



Health **Ministers** GUIDE

Connecting Science and Community for Health



What we know

- Zika can cause severe birth defects.
- No vaccine exists to prevent Zika.
- Zika is primarily spread through mosquito bites. People can protect themselves from Zika by preventing mosquito bites (see below).
- Mosquitoes that spread Zika virus bite mostly during the daytime but also bite at night.
- Zika can be spread through sex with an infected partner.
- Condoms can reduce the chance of getting Zika from sex.

On Zika

As a health minister, you hold a uniquely powerful place in your community. Health ministers often have important insights into the local culture and have earned the trust of community members. You may even serve as community members' first point of contact for health concerns. This guide is designed to help you help your community learn about Zika.

Zika virus disease (Zika) is primarily spread to people through the bite of an infected mosquito (*Aedes aegypti* or *Aedes albopictus*). This type of mosquito lives in some parts of the United States. A mosquito becomes infected by biting someone who is infected with Zika. Once the mosquito is infected, it can pass the virus to other people it bites.

Health ministers and their communities should be concerned about Zika infection during pregnancy because babies born to women who were infected with Zika virus while pregnant can have microcephaly and other severe brain defects. Microcephaly is a condition in which a baby's head is much smaller than expected. During pregnancy, a baby's head grows because the baby's brain grows. Microcephaly can occur because a baby's brain has not developed properly during pregnancy. Babies with microcephaly can have a range of other health problems, depending on how severe their microcephaly is. These problems can range from mild to severe and are often lifelong. In some cases, these problems can be life-threatening.

Babies with Microcephaly



Baby with Typical Head Size



Baby with Microcephaly



Baby with Severe Microcephaly

Most people infected with Zika won't have symptoms or will only have mild symptoms. The most common symptoms of Zika are fever, rash, joint pain, and conjunctivitis (red eyes). The illness is usually mild with symptoms lasting for several days to a week after being bitten by an infected mosquito. People usually don't get sick enough to go to the hospital, and they very rarely die of Zika. For this reason, many people might not realize they have been infected. Once a person has been infected, he or she is likely to be protected from future infections.



HOW DOES ZIKA SPREAD

THROUGH MOSQUITO BITES

- Zika virus is spread to people primarily through the bite of an infected *Aedes* species mosquito (*Ae. aegypti* and *Ae. albopictus*). These are the same mosquitoes that spread dengue (www.cdc.gov/dengue/) and chikungunya (www.cdc.gov/chikungunya/) viruses.
- These mosquitoes typically lay eggs in and near containers with standing water like buckets, bowls, animal dishes, flower pots, and vases. They prefer to bite people, and live indoors and outdoors near people.
- Mosquitoes that spread Zika, dengue, and chikungunya are aggressive daytime biters. They can also bite at night.
- 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.

FROM MOTHER TO CHILD

- A pregnant woman infected with Zika can pass the virus to her fetus during pregnancy or around the time of birth.
- To date, there are no reports of infants getting Zika virus through breastfeeding. Because of the benefits of breastfeeding, mothers are encouraged to breastfeed even in areas with Zika.

THROUGH SEX

- Only people with sex partners who live in or traveled to an area with Zika are at risk for getting Zika through sex.
- A man or woman with Zika virus can pass it to his or her partners during sex without a condom, even if she or he does not have symptoms.
- Use male or female condoms from start to finish, every time you have vaginal, anal, or oral (mouth-to-penis) sex.
- Dental dams (latex or polyurethane sheets) may also be used for certain types of oral sex (mouth to vagina or mouth to anus).



TAKE STEPS TO PREVENT MOSQUITO BITES

- Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants.
- Stay in places with air conditioning and use window and door screens to keep mosquitoes outside.
- Use Environmental Protection Agency-registered insect repellents (<https://www.epa.gov/insect-repellents>) with one of the following active ingredients: DEET, picaridin, IR3535, or oil of lemon eucalyptus or para-menthane-diol. When used as directed, these insect repellents are proven safe and effective even for pregnant and breastfeeding women.

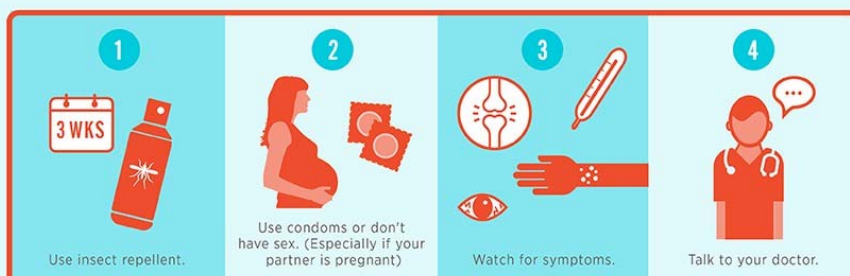
PREVENTING ZIKA AND OTHER VIRUSES SPREAD THROUGH MOSQUITO BITES

AVOID TRAVEL TO AN AREA WITH ZIKA

Until we know more, CDC recommends special precautions for pregnant women. Pregnant women should not travel to any area with Zika. If a pregnant woman must travel to one of these areas, she should talk to her healthcare provider first and strictly follow steps to prevent mosquito bites during her trip. Health ministers can encourage pregnant women to follow this advice.

