

Cumberland Advisors Market Commentary – Zika Vaccine

What seems like ages ago, we wrote about Zika. Multiple commentaries became a pamphlet which was and is available free. Here's the link: <https://www.cumber.com/zika/>.



In that pamphlet is a chapter about how a political fight held up Zika vaccine research for a year. The costs in human and monetary terms are estimated in the pamphlet. Most important for me is the full condemnation of Democrats and Republicans who failed their constituents by not uniting in national purpose.

There's some news on that front. A Zika vaccine has completed a Phase 1, 52-week human trial. It was well tolerated, required two doses, and will require boosters to maintain immunity. See "Safety and immunogenicity of a Zika purified inactivated virus vaccine given via standard, accelerated, or shortened schedules: a single-centre, double-blind, sequential-group, randomised, placebo-controlled, phase 1 trial," *The Lancet*, [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/laninf/article/PIIS1473-3099\(20\)30085-2/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/laninf/article/PIIS1473-3099(20)30085-2/fulltext).

This article in *The Lancet* further describes the vaccine candidate and its strengths and limitations. It also summarizes the outcomes of the Zika epidemic: "Vaccine development during global epidemics: the Zika experience," [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/laninf/article/PIIS1473-3099\(20\)30360-1/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/laninf/article/PIIS1473-3099(20)30360-1/fulltext)

Have we learned anything since the Zika outbreak? Is our national response to COVID-19 improved by those lessons or were the lessons ignored?

The debate over preparedness now rages in our national politics and our media, both public and social. It will continue, and it will intensify. Here in Florida, with 29 electoral college votes at stake, the debate is already intense.

And that's before hurricane season starts with the Gulf of Mexico at record heat, before the red tide arrives with its carriages of respiratory distress, before the scandalous Florida Department of Health data and reporting revelations are corrected, before completely universal testing and before any COVID-19 surges occur in a state reopening that packs a bar on the Sarasota main drag with folks partying, unmasked, shoulder to shoulder.

More will be revealed. Meanwhile, as the mosquito season arrives, at least there will be a Zika vaccine on the horizon, and the immunity it will confer when it is ready, though it may be short-lived, might well last long enough to prevent additional fetal infections and their devastating results.

As for COVID19, opening up too fast and too loose with minimal restrictions is risky business. The R_t ^[1] is now rising in Florida; this ain't over.

David R. Kotok

Chairman of the Board & Chief Investment Officer

[Email](#) | [Bio](#)

[1] R_t is a key measure of how fast a virus is growing. It's the average number of people who become infected by an infectious person. If R_t is above 1.0, the virus will spread quickly. When R_t is below 1.0, the virus will stop spreading. (SOURCE: <https://rt.live/>)

Links to other websites or electronic media controlled or offered by Third-Parties (non-affiliates of Cumberland Advisors) are provided only as a reference and courtesy to our users. Cumberland Advisors has no control over such websites, does not recommend or endorse any opinions, ideas, products, information, or content of such sites, and makes no warranties as to the accuracy, completeness, reliability or suitability of their content. Cumberland Advisors hereby disclaims liability for any information, materials, products or services posted or offered at any of the Third-Party websites. The Third-Party may have a privacy and/or security policy different from that of Cumberland Advisors. Therefore, please refer to the specific privacy and security policies of the Third-Party when accessing their websites.

[Sign up for our FREE Cumberland Market Commentaries](#)

Cumberland Advisors Market Commentaries offer insights and analysis on upcoming, important economic issues that potentially impact global financial markets. Our team shares their thinking on global economic developments, market news and other factors that often influence investment opportunities and strategies.