

Zika 101 video

The news about the spread of the Zika virus has been concerning, and scary for some. At CDC we're working around the clock to protect your health and learn more about the virus spreading in South and Central America and the Caribbean, including the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Here's what we know:

Zika mainly spreads to people through the bite of an infected *Aedes aegypti* mosquito. Zika is not spread through routine direct person-to-person contact.

Although there are at least two documented cases of transmission through sexual contact.

While *Aedes* mosquitoes can be found in many areas in the continental U.S., primarily in the Southeast and Gulf Coast region, they are not transmitting Zika here so far.

And while we expect to eventually see some local transmission in the US, we expect that will be limited, based on what we have seen with similar mosquito-borne diseases.

Only about 1 in 5 people infected with Zika virus actually get sick.

Symptoms typically last a few days to a week, after which the virus leaves the body.

Even among those who have symptoms, Zika virus usually causes mild illness

And symptoms include fever, rash, joint pain and red eyes. At this time, there is no vaccine or treatment.

As Zika spreads throughout the Americas, Brazil recognized a surge in cases of a devastating birth defect called microcephaly. Babies with microcephaly have smaller than expected head size. Laboratory tests suggest Zika may be linked with this condition.

We understand this news is concerning, especially to pregnant women and their families.

CDC is working in partnership with Brazil and other countries around the world to undertake research so we can better understand the connection between Zika and microcephaly, as well as Zika and other poor health outcomes.

The best way to avoid getting Zika is to avoid mosquito bites.

- Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants.
- Stay in places with air conditioning or that have screened windows and doors that keep mosquitoes outside.
- Use EPA-registered insect repellents like DEET and picaridin, which are safe for pregnant and nursing women and children two months and older.
- Wear clothing and gear with permethrin or purchase permethrin-treated items.
- Eliminate mosquito breeding grounds by removing standing water.

Until more is known, CDC recommends pregnant women in any trimester consider postponing travel to areas with local transmission of Zika.

The list of these areas can be found on the CDC website.

CDC recommends men who live in or traveled to an area with Zika virus, who have a pregnant partner, should abstain from sex or use condoms for the duration of the pregnancy.”

Pregnant women who travel to one of these areas should talk to their doctor first and strictly follow steps to avoid mosquito bites during the trip.

For more information about Zika, visit the CDC website.