PREVENT ZIKA AFTER TRAVEL

4 Ways to Stop the Spread



FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT CDC.GOV/TRAVEL

TAKE STEPS TO PREVENT GETTING ZIKA THROUGH SEX

- Only people whose sex partners have traveled to or live in an area with Zika are known to be at risk for getting the virus through sex. The timeframe for using condoms and dental dams, or waiting to have sex will vary based on the couple's situation and concerns.
- Couples in which one partner is pregnant and the other has lived in or traveled to an area with Zika should use condoms from start to finish, every time during sex, or not have sex for the duration of the pregnancy.
- Pregnant women who are concerned that a partner may have or had Zika should talk to their healthcare provider immediately. This includes discussing any symptoms, travel history, how long the partner stayed in an area with ongoing Zika transmission, whether or not they took steps to prevent getting mosquito bites, and if they had sex without a condom since returning.
- Couples who are not pregnant but are concerned about getting Zika through sex can consider using condoms every time they have vaginal, anal, and oral sex or they can choose not to have sex.

For couples with a partner who has traveled to or lives in an area with Zika:

- Women who have been diagnosed with Zika or have (or had) symptoms, should consider using condoms or not have sex for at least **8 weeks** after symptoms began.
- Men who have (or had) Zika symptoms should consider using condoms or not having sex for at least **6 months** after symptoms began. This longer period is because Zika stays in semen longer than in other body fluids.
- Men and women who have traveled to Zika areas but do not develop any symptoms should consider using condoms or not have sex for at least **8 weeks** after they return.
- If either partner lives in an area with Zika and has never developed symptoms, the couple should consider using condoms or not having sex while Zika is in the area.

PREGNANCY AND CONCEPTION DURING A ZIKA OUTBREAK

COUPLES WHO ARE PREGNANT

Zika virus can be spread by a man or woman to his or her partner during vaginal, anal, or oral sex, or through sharing of sex toys. Only people whose sex partners have traveled to or live in an area with Zika are at risk for getting Zika virus through sex.

Zika is of greatest concern for pregnant women and those who may become pregnant while infected. A pregnant woman can pass Zika virus to her fetus during pregnancy. Zika is a cause of microcephaly and other severe fetal brain defects. We are studying the full range of other potential health problems that Zika virus infection during pregnancy may cause.

- Pregnant women who have recently traveled to an area with Zika should talk to a doctor or healthcare provider about their travel even if they don't feel sick.

- Pregnant women should see a doctor or healthcare provider if they develop a fever, rash, joint pain, or red eyes during their trip or within 2 weeks after traveling to an area with Zika. They should tell their doctor or healthcare provider about where they traveled.

Because of the link between Zika and birth defects, pregnant women with a partner who has traveled to or lives in an area with Zika should take steps to prevent infection. They should use condoms and dental dams every time they have vaginal, anal, and oral sex or not have sex during the pregnancy.

Not having sex can eliminate the risk of getting Zika from sex.



COUPLES INTERESTED IN CONCEIVING

For women and men who have been diagnosed with Zika or who have symptoms of Zika (fever, rash, joint pain, or red eyes) after possible exposure to Zika virus, CDC recommends the following:

- Women should wait at least 8 weeks after their symptoms first appeared before trying to get pregnant.
- Men should wait at least 6 months after their symptoms first appeared before trying to get their partner pregnant.
- Men and women should use condoms correctly every time they have vaginal, anal, and oral sex or not have sex during this time period if they are concerned about the possibility of transmitting Zika virus to their sex partners.

Men and women without symptoms of Zika virus who had possible exposure to Zika from recent travel or sexual contact should wait at least 8 weeks after their possible exposure before trying to get pregnant. Men and women without symptoms of Zika virus who live in an area with active Zika transmission should talk with their healthcare providers about their pregnancy plans during a Zika virus outbreak, the potential risks of Zika, and how they can prevent Zika virus infection during the pregnancy. Decisions about pregnancy planning are personal and complex. Circumstances for women and their partners vary, and these circumstances are best discussed as part of clinical care for a woman and her partner during a visit with a trusted healthcare professional.

