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A case report of a confirmed Zika virus imported infection in Barcelona

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Introduction: Zika virus is a flavivirus mainly transmitted by Aedes mosquitoes. Zika infection, when symptomatic presents rash, low-grade fever, arthralgia, conjunctivitis, headache or, rarely, gastrointestinal symptoms. World Health Organization has declared Zika virus and its associated complications a Public Health Emergency of International Concern because its explosive spread in The Americas and the Caribbean in parallel with the unusual increase of microcephaly, fetal losses and Guillain-Barré syndrome among the affected. By 05/02/16 nine probable imported cases of Zika were declared in Spain.

Case Report: A 57 year-old male patient, native of Colombia, without remarkable past medical history, attended Primary Care with a 3-day history of exanthema and low-grade fever. The patient had arrived from Colombia 4 days before consulting, after a 21 days trip visiting family in Bogota and Cucuta. The very pruritic rash began in the face and spread over limbs and thorax, associated to pain in small and large joints (predominantly distal), low-grade fever and mild diarrhea.

On physical examination maculopapular rash was flagrant on arms, slight on thorax and legs, without other pathological findings. Based on high suspicion of Zika, the patient was referred immediately to the Tropical Diseases Department in Hospital Clinic. Diagnosis was confirmed by flavivirus RT-PCR positive for Zika in urine. RT-PCR was negative for Chikungunya and Dengue. Serology was positive for Dengue, probably due to cross-reactivity. No other significant laboratory test abnormalities were detected. The patient became asymptomatic after 6 days and is currently under being follow-up.

Discussion: Well trained and updated family medicine physicians among promoting communication paths and action protocols between Primary Care and other specialities is vital to early detection of emerging diseases. This case report is particularly relevant because of the acute state of the Zika infection, which, in a more favourable entomological environment, might lead to indigenous cases.