

ZIKA VIRUS DISEASE



What is Zika Virus disease (Zika)?

Zika is a disease caused by Zika virus that is spread to people primarily through the bite of an infected Aedes species mosquito. Zika can also be spread through sexual contact or blood contact.

Is this a new virus?

No. Outbreaks of Zika previously have been reported in tropical Africa, Southeast Asia, and the Pacific Islands. Zika virus likely will continue to spread to new areas.

What are the symptoms of Zika?

About one in five people infected with Zika will get sick. For people who get sick, the illness is usually mild with symptoms lasting for several days to a week. For this reason, many people might not realize they have been infected. The most common symptoms of Zika virus disease are fever, rash, joint pain, or conjunctivitis (red eyes). Symptoms typically begin 2 to 12 days after being bitten by an infected mosquito.

How is Zika transmitted?

Zika is primarily transmitted through the bite of infected Aedes mosquitoes. It can also be transmitted from a pregnant mother to her baby during pregnancy or around the time of birth. It is possible for Zika to spread from one person to another through sexual contact or blood transfusion. Zika is not spread through casual contact.

Who is at risk of being infected?

Anyone who is living in or traveling to an area where Zika virus is found who has not already been infected with Zika virus is at risk for infection, including pregnant women. Anyone who has had sex with someone who lives in or traveled to an area with Zika virus transmission without using condoms or other barrier methods to prevent infection is also at risk.

What countries have Zika?

Specific areas where Zika virus transmission is ongoing are often difficult to determine and are likely to change over time. The most current information is available at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website (<http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/page/zika-travel-information>).

Have there been cases of Zika virus infection in the United States?

There have been cases in travelers who have returned from areas where Zika virus is common. Local transmission of Zika virus has been documented in South Florida. The United States mainland does have Aedes species mosquitoes that can become infected and spread Zika virus. Returning travelers infected with Zika virus may result in local spread of the virus in other areas of the United States.

What can people do to prevent becoming infected with Zika?

There is no vaccine to prevent Zika. The best way to prevent diseases spread by mosquitoes is to avoid being bitten. Protect yourself and your family from mosquito bites. Here's how:

- Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants.
- Stay in places with air conditioning or that use window and door screens to keep mosquitoes outside.
- Use Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-registered insect repellents following the product label instructions.

How is Zika diagnosed?

- See your healthcare provider if you develop symptoms (fever, rash, joint pain, red eyes). If you have recently traveled, tell your healthcare provider.
- Your healthcare provider may order blood tests to look for Zika or other similar viral diseases like dengue or chikungunya.

What is the treatment for Zika?

There is no vaccine or specific medicine to treat Zika virus infections.

Treat the symptoms:

- Get plenty of rest.
- Drink fluids to prevent dehydration.
- Take medicines such as acetaminophen to reduce fever and pain.
- Do not take aspirin or other non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs.
- If you are taking medicine for another medical condition, talk to your healthcare provider before taking additional medication.

Does Zika virus infection in pregnant women cause birth defects?

Zika is not dangerous for most people. However, Zika *causes birth defects*. One birth defect linked to Zika is a smaller than normal head. This condition is called "microcephaly." Health experts are still learning about the link between Zika and microcephaly. The latest guidance to avoid this risk is below.

Guidance for Pregnant Women and Their Male Sex Partners

Pregnant women who have not traveled to a Zika-affected area	Do not travel to a Zika-affected area during your pregnancy.
Pregnant women who have traveled to a Zika-affected area	Call your health care provider to discuss Zika testing.
Pregnant women with a male sex partner who has traveled to a Zika-affected area	Plan together to abstain from sexual activity or use condoms correctly every time you have vaginal, anal and/or oral sex for the duration of the pregnancy. If you're pregnant and had condomless vaginal, anal or oral sex with a man who spent time in a Zika-affected area, contact your health care provider to discuss Zika testing.

Guidance for People Trying to Conceive

Women who have or might have Zika	Symptoms	Wait at least eight weeks after symptoms started before trying to conceive
	No symptoms	Wait at least eight weeks after last possible Zika exposure before trying to conceive
Men who have or might have Zika	Symptoms	Wait at least six months after symptoms started before trying to conceive
	No symptoms	Wait at least six months after last possible Zika exposure before trying to conceive

Guidance to Avoid Spreading Zika Sexually

While traveling to a Zika-affected area	Use birth control and barrier protection correctly	
After returning home from a Zika-affected area	Women:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue using birth control to prevent pregnancy for eight weeks after returning home. Use barrier protection correctly every time you have vaginal, anal or oral sex for eight weeks after returning home.
	Man has symptoms or positive Zika test	Use barrier protection correctly every time you have vaginal, anal and/or oral sex for six months after returning home.
	Man has no symptoms and no positive Zika test	Use barrier protection correctly every time you have vaginal, anal and/or oral sex for six months after returning home.

For more information, go to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website www.cdc.gov and search the disease you are interested in their *A to Z Index* in the blue bar at the top of the page.