

PREGNANCY & BIRTH DEFECTS TASK FORCE



Activities in Puerto Rico

Zika virus can be passed from a pregnant woman to her fetus, and infection during pregnancy can cause a serious birth defect of the brain, called microcephaly, and other severe brain defects. Other problems have been detected among fetuses and infants infected with Zika virus before birth, such as miscarriage, defects of the eye, hearing deficits, and impaired growth.

CDC is working closely with the Puerto Rico Department of Health during the current Zika outbreak to better understand the effects of Zika virus infection during pregnancy, to reduce the risk of Zika virus infection among pregnant women and women of reproductive age, and to improve care for women and families infected by Zika.



Zika Active Pregnancy Surveillance System (ZAPSS)

The Zika Active Pregnancy Surveillance System (ZAPSS) monitors pregnant women in Puerto Rico with laboratory evidence of Zika virus infection through pregnancy and their infants through early childhood up to 3 years of age. The data collected by ZAPSS will be used to better understand the spectrum of outcomes, including birth defects and developmental outcomes, in infants and children whose mothers had Zika virus during pregnancy. Information from ZAPSS will be used to inform best practices for the care of pregnant women with Zika virus infection and their infants and children.

Contraceptive Assessment in Puerto Rico during Zika (CAPRZ)

The Contraceptive Assessment in Puerto Rico during Zika (CAPRZ) will estimate the level of unmet need for contraception among women in Puerto Rico, identify the level of knowledge and awareness of Zika, and measure adherence to Zika prevention recommendations. The assessment will be administered via cell phone interviews by using the existing Puerto Rico's Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS). This information will primarily be used to guide and evaluate contraceptive distribution efforts in Puerto Rico with the goal of reducing the number of unintended pregnancies in Puerto Rico.

Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitory System (PRAMS) Zika Postpartum Emergency Response (ZPER) Survey

The Zika Postpartum Emergency Response (ZPER) Survey is a population-based rapid assessment of maternal behaviors and experiences related to Zika virus exposure among women who recently gave birth. The ZPER uses methods from previous hospital-based surveillance conducted by the Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS). This information will be used to understand the Zika-related concerns of pregnant women, interactions between women and their healthcare providers regarding Zika, sources of information that women consult regarding Zika virus, adherence to recommended precautions to reduce their risk of exposure to Zika virus, pregnancy intentions, and contraceptive use.

Zika Contraception Access Network (Z-CAN)

The CDC Foundation, with technical assistance CDC, and in partnership with the Puerto Rico Department of Health, launched the Zika Contraception Access Network (Z-CAN). Z-CAN provides same day access to the full range of reversible contraceptive methods at no cost to women who choose to delay or avoid pregnancy during the Zika outbreak. The Z-CAN team has trained a network of physicians at clinics across Puerto Rico. Physicians in the Z-CAN network receive technical training and proctoring on the insertion and removal of long-acting reversible contraceptives (i.e., intrauterine device and implant). Z-CAN physicians and clinic staff also participate in an education module on evidence-based, client-centered contraceptive counseling. All Z-CAN patients are offered the full range of reversible contraceptive methods so that women can choose a contraceptive method based on their individual needs and preferences.

Evaluating the Diagnostic Utility of PCR-testing for Zika Virus on Whole Blood (Epi-Aid)

The Puerto Rico Department of Health (PRDH) and CDC have partnered to rapidly assess whether testing for the presence of Zika virus (ZIKV) by using Triplex rRT-PCR test for Zika, dengue, and chikungunya viruses in whole blood rather than serum or urine improves diagnostic capacity among pregnant women in Puerto Rico. Whole blood testing among pregnant women would require less blood, provide quicker results, and would potentially have improved sensitivity for detecting recent ZIKV infection. This assessment will strengthen local capacity and improved diagnostics to detect ZIKV infection in pregnant women.



**U.S. Department of
Health and Human Services**
Centers for Disease
Control and Prevention