

Fact Sheet

Zika Virus

What is Zika Virus?



Zika virus is spread to people primarily through the bite of an infected *Aedes* species mosquito (*Aedes aegypti* and *Aedes albopictus*). Zika virus can also be passed through sex from a person who has Zika to his or her sex partner and it can spread from a pregnant woman to her fetus.

The mosquitos that spread Zika virus also spread dengue and chikungunya viruses. The mosquitos that may become infected with Zika virus live in many parts of the world, including parts of the United States. The specific location where Zika virus is being spread is continuously changing. For current information on Zika virus in a specific area visit: wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel.

How is it Spread?

Zika virus can be spread:

Through the bite of an infected mosquito – Mosquitoes become infected when they feed on a person already infected with the virus. Infected mosquitoes can then spread the virus to other people through bites.

Through sex – Zika virus can be passed from a person who has Zika virus to his or her partners. Zika virus can be passed through sex, even if the infected person does not have symptoms at the time.

From mother to child – A pregnant woman already infected with Zika virus can pass the virus to her fetus during the pregnancy or around the time of birth potentially causing severe birth defects.

Through blood transfusion – To date, there have not been any confirmed blood transfusion transmission cases in the United States.

Pregnancy and Zika Virus

Zika virus can be passed from a pregnant woman to her fetus. Infection of Zika virus during pregnancy can cause a birth defect called microcephaly and other severe fetal brain defects. Pregnant women should consider postponing travel to any area where Zika virus transmission is ongoing. If travel must take place, strict steps must be followed to avoid mosquito bites during the trip. Fetuses and infants of women infected with Zika virus during pregnancy should be evaluated for possible congenital infection and neurologic abnormalities.

Signs and Symptoms

The incubation period of Zika virus disease is 3-14 days. The illness is usually mild with symptoms lasting for several days to a week. Many people infected with Zika virus won't have any symptoms or will have mild symptoms. . Severe disease requiring hospitalization is uncommon and deaths are rare. The most common symptoms are:

- Fever
- Rash
- Conjunctivitis (red eyes)
- Joint pain
- Muscle Pain
- Headache

Diagnosis

Zika virus diagnosis is based on a combination of travel history, clinical signs and symptoms. Your health care provider may order blood or urine tests to screen for Zika virus.

Treatment

Zika virus disease is usually relatively mild and requires no specific treatment. People sick with Zika virus should get plenty of rest, drink fluids to prevent dehydration, and treat pain and fever with medicine such as acetaminophen (Tylenol). Aspirin and other non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs should not be used. If symptoms worsen, they should seek medical care and advice. There is currently no vaccine available. **To help prevent the spread of the virus, it is important that a person follow steps to prevent mosquito bites during the first week of illness.**

People at Risk

Anyone 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.

Prevention

There is no vaccine to prevent Zika virus. Protection against mosquito bites is a key measure to prevent Zika virus infection. To prevent mosquito bites a person should:

- Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants while outdoors.
- Stay in places with air conditioning and window and door screens to keep mosquitos out.
- Take steps to control mosquitos [inside and outside the home.](#)
- Treat clothing and gear with permethrin or buy pre-treated items.
- Use [Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\) registered](#) insect repellants. Always follow the product label instructions.
- When used as directed, these insect repellants are proven safe and effective even for pregnant and breastfeeding woman.
- Don not use insect repellent on babies younger than 2 months old.
- Do not use products containing oil of lemon eucalyptus or para-menthane-diol on children younger than three.
- Mosquito netting can be used to cover babies younger than two months of age in carriers, strollers, or cribs to protect them from mosquito bites.
- Sleep under a mosquito bed net if air conditioned or screened rooms are not available or if sleeping outdoors.



[Prevent sexual transmission of Zika virus by using condoms or not having sex.](#)

When traveling to an area where Zika virus has been found, ensure personal travel immunizations are up to date. Contact St. Clair County Health Department (810) 987-5300 for travel immunization guidelines.



[For more sources of information on this topic visit:](#)

ST. CLAIR COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT www.scchealth.co

ST. CLAIR COUNTY TRAVEL CLINIC

www.stclaircounty.org/offices/health/adult_immunization

MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES www.michigan.gov

CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION www.cdc.gov/zika