

# Zika Virus



What does it mean  
for pregnant  
women, children,  
and  
everyone else?

## If you are pregnant or trying

- Medical research has now **conclusively** shown that when **pregnant women are infected with Zika virus** their **babies are at risk for severe brain damage**.
- Pregnant women should postpone travel to areas where Zika virus transmission is ongoing. Check [www.cdc.gov/zika](http://www.cdc.gov/zika) for an up-to-date travel map.
- If you must travel to a Zika infested area, the experts at the American College of Obstetricians & Gynecologists (ACOG) say it's **safe** for pregnant and breast-feeding women **to use insect repellent**. They should choose a repellent containing DEET, picaridin, or oil of lemon eucalyptus.



- CDC recommends that all pregnant women who have traveled to a Zika outbreak area get tested after they return, even if they don't feel sick.
- Women diagnosed with Zika virus disease should wait at least 2 months after infection to attempt pregnancy. Men diagnosed with Zika virus disease should wait at least 6 months after infection to attempt pregnancy.
- **Men who have** traveled to an area with Zika virus and have a **pregnant partner** should abstain from vaginal, oral, and anal sexual activity or consistently and correctly use condoms during sex for the remainder of the pregnancy.
- Any women at risk of Zika infection who does not want to be pregnant should use a very effective method of birth control including birth control pills, DepoProvera, an implant, or an IUD.

## WHAT IS ZIKA VIRUS?

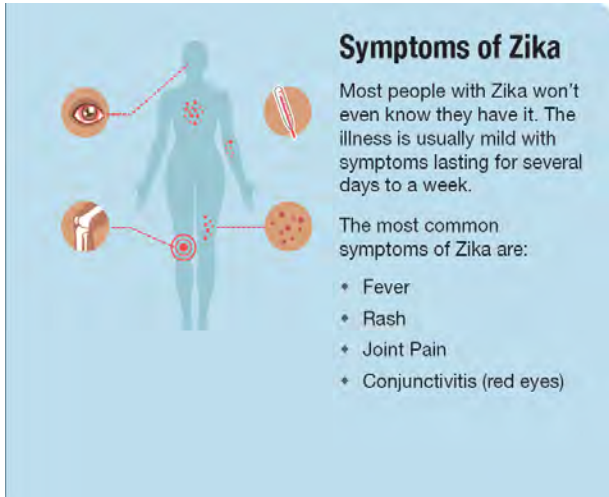
Zika virus is a mosquito-borne illness. It was first discovered in Africa in 1947. Zika virus spread to the Western Hemisphere in 2015 and is estimated to have affected more than one million people in South and Central America, Mexico and the Caribbean. Cases of Zika virus infection have been identified in the United States in travelers returning from an infected area.



## TRANSMISSION

The disease is spread to people primarily through the bite of an infected mosquito. These mosquitoes are aggressive daytime biters. Recent evidence shows that Zika virus can also be spread through sexual activity. A man can transmit the virus to his partner for months after he is infected. In addition to the serious harm the virus can cause to the development of the fetal brain, the CDC is investigating a link between Zika virus and Guillain-Barre syndrome (GBS) in children and adults. GBS can result in severe damage to the nervous system, including paralysis.

## SYMPTOMS of ZIKA VIRUS



## DIAGNOSIS

**Is there a test available to confirm Zika virus infection in humans?** Yes, your healthcare provider may order blood tests for Zika or other viruses with similar symptoms. See your healthcare provider if you have recently traveled to affected areas and have developed any of the symptoms described in the picture above. All pregnant women traveling to an infected area should be tested even if she has no symptoms.

## TREATMENT

- There is no medicine or vaccine to treat Zika virus disease.
- Symptoms including fever and pain will be treated on an individual basis.
- Aspirin and other non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) should be avoided until your doctor can make sure you don't have another mosquito-transmitted disease called dengue.

## This is THE MOST IMPORTANT section to read

### PREVENT MOSQUITO BITES:

- Use mosquito repellent. Look for these ingredients: DEET, Picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus. Always follow the instructions when using insect repellent.
- Wear protective clothing such as long sleeved shirts, long pants, and socks. These mosquitoes often fly close to the ground and bite low.
- Use screens on windows and doors. Use air conditioning when available.

### PREVENT MOSQUITO BREEDING:

- Mosquitoes need water to breed. Eliminate standing water in and around your home.
- Mosquitoes can lay eggs in something as small as a water-filled bottle cap.
- Cover, throw away, or empty at least weekly items that hold water such as tires, buckets, flowerpots, toys, birdbaths, kiddie pools, or trash containers.
- Remove leaves and other debris that can clog gutters and trap water.
- Keep swimming pools treated and circulating.
- Ask your neighbors to do the same. It's important that **everyone help protect pregnant women and their babies from irreversible birth defects.**



Where can I get more information?

[www.acog.org/zika](http://www.acog.org/zika)

[www.cdc.gov/zika](http://www.cdc.gov/zika)

[www.calverthealth.org](http://www.calverthealth.org)

