

Zika Virus

Zika (ZEE ka) is a disease caused by the Zika Virus. A person becomes infected by the bite of an infected Aedes mosquito or by having unprotected sex with an infected person. Infection during pregnancy has been shown to be linked to birth defects in babies. Specific areas where Zika Virus is spreading are often difficult to determine and are likely to change over time. If traveling, please visit the CDC Travelers' Health website for the most recent travel information.

Symptoms

Not everyone who is infected will experience symptoms. These are the symptoms that can appear within 2 weeks of being bitten:

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

The symptoms are usually mild and only affect 1 out of 5 infected people.

Diagnosis

Anyone who has traveled to a Zika-affected area in the last 12 weeks who has symptoms of the disease should be tested as soon as possible. Pregnant women who have traveled to these areas or have had unprotected sex with a male who could have Zika, whether they have symptoms of the disease or not, need to contact a doctor about testing. The test for Zika is a simple blood test

Treatment

There is no vaccine to prevent or medicine that can cure Zika.

Prevention

Mosquitos like dark, humid places and standing water, both indoors and out. Here is the best way to avoid mosquito bites and keep from becoming infected with the Zika virus:

- Use an EPA-registered insect repellent (bug spray):
 - Read the label on the repellent carefully.
 - Do not apply the repellent to hands, eyes or mouth.
 - Do not spray repellent under clothing.

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Prevention, continued

- Do not use lemon eucalyptus on children less than 3 years old.
- Do not use insect repellent on babies younger than 2 months old. Instead, put a mosquito net around the car seat or carrier.
- Apply sunscreen first, then apply insect repellent.
- Get rid of standing water and water resources. Mosquitoes multiply by laying eggs in and around standing water.
 - Empty, turn over or remove anything that holds water (like buckets, toys, vases, and saucers under flower pots).
 - Get rid of old tires; drill holes in the bottoms of tire swings.
 - Clear clogged rain gutters.
 - Treat rain barrels for mosquitoes. Seal openings.
 - Patch torn screens.
 - Repair leaky faucets.
 - Empty bird baths or change water weekly
 - Empty wading pools when not in use.
- If you have a septic tank, repair cracks or gaps. Cover open vent or plumbing pipes. Use wire mesh with holes smaller than an adult mosquito.
- If sleeping outside (camping, etc.) sleep under a mosquito bed net
- Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants.
- When inside, use air conditioning or window and door screens.
- Use condoms or abstain from sex to avoid sexual transmission.
- Pregnant women:
 - Avoid travel to anywhere that Zika virus is spreading.
 - If you must travel to these areas, talk to your doctor first and strictly follow steps to prevent mosquito bites.
 - Use condoms correctly every time with male partners who have traveled to these areas.
- To help prevent others from getting sick, strictly follow steps to prevent mosquito bites during the first week of illness.