

Zika Virus

Where has Zika virus been found?

- Prior to 2015, Zika virus outbreaks have occurred in areas of Africa, Southeast Asia, and the Pacific Islands.
- In May 2015, the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) issued an alert regarding the first confirmed Zika virus infections in Brazil.
- Currently, outbreaks are occurring in many countries.
- Zika virus will continue to spread and it will be difficult to determine how the virus will spread over time.

Zika in the United States and its territories:

- No locally transmitted Zika cases have been reported in the continental United States, but cases have been reported in returning travelers.
- Locally transmitted Zika virus has been reported in the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.
- With the recent outbreaks, the number of Zika cases among travelers visiting or returning to the United States will likely increase.
- These imported cases could result in local spread of the virus in some areas of the United States.

Countries and territories with active Zika virus transmission

Zika-affected Areas

AMERICAS

- Barbados
- Bolivia
- Brazil
- Colombia
- Dominican Republic
- Ecuador
- El Salvador
- French Guiana
- Guadeloupe

- Guatemala
- Guyana
- Haiti
- Honduras
- Martinique
- Mexico
- Panama
- Paraguay
- Puerto Rico
- Saint Martin
- Suriname
- U.S. Virgin Islands
- Venezuela

OCEANIA/PACIFIC ISLANDS

- Samoa

AFRICA

- Cape Verde

Prevention

- No vaccine exists to prevent Zika virus disease (Zika).
- Prevent Zika by avoiding mosquito bites (see below).
- Mosquitoes that spread Zika virus bite mostly during the daytime.
- Mosquitoes that spread Zika virus also spread dengue and chikungunya viruses.

When traveling to countries where Zika virus or other viruses spread by mosquitoes are found, take the following steps:

- **Use insect repellents**

- When used as directed, insect repellents are safe and effective for everyone, including pregnant and nursing women.
- Most insect repellents can be used on children. Do not use products containing oil of lemon eucalyptus in children under the age of three years.

- Repellents containing DEET, picaridin, IR3535, and some oil of lemon eucalyptus and para-menthane-diol products provide long lasting protection.
- If you use both sunscreen and insect repellent, apply the sunscreen first and then the repellent.
- Do not spray insect repellent on the skin under your clothing.
- Treat clothing with permethrin or purchase permethrin-treated clothing.
- Always follow the label instructions when using insect repellent or sunscreen.
- When weather permits, wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants.
- Use air conditioning or window/door screens to keep mosquitoes outside. If you are not able to protect yourself from mosquitoes inside your home or hotel, sleep under a mosquito bed net.
- Help reduce the number of mosquitoes inside and outside your home or hotel room by emptying standing water from containers such as flowerpots or buckets.

If you have Zika, protect others from getting sick

- 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.
- To help prevent others from getting sick, avoid mosquito bites during the first week of illness.

Transmission

Through mosquito bites

Zika virus is transmitted to people primarily through the bite of an infected *Aedes* species mosquito. These are the same mosquitoes that spread [dengue](#) and [chikungunya](#) viruses.

- These mosquitoes typically lay eggs in and near standing water in things like buckets, bowls, animal dishes, flower pots and vases. 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.

Rarely, 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, but this is rare.
- It is possible that Zika virus could be passed from mother to fetus during pregnancy. This mode of transmission is being investigated.
- To date, there are no reports of infants getting Zika virus through breastfeeding. Because of the benefits of breastfeeding, mothers are encouraged to breastfeed even in areas where Zika virus is found.

Possibly through infected blood or sexual contact

- There has been one report of possible spread of the virus through blood transfusion and one report of possible spread of the virus through sexual contact.

Symptoms, Diagnosis, & Treatment

Symptoms

- About 1 in 5 people infected with Zika virus become ill (i.e., develop Zika).
- The most common symptoms of Zika 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.
- The illness is usually mild with symptoms lasting for several days to a week.
- Zika virus usually remains in the blood of an infected person for a few days but it can be found longer in some people.
- Severe disease requiring hospitalization is uncommon.
- Deaths are rare.

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.

Treatment

- No vaccine or medications are available to prevent or treat Zika infections.

Treat the symptoms:

- Get plenty of rest
- Drink fluids to prevent dehydration
- Take medicines, such as acetaminophen or paracetamol, to relieve fever and pain
- Do not take aspirin and other non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), like ibuprofen and naproxen. Aspirin and NSAIDs should be avoided until dengue can be ruled out to reduce the risk of hemorrhage (bleeding). If you are taking medicine for another medical condition, talk to your healthcare provider before taking additional medication.

If you have Zika, avoid mosquito bites for the first week of your illness.

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- An infected mosquito can then spread the virus to other people.

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