To the Editor: News coverage of emerging infectious diseases tends to be episodic and ephemeral rather than thematic, comprehensive, and consistent over time, in part because of newsroom constraints (1–3). Public health authority announcements may help drive peaks in coverage and warrant attention, in particular given the importance of trust and credibility for information acceptance (4,5). Moreover, online search behavior and social media interaction tend to respond to news coverage, especially for novel health issues (6,7).

The nature of Zika virus transmission as a novel phenomenon not completely understood by researchers could encourage anxiety and fear among the public (8,9). Patterns of social interaction and search behavior regarding Zika virus can point to opportunities and constraints for education efforts.

To assess relationships between news coverage, social media mentions, and online search behavior regarding Zika virus, we studied data available for January 1–February 29, 2016. Although news outlets occasionally covered Zika virus before 2016, our selected period included prominent announcements. For example, on January 28, the World Health Organization declared that Zika virus was “spreading explosively” (10), and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention issued a travel alert. On February 3, authorities reported the first case that appeared in the United States.

Across 3 data sources, we searched for mentions of “Zika” or “El Zika.” We used Google Trends (Google Inc., Mountain View, CA, USA) to assess the number of total searches that originated in the United States, Guatemala, or Brazil for these terms, relative to total Google searches for any topic for the same period. We used a scale of 0–100 (as an indicator of relative volume), with 50 representing half the volume as 100 but not a specific absolute number. Zika virus has been detected in >25 countries since 2015; the countries selected were places where transmission has been relatively widespread or where Zika virus had not yet been but was anticipated to be. We used a monitoring tool, Crimson Hexagon (http://www.crimsonhexagon.com/), to capture the total number of daily Twitter posts (tweets) and focused on tweets geotagged as originating from the United States.

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Zika Virus–Related News Coverage and Online Behavior, United States, Guatemala, and Brazil

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Figure. Comparison of number of tweets by individual persons, Google searches by individual persons, and Associated Press news stories about Zika virus in the United States, Guatemala, and Brazil, January 1–February 29, 2016.
Detection and Genomic Characterization of Senecavirus A, Ohio, USA, 2015

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To the Editor: Senecavirus A (SVA), formerly Seneca Valley virus, is a single-stranded positive-sense, non-enveloped RNA virus (J). The RNA genome of SVA is 7.2 kb long and is translated into a polyprotein in a host