

# ZIKA VIRUS DISEASE

## FACTS

- Zika is a disease that is caused by the Zika virus.
- It is spread to people through the bite of an infected *Aedes* species mosquito, the same mosquito that spreads Chikungunya and dengue fever.
- Mosquitos become infected when they bite a person that is already infected by the virus.
- About 1 in 5 people infected with Zika will get sick. For people who get sick, the illness is usually mild.
- Those with Zika usually don't get sick enough to go to the hospital, and they rarely die.
- Zika is not a new virus, but in 2015 the Pan American Health Organization reported the first confirmed Zika virus infection in Brazil. This led to transmission being reported in many other local countries and territories.

## ZIKA IN THE UNITED STATES

- The Center for Disease Control (CDC) is monitoring the US for mosquito-borne diseases.
- Healthcare providers are encouraged to report suspected Zika cases to their local health departments to mitigate the risk of local transmission.
- Transmission of Zika virus has **NOT** been identified in the continental US, but cases have been reported in returning travelers.
- Limited local transmission may occur in the mainland US, but it is unlikely that we will see widespread transmission.
- The US does have *Aedes* species mosquitos that can become infected with Zika.
- With the recent outbreaks, the number of Zika virus disease cases among travelers visiting or returning to the US will likely increase.
- The CDC is prepared to address cases imported into the US and cases transmitted locally.

## SYMPTOMS

- Most common symptoms are fever, rash, joint pain, or conjunctivitis (red eyes).
- Symptoms usually begin 2 to 7 days after being bitten by an infected mosquito.
- Since symptoms are typically mild, most people may not realize that they have been infected.

## TRANSMISSION

- Zika is primarily transmitted through the bite of the infected mosquito.
- It can also be transmitted from a pregnant mother to her baby during pregnancy or around the time of birth.
- There is evidence that [Zika can be sexually transmitted](#) by a man to his sex partners.

## DIAGNOSIS

- Your doctor may order blood tests to look for Zika or other viral diseases like dengue or Chikungunya.

## TREATMENT

- You can only treat the symptoms of Zika, because there is no medicine to treat virus infections.
- Get plenty of rest, drink fluids, take medicine to reduce fever and pain, and don't take aspirin or other non-steroidal inflammatory drugs.
- If you are taking medicine for another medical condition, talk to your doctor before taking additional medication.
- Once a person has been infected, they are likely to be protected from future infections.

## WHO IS AT RISK?

- Anyone who lives or travels to an area where Zika is found and has not already been infected with Zika can get it from mosquito bites.
- Prior to 2015, Zika outbreaks have occurred in areas of Africa, SE Asia, and the Pacific Islands.
- Countries and territories with active Zika virus transmission:



## STUDIES IN PROGRESS

- Scientists are trying to determine how mothers can pass the virus to their babies.
- Specific areas where Zika is being transmitted can change over time. Cases of transmission are being tracked and documented. Check [the CDC Travelers' Health site](#) for updated travel info.
- The link between Zika and birth defects is being studied.
- We do not know if Zika causes [Guillain-Barré syndrome \(GBS\)](#), but the CDC is collaborating with the Brazil Ministry of Health to determine if having Zika makes it more likely you will get GBS.
- CDC is working with international public health partners and with state health departments to:
  - Alert healthcare providers and the public about Zika
  - Post travel notices and other travel related guidance
  - Provide state health labs with diagnostic tests
  - Detect and report cases, which will help prevent further spread

## PREVENTION

- There is no vaccine to prevent Zika.
- The best way to prevent Zika is to protect yourself and your family from mosquito bites.
  - Wear long sleeve shirts and long pants.
  - Stay in places with AC or that use window and door screens to keep mosquitos outside.
  - Use [EPA registered insect repellents](#).
- If you have a baby or child:
  - Don't use insect repellent on babies younger than 2 months.
  - Dress child in clothing that covers arms/legs, or cover cribs and strollers with mosquito netting.
  - Don't apply insect repellent onto child's hands, eyes, mouth, and cut or irritated skin.

- Sleep under mosquito bed netting if you are overseas or outside and are not able to protect yourself from mosquito bites.
- Check out the CDC's [steps to prevent mosquito bites](#) for more info.

## BIRTH DEFECTS

- A serious birth defect of the brain called [microcephaly](#) has been reported in babies of mothers who were infected with Zika virus while pregnant.
- Women who are pregnant should consider postponing travel to any area where Zika transmission is occurring.
- Women who are trying to become pregnant should talk to their doctor about the risk of Zika virus infection.

## REFERENCES

- All information was gathered from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ([CDC](#)) on February 10, 2016.