



## NAVY AND MARINE CORPS PUBLIC HEALTH CENTER

PREVENTION AND PROTECTION START HERE

### Zika Virus Infection

Zika is a viral infection primarily spread by mosquito bites. Zika virus infection during pregnancy can cause microcephaly and other birth defects. Currently, Zika outbreaks are occurring in numerous Pacific Islands, the Caribbean, and throughout Central America and South America. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have issued travel notices for more than 50 countries and territories that are reporting Zika outbreaks. The CDC may also issue travel guidance within the US (similar to the recent Miami, Florida neighborhood travel advisory) when active mosquito transmission of Zika virus is confirmed. This updated information paper promotes awareness of Zika virus and recommends precautions for those travelling to or living in areas of active mosquito-borne transmission of Zika virus.

#### How do you become infected?

The virus is spread by:

- A bite from an infected mosquito (primary method of spread).
- A mother to her fetus during pregnancy.
- A person who has Zika to their sex partners.
- Blood transfusions.

#### What is your risk of becoming infected?

Navy and Marine Corps personnel, and their families, may become infected when travelling to or living in areas experiencing active Zika virus transmission. US states have reported more than 1,800 travel-associated cases. Sex partners of Zika-infected individuals also are at risk. Infection risk can be reduced by taking measures to avoid mosquito bites and by avoiding unprotected sex with a person who may have been exposed to Zika virus.

#### What are the typical symptoms?

- Fever
- Conjunctivitis (red, irritated eyes)
- Muscle Pain
- Rash
- Headache
- Joint Pain

Most people infected with Zika virus have no symptoms. About one in five people infected will develop mild symptoms lasting several days to a week. If symptoms occur, they typically appear 2—7 days after being bitten by an infected mosquito or having unprotected sex with an infected person.

#### How can you prevent being infected if you live in or travel to Zika virus areas?

Currently, no vaccine or drug is available to prevent Zika virus infection, and there is no specific antiviral treatment for the disease. The best way to prevent infection is to avoid mosquito bites (both day and night) while in areas of active transmission and avoid unprotected sex with a person who may have been exposed to Zika.

*The CDC recommends pregnant women postpone travel to any area with active Zika virus transmission. Pregnant women who do travel to one of these areas should talk to their healthcare provider before traveling and strictly follow steps to avoid mosquito bites. The CDC also recommends that, for the duration of pregnancy, pregnant women avoid unprotected sex with any sex partners who live in or traveled to an area of active Zika virus transmission.*

The following steps are recommended if you live in, or travel to, an area with active Zika virus transmission:

- Choose a hotel or lodging with air conditioning or with screens on windows and doors.
- Sleep under a mosquito bed net if you are outside or in a room that is not well screened.
- Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants.
- Use EPA-registered insect repellents containing DEET, picaridin, or IR3535. These are safe for pregnant women when used as directed.
- Use permethrin-treated clothing and equipment.
- Avoid unprotected sex with potentially exposed partners.
- Use condoms the right way, every time you have sex.

### What should you do if you suspect you have been infected?

If you develop sudden fever, rash, joint aches, or conjunctivitis (red, irritated eyes) within two weeks of travelling to an area of ongoing Zika virus transmission, or within two weeks of unprotected sex with a potentially-exposed person, see your healthcare provider immediately. Report your symptoms, recent travel, and history of sexual partners. Your provider will coordinate testing for Zika virus as appropriate and help manage your symptoms. Because Zika virus is often transmitted in the same geographic areas as dengue fever, you should avoid taking aspirin and other non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) until dengue infection can be ruled out, to reduce the risk of bleeding. You may use acetaminophen to treat fever and other symptoms. Finally, take strict steps to avoid mosquito bites during the first week after symptoms begin to avoid further spread of Zika virus.

### Zika Virus Resources

- **CDC information hotline:**  
800-CDC-INFO (800-232-4636)
- **Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center Zika virus information:**  
<http://www.med.navy.mil/sites/nmcphc/program-and-policy-support/Pages/Zika-virus.aspx>
- **CDC Zika virus webpage:**  
<http://www.cdc.gov/zika/index.html>
- **CDC Zika Travel Notices:**  
<http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/page/zika-travel-information>
- **CDC questions and answers, Zika virus infection and pregnancy:**  
<http://www.cdc.gov/zika/pregnancy/question-answers.html>
- **Zika and Sexual Transmission:**  
<http://www.cdc.gov/zika/transmission/sexual-transmission.html>
- **Pregnant? Read this before you travel:**  
<http://www.cdc.gov/zika/pdfs/zika-pregnancytravel.pdf>
- **Mosquito Bite Prevention for Travelers:**  
[http://www.cdc.gov/chikungunya/pdfs/fs\\_mosquito\\_bite\\_prevention\\_travelers.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/chikungunya/pdfs/fs_mosquito_bite_prevention_travelers.pdf)