

Zika Virus



What is Zika virus? Zika is a disease caused by Zika virus that is spread to people primarily through the bite of an infected *Aedes* species mosquito. 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. People usually don't get sick enough to go to the hospital, and they very rarely die of Zika.

How does Zika virus spread? While sexual transmission of Zika virus is possible, it is spread to people primarily through the bite of an infected *Aedes* species mosquito. They are aggressive daytime biters, prefer to bite people, and live indoors and outdoors near people. 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. A mother already infected with Zika virus near the time of delivery can pass on the virus to her newborn around the time of birth. It is possible that Zika virus could be passed from mother to fetus during pregnancy.

What are the symptoms of Zika virus? About 1 in 5 people infected with Zika virus become ill (i.e., develop Zika). The most common symptoms of Zika virus are fever, rash, joint pain, and conjunctivitis (red eyes). Other common symptoms include muscle pain and headache. The illness is usually mild with symptoms lasting for several days to a week. Severe disease requiring hospitalization is uncommon. Deaths are rare. See your healthcare provider if you develop the symptoms and have visited an area where Zika virus is present. If you have recently traveled, tell your healthcare provider when and where.

How is Zika virus treated? No vaccine or medications exist to prevent or treat Zika virus. Treat the symptoms:

- Get plenty of rest.
- Drink fluids to prevent dehydration.
- Take medicines, such as acetaminophen or paracetamol, to relieve fever and pain.
- Aspirin and other non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), like ibuprofen and naproxen, should be avoided until dengue can be ruled out to reduce the risk of hemorrhage. If you are taking medicine for another medical condition, talk to your healthcare provider before taking additional medication.

What should I do if I have Zika virus? If you have Zika virus, avoid mosquito bites for the first week of your illness. 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.

What can I do? Defend by using the 4Ds.

DEET All Day Every Day: Whenever you're outside, use insect repellents that contain DEET or other EPA approved repellents and follow label instructions.

Dress: Wear long, loose and light-colored clothing outside. Treat clothing and gear with permethrin or buy permethrin-treated items.

Drain: Remove all standing water in and around your home.

Dusk & Dawn: Limit outdoor activities during dusk and dawn when mosquitoes are most active.

Travelers can protect themselves by doing the following:

- Choose a hotel or lodging with air conditioning or screens on windows or doors.
- Sleep under a mosquito bed net if you are outside or in a room that is not well-screened.

Sexual partners can protect each other by abstaining from sex or by using condoms consistently and correctly during sex.

Pregnant women and women planning to get pregnant should use the above prevention methods in addition to talking to their health care provider about Zika virus. More information about Zika virus for pregnant women and women planning to get pregnant can be found at: <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/pregnancy/index.html>