

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THE Zika Virus

What Is the Zika Virus and How Is It Transmitted?

Since 2007, Zika virus outbreaks have been reported in the South Pacific. In 2015, reports confirmed that the Zika virus had spread to the Western Hemisphere. The Zika virus is transmitted primarily through the bite of an infected *Aedes* species of mosquitoes. Mosquitoes become infected when they consume blood from a person infected with the virus. Infected mosquitoes can then spread the Zika virus to other people through bites. Direct human-to-human transmission of the Zika virus can occur through sexual contact and from a pregnant woman to her fetus. Zika virus infection during pregnancy can cause severe birth defects, including microcephaly. The Zika virus is not transmitted from one person to another through casual contact.



How Is the Zika Virus Diagnosed? Travel History – Symptoms – Test Results

Diagnosis of the Zika virus is based upon a person's recent travel history, symptoms and test results. A blood or urine test can confirm a Zika virus infection. Symptoms of Zika are similar to other illnesses spread through mosquito bites. A physician or healthcare provider may order tests for several types of infections before diagnosing Zika.

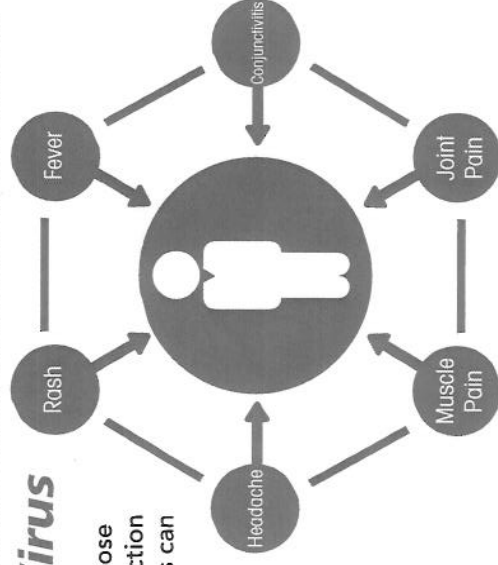
People usually do not feel sick enough to go to the hospital and rarely do people die from the Zika virus. Once a person has been infected with the Zika virus, they are likely to be protected from future infections.



Symptoms of the Zika Virus

Most people will not have any symptoms. For those who do, the signs and symptoms of Zika virus infection in children are similar to those in adults. Symptoms can last for several days to a week. The most common symptoms of Zika are:

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



Best Ways to Prevent Becoming Infected with the Zika Virus

There is no vaccine to prevent becoming infected with the Zika virus. The best way to prevent diseases transmitted by mosquitoes is to protect yourself as follows:

- Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants.
- Treat your clothing with permethrin, which is used in a number of ways to control insects.

Treatments for Someone with the Zika Virus

There is no specific medicine or treatment for the Zika virus. The symptoms are treated as follows:

- Get plenty of rest.
- Drink fluids to prevent dehydration.
- Take medicine such as acetaminophen to reduce fever and pain.
- Do not take aspirin or other non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs).
- If currently taking other medicines, consult your healthcare provider before taking any additional medication.



Source of Information: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at www.cdc.gov/zika/schools.htm#key-points