

Zika (also called Zika virus disease) is a disease caused by a virus that is spread mostly by mosquitoes. It has been found in areas of Africa, Asia, the Pacific Islands, the Caribbean and the Americas (visit <http://www.cdc.gov/travel/> to learn which countries are affected at this time). Because the mosquito that spreads Zika is found throughout the world, Zika will likely spread to new areas.

SYMPTOMS

- Fever
- Joint pain
- Pink eye (conjunctivitis)
- Rash
- Headache
- Muscle pain

Symptoms start 2 to 7 days after being bitten by an infected mosquito. Most people who get sick with Zika virus have mild symptoms. **Four out of every 5 people infected with Zika virus do not have any symptoms at all.**

A few people with Zika get Guillain-Barré syndrome (causes muscle weakness or muscles that cannot move).

TREATMENT

There is no treatment for Zika. If you get Zika you can take drugs to lower fever and help you feel better. You should also rest and drink lots of fluids. Most people with Zika virus get better within a week.

HOW IT SPREADS

You can get Zika if you are bitten by an infected mosquito. Mosquitoes get infected when they bite a person with Zika virus. Then they can spread the virus to other people through bites.

Zika virus can also spread from a mother to her unborn baby during pregnancy or at the time of birth. Babies born to mothers who had Zika virus when they were pregnant are more likely to have problems like small heads (microcephaly) and brain defects. Experts are warning women who are pregnant or want to get pregnant not to travel to countries with Zika virus. Go to <http://www.cdc.gov/travel/> to find out which countries are being affected by Zika.

Zika virus is also spread through sex (vaginal, anal and oral sex and sharing sex toys). Even if you don't have symptoms, if you have Zika, you may be able to spread the virus to your sex partners.

One type of mosquito that spreads Zika is found in North Carolina. As of July 2018, there have been no cases of Zika spread by mosquitoes in North Carolina.

ZIKA PREVENTION – READ THE OTHER SIDE OF THIS PAGE

PREVENTION

Women who are pregnant or trying to get pregnant should talk to their doctors and think about waiting to travel to areas that have Zika. Go to <http://www.cdc.gov/travel/> to learn more about which countries have Zika virus.

Prevent Mosquito Bites

There is no vaccine or drug to prevent Zika. The best way to prevent it is by preventing mosquito bites:

- Use mosquito repellent on skin not covered by clothing. Follow label directions.
- Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants. Treat or buy clothing with permethrin repellent.
- Use air conditioning or fans instead of opening windows.
- Only open windows and doors that have screens on them.
- Use mosquito netting over beds if there are mosquitoes in sleeping areas.
- Prevent mosquitoes from breeding around your home (see below).

Prevent the Spread of Zika through Sex

Women planning travel to an area of the world with Zika should talk with their doctor if they are thinking about getting pregnant.

Women who are pregnant

Pregnant women with sex partners who live in or travel to areas where Zika virus is found should not have sex or use a barrier method (condoms, female condoms, dental dams-for oral sex) during pregnancy and should not share sex toys. Use barrier methods every time you have vaginal, oral or anal sex.

All others

- Travelers to areas with Zika should use a barrier method (condoms, female condoms, dental dams-for oral sex) or not have sex for at least:
 - 2 months after returning from an area with Zika if the traveler is female (even if she doesn't have symptoms) or after being diagnosed with Zika
 - 3 months after returning from an area with Zika if the traveler is male (even if he doesn't have symptoms) or after being diagnosed with Zika (the virus stays in semen longer than other body fluids)
- If you live in an area with Zika and you haven't gotten it, you should use a barrier method all the time or not have sex if you are concerned about passing or getting Zika through sex.

Keep Mosquitoes from Breeding around your Home

- **Tip and toss standing water twice a week.** Some mosquitoes only need a tiny bit of standing water to lay their eggs. The eggs hatch after a few days and become mosquitoes within 2 weeks. Empty things that trap water after it rains, like bird baths, pet bowls, plant saucers, gutters, buckets, wheelbarrows and wading pools. If you cannot drain standing water, treat it with *Bacillus thuringiensis* or Bt (sold as "Mosquito Dunks") that kills mosquito larvae, but is safe for people and animals. Follow the label instructions.
- Store indoors or **throw away** other things that could hold water like old tires, trash cans and recycle bins without lids, litter, tarps, children's toys, etc.
- **Use screens** on doors and windows you leave open. Cover rain barrels and boats with screens.
- **Buy fish** that eat mosquito larvae in ponds. Don't put them into water that drains into streams or rivers as they can harm other fish and wildlife.
- **Buy or build a bat house.** One brown bat can eat up to 600 mosquitoes in one hour!