Can you Guess How Many Countries Have Zika?

By Julianna LeMieux — September 2, 2016

We all know you're adults and hate guessing games so I'll get right to the answer: 58.

Fifty eight countries/territories currently have active Zika transmission. That has to alarm you as much as it does me.

And those do not include those countries where someone brought it back home after becoming infected on a trip (such as France.) These 58 are the countries where a person in the country contracted Zika while in that country.

The breakdown is as follows:

- 1 country in Africa (Cape Verde)
- 8 in the Pacific Islands
- 48 in North, Central and South America
That's worrisome. Even more concerning than the number of countries, however, is a timeline of how quickly the virus has spread throughout the world. Below is the virus's spread in the last six months.

By February 2016, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) reported active transmission of Zika virus in 30 countries (mostly in the Americas. In the same month, the World Health Organization (WHO) declares a public health emergency of international concern.

**February (+6 countries)**
- Aruba, Bonaire, Trinidad and Tobago, Marshall Islands, St. Maarten, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

**March (+3 countries)**
- New Caledonia, Cuba, Dominica

**April (+5 countries)**
- Kosrae, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, St. Lucia, Belize

*Map courtesy of www.cnn.com [1]*
May (+5 countries)
- Papua New Guinea, Saint Barthelemy, Peru, Grenada, Argentina

June (+1 country)
- Anguilla

July (+2 countries)
- Saint Eustatius, Saba

August (+7 countries)
- Antigua, Barbuda, Turks and Cacos, Cayman Islands, The Bahamas, the United States, Singapore

The latest, and perhaps one of the most concerning, is the recent report on August 25th of the first case of Zika infection in Hong Kong, one of the most densely populated areas of the world. Although the Aedes aegypti is not found, Aedes albopictus is found in Hong Kong and is thought to spread Zika virus as well.

With anywhere from one to seven countries being added to the list every month, there seems to be no stopping this virus from advancing in what can only be described as a worldwide health crisis.

Thinking about just the cases in the United States is astonishing. As of right now, in the United States, the number of locally acquired cases is 35 (all located in Florida).

The total number of travel-associated cases is 2,687, spread throughout 48 states. The distribution is shown on the map below. (The two states that have not received a travel associated case yet are Alaska and Wyoming.)

Astonishingly, here in New York, where local transmission has not occurred and is unlikely due to the lack of Aedes aegypti mosquitoes, the latest report from the Department of Health states that
there are a total of 531 cases of Zika in the state, 489 of which have been verified as travel associated with the remainder pending verification. Out of those 531, 56 are pregnant mothers. These numbers alone show that Zika is doing a very good job wreaking havoc, even in areas that are very unlikely to have local transmission.

References: