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Abortion pill requests spike in Zika outbreak countries

By MIKE STOBBE
AP Medical Writer

NEW YORK (AP) - A new study finds that requests for abortion pills spiked dramatically this year in Brazil, Ecuador and some other Latin American countries that have had outbreaks of Zika virus, which has been shown to cause severe birth defects.

The study, published Wednesday in the New England Journal of Medicine, does not address how many abortions actually occurred in those countries. But it gives an indication that women may be choosing to end pregnancies rather than risk birth defects stemming from Zika, even when abortion is banned.

Access to abortion has been shrinking in Texas and Florida, two U.S. states considered among the most likely to experience a Zika outbreak this summer as the tropical mosquitoes that can spread Zika flourish.

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