center and Yerkes National Primate Research Center have assembled a team of scientists, including Mehul Suthar, Jens Wrammert, Anita McElroy, Mark Mulligan, Paul Johnson, Bali Pulendran, and Rafi Ahmed, who are studying the pathogenesis of Zika virus.

Suthar and others are experts on flaviruses, which include West Nile, dengue, and Zika, and they are studying immune responses to Zika based on prior and ongoing research with these viruses. The studies, which include transmission of the virus from other to child during pregnancy, will help them develop an effective vaccine and therapeutic against Zika virus.

Jens Wrammert, PhD and colleagues, including collaborators from Thailand, recently published a paper in the Journal of Virology on antibody responses during secondary infection by dengue virus. The findings could have implications for the effort to develop a vaccine against dengue and understanding better how to fight Zika virus, since Zika is
very similar to dengue. USA co-authors include graduate student Alice Cho, Emory Vaccine Center director Rafi Ahmed and Patrick Wilson from the University of Chicago.

**Zika Virus Drug Development at DRIVE and EIDD**

Drug Innovation Ventures at Emory (DRIVE) and Emory Institute for Drug Development (EIDD) are working to identify and develop antiviral drugs to treat Zika virus infection, using their broad experience in drug development for other antivirals. They are developing a Zika assay that would allow them to rapidly screen their nucleoside/nucleotide library of compounds against Zika virus. The Georgia Research Alliance is providing early support for the project.


**Zika Virus and Microcephaly Research**

Emory School of Medicine scientist Peng Jin, PhD, and his colleagues are part of a research team including scientists from Johns Hopkins and Florida State University that showed Zika virus can infect neural progenitor cells critical for brain development. The research suggests a potential explanation for the cases of microcephaly seen in Latin America.

http://news.emory.edu/stories/2016/03/jin_zika_developing_brain/campus.html

**Emory Woodruff Health Sciences Media Engagement**

The researchers mentioned above, along with other infectious disease experts, have been interviewed by local and national media about all aspects of Zika. In addition to those above, these include Phyllis Kozarsky, director of Emory TravelWell; John Horton, Ob/Gyn; Carlos Del Rio, chair of the Hubert Department of Global Health; Saad Omer, global public health expert; Andi Shane, pediatric infectious diseases; Anne Winkler, and blood and transfusion medicine expert.