Zika Virus Infection in the Central Nervous System and Female Genital Tract

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DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.3201/eid2212.161280

To the Editor: On April 9, 2016, a 32-year-old woman from Italy traveled to Santo Domingo in the Dominican Republic. She worked as a volunteer nurse in the outpatient clinic of a primary school of a nongovernmental organization based in Italy. She returned to Italy on April 17. She did not have sexual intercourse during her stay abroad.

On April 26, she was referred to the travel clinic of the National Institute for Infectious Diseases Lazzaro Spallanzani in Rome for a febrile syndrome with rash, generalized headache, and weakness, which started on April 21. Approximately 24 hours later, she was admitted to the institute’s medical facility for a suspected neurologic involvement. At admission, she had abnormal gait, strong asthenia, and a disseminated pruritic rash on her face, abdomen, chest, and arms, but she did not have a fever.

During physical examination, the patient was alert and fully oriented. Temperature was 36.9°C, pulse rate 90 beats/min, blood pressure 100/60 mm Hg, and respiratory rate 20 breaths/min. She had a diffuse erythematous macular rash and bilateral nonpurulent conjunctival hyperemia without meningeal signs. Findings of a neurologic examination of the upper limbs were within reference ranges. Muscular strength was reduced in both legs (left > right), whereas tendon reflexes and all sensory modalities were within reference ranges. Results of a contrast-enhanced magnetic resonance imaging of the brain and spinal cord (on day 7), nerve conduction studies...