SYMPTOMS, DIAGNOSIS, & TREATMENT OF ZIKA

SYMPTOMS

- Many people infected with Zika virus won't even know they have it because they won't have symptoms. For those who do get sick, the illness is usually mild with symptoms lasting for several days to a week after being bitten by an infected mosquito.
- The most common symptoms are fever, rash, joint pain, or conjunctivitis (red eyes). Other common symptoms include muscle pain and headache. The time from exposure to symptoms for Zika is not known, but is likely to be a few days to a week.
 - Women who are pregnant and have a fever, rash, joint pain, or red eyes within 2 weeks after traveling to a place with Zika should see a doctor or other healthcare provider and tell the doctor or healthcare provider about their recent travel history.
- People usually don't get sick enough to go to a hospital, and they rarely die of Zika.

DIAGNOSIS

The symptoms of Zika can be similar to other diseases.

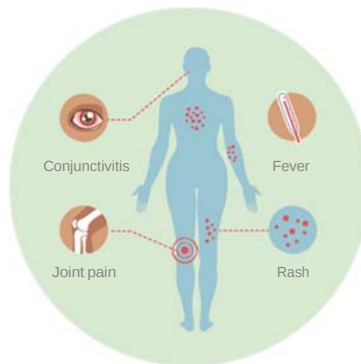
- Encourage community members to visit a healthcare provider if they have the symptoms described above and have visited an area with Zika. They should tell their healthcare provider where they traveled.
- Healthcare providers can order blood or urine tests to look for Zika or other similar viruses like dengue or chikungunya.

TREATMENT

- There is no vaccine to prevent Zika and no medicine to treat it.
- Treat the symptoms by:
 - Getting plenty of rest.
 - Drinking fluids to prevent dehydration.
 - Taking medicine such as acetaminophen (Tylenol®) to relieve fever and pain.
- Do not take aspirin, ibuprofen (like Advil or Motrin), or other non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, commonly referred to as NSAIDs, until dengue can be ruled out.
- If you are taking medicine for another medical condition, talk to your doctor or healthcare provider before taking additional medication.

IF YOU HAVE ZIKA, PROTECT OTHERS FROM GETTING SICK

- During the first week of infection, Zika virus can be found in the blood and passed from an infected person to another mosquito through mosquito bites. An infected mosquito can then spread the virus to other people.
- To help prevent others from getting sick, take steps to prevent mosquito bites during the first week of illness.
- Couples should protect against sexual transmission if Zika is diagnosed in either partner, or if either partner has symptoms while living in or after traveling to an area with Zika. When used correctly, condoms can reduce the risk of passing Zika through sex. Not having sex is the only way to eliminate sexual transmission risk.
 - Men who have been diagnosed with Zika, or have symptoms of Zika, should use condoms every time they have sex or not have sex for at least 6 months after symptoms started.
 - Men who traveled to an area with Zika but do not have a diagnosis or symptoms should use these precautions for at least 8 weeks after return from travel.
 - Women who are diagnosed with or have symptoms of Zika should use condoms during sex or abstain from sex for 8 weeks after symptoms started if they are infected or have symptoms, or 8 weeks after return from an area with Zika if they never have symptoms.



HISTORY OF ZIKA

Zika virus was first discovered in 1947 and is named after the Zika Forest in Uganda. Since then, outbreaks of Zika have been reported in tropical Africa, Southeast Asia, and the Pacific Islands. Because the symptoms of Zika can be similar to those of many other diseases, and because symptoms are usually mild, previous cases may not have been recognized.

In May 2015, the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) issued an alert regarding the first confirmed Zika virus infection in Brazil. Brazil also reported an increase in the number of babies born with microcephaly, which was later linked to Zika virus infection during pregnancy. Local transmission has been reported in many countries and territories. Local transmission has also been reported in the US (<http://www.cdc.gov/zika/geo/>). Zika virus likely will continue to spread to new areas.

Specific areas where Zika is spreading are often difficult to determine and are likely to change over time. Before traveling overseas, please visit the CDC Travelers' Health site for updated travel information.

RESOURCES

ZIKA VIRUS

- Symptoms, diagnosis and treatment of Zika: <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/symptoms/index.html>
- Zika Travel Information: <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/page/zika-travel-information>
- What we know and do not know about Zika and pregnancy: <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/healtheffects/index.html>
- CDC recommendations for couples thinking about pregnancy: <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/pregnancy/thinking-about-pregnancy.html>
- Sexual transmission of Zika virus: <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/transmission/sexual-transmission.html>

PREVENTION

- Basic prevention advice: <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/prevention/>
- Advice for controlling mosquitoes at home: <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/prevention/controlling-mosquitoes-at-home.html>
- Mosquito-proofing septic tanks: <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/pdfs/septic-tank-factsheet-english-nceid.pdf>
- Building a Zika prevention kit: <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/prevention/prevention-kit.html>
- Advice for pregnant women to protect themselves: <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/pregnancy/protect-yourself.html>

COMMUNICATION RESOURCES

- Print Resources: <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/fs-posters/index.html>
- Infographics: <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/comm-resources/infographics.html>
- Zika video resources: <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/comm-resources/video.html>

