

Zika and Pregnancy

For more information:

General information about Zika:
<http://www.cdc.gov/zika/>

Philadelphia Department of Health Zika
Webpage:
<http://www.phila.gov/health/DiseaseControl/zika.html>

Protection against mosquitoes:
<http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/yellowbook/2016/the-pre-travel-consultation/protection-against-mosquitoes-ticks-other-arthropods>

Travel notices related to Zika virus:
<http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/page/zika-travel-information>

Information about Zika virus for travelers and travel health providers:
<http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/yellowbook/2016/infectious-diseases-related-to-travel/zika>

Pan American Health Organization (PAHO):
http://www.paho.org/hq/index.php?option=com_topics&view=article&id=427&Itemid=41484&lang=en

Information on microcephaly:
<http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/birthdefects/microcephaly.html>



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What is Zika?

Zika is a viral disease primarily spread by the mosquito *Aedes aegypti*, which also spreads dengue and chikungunya. Spread by maternal to fetal transmission, possible sexual transmission, and transfusion- or transplant-acquired infection are less common. Approximately 1 in 5 people infected with Zika virus will develop symptoms 2-7 days after the mosquito bite, but symptoms can take up to two weeks to appear.

Where does Zika occur?

Local outbreaks of Zika have occurred through South/Central America, the Caribbean, and Mexico since 2015. Zika virus infections have also been reported in travelers returning to the US. For a list of current disease outbreaks, visit CDC Travel Health Notices:

<http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/page/zika-travel-information>

What are the symptoms?

Symptoms of Zika can include:

- Mild fever
- Headache
- Joint and muscle pain
- Vomiting
- Skin rash
- Conjunctivitis (red eyes)

The illness is usually mild, and symptoms last for several days to a week. Severe disease is uncommon.

Is there a treatment for Zika?

There is no vaccine or specific treatment for Zika virus. Treatment is generally supportive to reduce fever and pain. People with suspected Zika virus infections should also be evaluated and managed for possible dengue or chikungunya virus infection.

Am I at risk?

People who live in or travel to areas with local Zika outbreaks are at risk of developing Zika. Pregnant women have the same risk as the rest of the population for getting Zika.

How does Zika affect pregnant women and fetuses?

Scientists are researching a potential link between Zika infection in pregnant women and their babies being born with unusually small heads (microcephaly) or the loss of the unborn baby. Sometimes there are other symptoms associated with microcephaly, such as convulsions, developmental delays, or feeding difficulties.

What is congenital microcephaly?

Microcephaly is a birth defect in which the newborn's head and skull are smaller than expected for age and sex. There is no specific treatment for microcephaly.

How can microcephaly be confirmed in a baby?

The most reliable way to tell if a baby has microcephaly is to measure head circumference at birth and again 24 hours after birth. Microcephaly can also be detected during pregnancy using ultrasound. Pregnant women should attend regular prenatal check-ups and follow their provider's recommendations.

If I am pregnant or planning to become pregnant, should I travel?

Pregnant women should strongly consider postponing travel to areas with ongoing Zika virus transmission. If you plan to travel or have recently returned from an area with outbreaks, talk to your provider. If you must travel, take steps to avoid mosquito bites. Pregnant women who have traveled to areas with active Zika transmission should be monitored, screened, and tested for Zika infection.

Is it safe to use an insect repellent if I am pregnant or nursing?

Using an insect repellent is safe and effective. Choose EPA-registered insect repellents.

Can mothers pass Zika virus to their babies?

Information on whether mothers can pass the virus to babies during pregnancy or childbirth is very limited. To date, there are no reports of infants getting Zika through breastfeeding.

What should I do if I think I was exposed to Zika?

If you develop a fever or other symptoms, contact your healthcare provider and tell them about any recent travel. Your provider may order tests to look for Zika or other diseases. To help prevent others from getting sick, protect yourself from mosquito bites during the first week of illness. If you are pregnant and traveled somewhere with ongoing Zika virus transmission in the past two weeks, you may need special testing or ultrasounds.

KEY POINTS:

Mosquitoes spread Zika, dengue, chikungunya, and other diseases.

Pregnant women should strongly consider postponing travel to areas with ongoing Zika virus outbreaks. If you are traveling, talk to your healthcare provider. Closely follow these tips to avoid mosquito bites:

- Use mosquito repellent
- Wear long sleeved shirts and long pants
- Stay in air-conditioned or screened accommodations

If pregnant, mention any travel plans to your healthcare provider during your prenatal check up!

