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Monthly Safety Blast

Produced by the Southwest Center for Agricultural Health, Injury Prevention and Education

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Transmission, Symptoms and Prevention of the Zika Virus

Transmission of ZIKV

Zika virus (ZIKV) is known to spread to people through mosquito bites via mosquitoes of the *Aedes* species. About 1 in 5 people infected with Zika virus become ill. This is particularly important if there has been recent travel to countries affected by ZIKV.

There have been reports in Brazil of microcephaly in babies of mothers who had been exposed to the ZIKV. However, more research is needed to find a direct link. Nonetheless, the CDC suggests that pregnant women in any trimester should consider postponing travel to regions where the ZIKV is active. Women trying to get pregnant should consult with their doctor or health provider before travel to those regions.

Symptoms of Zika

Illness resulting from ZIKV infection is typically mild, with symptoms lasting for several days to a week.

Symptoms of ZIKV include:

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

According to the CDC, symptoms typically begin 2 to 7 days after being bitten by an infected mosquito. Because the symptoms of ZIKV are mild, it is difficult for people to recognize that they may be infected; as such, it is important to pay



attention to whether any mosquito bites were sustained 2 to 7 days prior to the appearance of symptoms.

The CDC further indicates that the need for hospitalization is uncommon, while deaths resulting from ZIKV are quite rare.

Prevention of ZIKV Transmission

Whether a person is infected or not, the best way to prevent the spread of ZIKV is to avoid getting mosquito bites. If you or someone you know plans on traveling to countries where ZIKV virus or other viruses spread by mosquitoes (such as dengue or chikungunya) are found, take insect repellents when traveling inside and outside of the country.

When used as directed, insect repellents are safe and effective for everyone, including pregnant and nursing women. Most insect repellents can be used on children in proper concentrations. Do not use products containing oil of lemon eucalyptus in children under the age of three years.

Repellents containing DEET, picaridin, IR3535, and some oil of lemon eucalyptus and para-menthane-diol products provide long lasting protection. If you use both sunscreen and insect repellent, apply the sunscreen first and then the repellent.

Do not spray insect repellent on the skin under your clothing. Always follow the label instructions when using insect repellent or sunscreen.

- Treat clothing with permethrin or purchase permethrin-treated clothing.
- When weather permits, wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants.
- Use air conditioning or window/door screens to keep mosquitoes out of your home, hotel room or place of work. Remember that the mosquitoes are believed to transmit ZIKV bite during the daytime as well as early morning and evening.
- Help reduce the number of mosquitoes inside and outside your home or hotel room by emptying standing water from containers such as flowerpots or buckets.

Treatment

Currently no vaccine exists to prevent ZIKV disease. Follow these guidelines to treat symptoms:

- Get plenty of rest
- Drink fluids
- Take fever- and pain-relieving medicine. Do NOT take Aspirin or NSAIDs (such as ibuprofen).

Travel

CDC has issued a travel alert for people traveling to regions and certain countries where ZIKV transmission is ongoing.

Follow the latest CDC guidance regarding areas affected with ZIKV at www.cdc.gov.



Take the [Transmission, Symptoms and Prevention of ZIKV quiz](#) to test your knowledge!

Resources:

- www.cdc.gov
- www.txidr.org
- <http://www.utmb.edu/newsroom/article10808.aspx>
- <http://nmsueddyag.blogspot.com/2016/02/zika-virus-and-livestock.html>

Disclaimer: The facts and information listed above are merely suggestions for your safety, but are in no way a comprehensive and exhausted list of all actions needed to insure your safety.

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