

# Zika Virus: Frequently Asked Questions

## What is Zika?

- Zika is a disease you can get from a mosquito that carries the Zika virus.
- If a pregnant woman has Zika, the virus can cause serious birth defects in her baby.
- There is no vaccine to prevent or treatment to cure the Zika virus.

## What countries and areas have Zika?

- Right now, Zika is found in Mexico, Central America, South America, the Caribbean, the Pacific Islands, Southeast Asia, and Africa. For details about which countries have Zika risk, visit <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/page/zika-information>
- Small areas of Florida and Texas also have Zika
- Zika is not spreading in San Francisco or California
- See [www.cdc.gov/zika/geo/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/zika/geo/index.html) for more information about where Zika is spreading

## How does Zika spread?

- The main way Zika spreads is through the bite of an infected *Aedes* mosquito. These mosquitoes usually bite during the day.
- People who have Zika virus can give it to their sex partners.
- Pregnant women can pass it to their babies.

## What are the symptoms of Zika?

- Fever, rash, joint or muscle pain, red eyes. Most people do not have any of these symptoms.

## What about Zika during pregnancy?

- If you are pregnant or planning to become pregnant, do not travel to areas that have Zika. If you cannot delay your travel plans you should talk to a health care provider, and you should protect yourself from mosquito bites.
- If you are pregnant and you or your sex partner have traveled to an area that has Zika, talk to a health care provider right away.

## How can I protect myself from getting Zika from mosquito bites?

If you are in an area where Zika is present, protect yourself from mosquito bites by:

- Wearing long-sleeved shirts and long pants (treated with Permethrin if possible)

- Frequently applying insect repellent (bug spray) that has one of these ingredients: DEET, Picaridin, IR3535, or Oil of lemon eucalyptus
- Repellents are safe to use while pregnant or breastfeeding, if used as directed

## How can I prevent sexual transmission of Zika?

- Men who have traveled to an area with Zika may be able to infect others for 6 months, and should use condoms during that time.
- Women who have traveled to an area with Zika can pass Zika for 8 weeks and should use condoms during that time.
- Women who are pregnant and have male partners who have traveled to an area with Zika should use condoms or not have sex (vaginal, anal, or oral) during the entire pregnancy.

## What if my partner and I are planning to get pregnant?

- If you are a woman who is planning to get pregnant and you have traveled to or lived in an area that has Zika virus, you should wait at least **8 weeks** after your return before trying to become pregnant. Until then, use condoms every time you have sex (vaginal, anal, or oral), or avoid sex.
- If your male partner has traveled to or lived in an area that has Zika virus, was diagnosed with Zika infection, or had symptoms of Zika you should wait **6 months**.
- If you have traveled to or are planning travel to Southeast Asia or Africa, talk with your health care provider.

## Questions?

- Contact a health care provider. Get prenatal care as soon as you know you are pregnant. If you do not have a doctor, call the New Patient Appointment Unit at (415) 682-1740.
- Visit the CDC Zika website at: [www.cdc.gov/zika/](http://www.cdc.gov/zika/)
- Visit the San Francisco Department of Public Health Zika Virus Information Webpage at: [www.sfdcp.org/zika](http://www.sfdcp.org/zika)

