

June 2016

Zika Advisory

Information regarding Zika virus disease has been in the news since early 2016. This disease is caused by a virus and is spread to people primarily through the bite of an infected *Aedes* species mosquito. For most people the symptoms of Zika are mild and include fever, rash, joint pain, and conjunctivitis (red eyes). Symptoms typically last for several days to a week after being bitten by an infected mosquito. Because people rarely get sick enough to go to the hospital, people may not realize that they have been infected. However, Zika virus infection during pregnancy can cause a serious birth defect called microcephaly, as well as other severe fetal brain defects. Persons who have been infected with the virus are likely to be protected from future infections.

Specific areas where the Zika virus is spreading and causing disease are difficult to determine and will likely change over time. Travelers should visit the CDC Travelers' Health site for the most updated travel information. To date, no local mosquito-borne Zika virus disease cases have been reported in the US States but have been reported in the US Territories of Puerto Rico, US Virgin Islands and American Samoa. The US is reporting travel-associated cases. These imported cases could result in local spread of the virus in some areas of the United States.

When in areas with Zika and other diseases spread by mosquitos, take the following steps:

- Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants.
- Stay in places with air conditioning and windows and door screens to keep mosquitoes outside.
- Take steps to control mosquitos inside and outside your home.
- Sleep under a mosquito bed net if you are overseas or outside and are not able to protect yourself from mosquito bites.
- Use Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-registered insect repellents with one of the following active ingredients: DEET, picaridin, IR3535, oil of lemon eucalyptus, or para-menthane-diol.
 - Always follow product label instructions.
 - Reapply insect repellent as directed.
 - Do not spray repellent on the skin under clothing.
 - If you are also using sunscreen, apply sunscreen before applying insect repellent.
- Follow CDC guidelines for children and babies regarding safe products and other recommendations.
- Treat clothing and gear with permethrin or purchase permethrin-treated items and follow all product instructions carefully. Do not use permethrin products directly on skin.

Zika virus can be sexually transmitted from a man to his sex partners. This is of particular concern during pregnancy. Men who have traveled to or reside in an area with active Zika virus transmission and their pregnant sex partners should consistently and correctly use condoms during sex or abstain from sex for the duration of the pregnancy. Pregnant women should discuss their male sex partner's history of travel to areas with active Zika virus transmission and history of illness consistent with Zika virus disease with their health care provider.

Couples concerned about sexual transmission should follow these guidelines:

- Couples in which a man had confirmed Zika virus infection or clinical illness consistent with Zika virus disease should consider using condoms or abstaining from sex for at least 6 months after onset of illness.
- Couples in which a man traveled to an area with active Zika virus transmission but did not develop symptoms of Zika virus disease should consider using condoms or abstaining from sex for at least 8 weeks after departure from the area.
- Couples in which a man resides in an area with active Zika virus transmission but has not developed symptoms of Zika virus disease might consider using condoms or abstaining from sex while active transmission persists.

For more information please visit the CDC website at: www.cdc.gov/zika

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