

Zika- Factsheet

What is Zika virus (ZIKV)?

Zika virus infection is caused by the Zika virus.

What are the symptoms of Zika virus infection?

Most people infected with the Zika virus will not have any symptoms. Those who do may have:

- Fever.
- Rash.
- Headache.
- Joint pain.
- Conjunctivitis (red eyes.)
- Muscle pain.
- Infection during pregnancy can cause microcephaly and other birth defects in the fetus.

How is Zika virus spread?

Zika virus is usually spread through the bite of an infected mosquito. Only certain kinds of mosquitoes can spread the virus (*Aedes aegypti* and *Aedes albopictus*). The virus can also be spread through sex from a person with Zika virus infection to his or her partners, even if the infected person has no symptoms. A pregnant person can pass the virus to her fetus. Transmission through transplants and blood transfusions have been documented but are extremely rare. The donated blood supply in the United States is screened for Zika virus.

How long are people contagious?

A person infected with Zika virus should strictly avoid mosquito bites for the first week after getting sick or for three weeks after returning from an area with Zika virus so that they do not pass the virus to mosquitoes which could bite other people. Men with Zika virus can pass the infection to their partners through sex for three months, and women with Zika virus can pass the virus to their partners through sex for two months.

Who gets Zika virus?

Most people who get Zika virus have lived in or traveled to an area where the virus is present and have been bitten by infected mosquitoes. Some people contract Zika virus through unprotected sex with a partner who has Zika virus. A pregnant woman can pass Zika virus infection to her fetus.

What treatment is available for people with Zika virus?

There is no vaccine and no specific treatment for Zika virus. Treatment of symptoms is recommended including plenty of rest, fluids, and medicines to reduce fever and pain. Aspirin and other non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDS) should be avoided until dengue virus infection can be ruled out.

Do infected people need to be kept home from school, work or daycare?

No, however people potentially exposed to Zika virus should take strict precautions against mosquito bites for the first week of illness or three weeks after returning from an area with Zika virus.

How can I protect myself and my family from getting Zika virus?

- Pregnant women should avoid travel to areas with Zika virus if possible.
- Zika virus and many other diseases can be prevented by avoiding mosquito bites.
- People who have lived in or traveled to an area with Zika virus should practice abstinence or use barrier protection with pregnant sex partners for the duration of the pregnancy and should consider doing the same with non-pregnant sex partners for three months if male or two months if female after symptoms of or exposure to Zika virus.
- People with Zika virus should take strict precautions against mosquito bites for the first week of illness.
- People who have traveled to an area with Zika virus should strictly avoid mosquito bites for three weeks after returning.