



# ZIKA VIRUS DISEASE

Zika virus disease (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 after being bitten by an infected mosquito. People usually don't get sick enough to go to the hospital, and they very rarely die of Zika. For this reason, many people might not realize they have been infected. Once a person has been infected, he or she is likely to be protected from future infections.



## Symptoms

- Most people infected with Zika virus won't even know they have the disease because they won't have symptoms. The most common symptoms are fever, rash, joint pain, or conjunctivitis (red eyes). Other common symptoms include muscle pain and headache. The incubation period (the time from exposure to symptoms) for Zika virus disease is not known, but is likely to be a few days to a week.
- If you are pregnant, you should see your doctor if you or your male sexual partner lives in or has traveled to areas with Zika transmission during the pregnancy, whether or not you have symptoms.
- The illness is usually mild with symptoms lasting for several days to a week after being bitten by an infected mosquito.
- Zika virus usually remains in the blood of an infected person for about a week but it can be found longer in some people.
- Once a person has been infected, he or she is likely to be protected from future infections.

## Diagnosis

- The symptoms of Zika are similar to those of dengue and chikungunya, diseases spread through the same mosquitoes that transmit Zika.
- See your healthcare provider if you develop the symptoms described above and have visited an area where Zika is found.
- If you have recently traveled, tell your healthcare provider when and where you traveled.
- Your healthcare provider may order blood tests to look for Zika or other similar viruses like dengue or chikungunya.

## Transmission and Risks

- **Through mosquito bites**
  - Zika virus is transmitted to people primarily through the bite of an infected Aedes species mosquito, *Aedes aegypti* (the yellow fever mosquito), *Aedes Albopictus* (the Asian tiger mosquito), and *Aedes polynesiensis*.
  - These mosquitoes typically lay eggs in and near standing water in containers such as buckets, bowls, animal dishes, flower pots and vases. They prefer to bite people, and live indoors and outdoors near people.
  - Mosquitoes that spread Zika, chikungunya, and dengue are aggressive daytime biters. They can also bite at night.
  - 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.



ARMY STRONG

---

## **Transmission and Risks (Continued)**

- **From mother to child**
  - 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.
  - A pregnant woman can pass Zika virus to her fetus during pregnancy. The CDC is studying the adverse pregnancy and infant outcomes associated with Zika virus infection during pregnancy.
  - There are no reports of infants getting Zika virus through breastfeeding.
- **Through sexual contact**
  - Zika virus can be spread by a man to his sex partners.
  - In known cases of sexual transmission, the men developed Zika virus symptoms. From these cases, we know the virus can be spread when the man has symptoms, before symptoms start and after symptoms resolve.
  - The virus can be present in semen longer than in blood.
- **Through blood transfusion**
  - As of February 1, 2016, there were no confirmed blood transfusion transmission cases in the United States. The FDA has issued guidance to ensure the safety of the US blood supply.
  - Reports of multiple blood transfusion transmission cases in Brazil are being investigated.

## **Treatment**

- There is no vaccine to prevent or medicine to treat Zika virus.
- Treat the symptoms:
  - Get plenty of rest.
  - Drink fluids to prevent dehydration.
  - Take medicine such as acetaminophen (Tylenol®) or paracetamol to reduce fever and pain.
  - Do not take aspirin and other non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) until dengue can be ruled out to reduce the risk of bleeding.
- If you are taking medicine for another medical condition, talk to your healthcare provider before taking additional medication.
- If you have Zika, prevent 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 a mosquito through mosquito bites.
  - An infected mosquito can then spread the virus to other people.

## **Prevention Tips**

- Apply insect repellents with the active ingredients DEET or picaridin to exposed skin when outdoors.
- Wear permethrin-treated clothing whenever possible. Minimize exposed skin by wearing long-sleeved shirt, long pants, and socks.
- Eliminate all sources of standing water around the home to prevent mosquito breeding.
- Maintain screens on windows and doors to prevent mosquitoes from entering buildings.
- Talk to your sexual partners about their potential exposure to Zika, travel to Zika-affected areas, and any history of Zika-like symptoms. Consider abstaining from sex or using condoms correctly every time to prevent sexual transmission of Zika virus.

## **Where to Find Additional Information**

- Army Public Health Center—
  - <https://phc.amedd.army.mil/topics/discond/diseases/pages/zika.aspx>
  - Zika Hotline – **800-984-8523**
- Health.Mil—<http://www.health.mil/zika>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)—<http://www.cdc.gov/zika/>
- World Health Organization—<http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/zika/en/>
- Ready Army—[www.ready.army.mil](http://www.ready.army.mil)

**It's up to you. Prepare strong. Get an emergency supply kit with enough supplies for at least three days, make an emergency plan with your family and be informed about what might happen.**

