

Talk ZIKA: Pregnancy

Discussion Points to Share with Women Who are Pregnant or Planning Pregnancy

What is Zika?

- ✓ Zika is a virus that spreads to people primarily through mosquito bites in areas of the world with Zika, including Mexico, Central America, South America and the Caribbean Islands. Two specific types of mosquito can spread the Zika virus, and both types are found in certain areas of California.
- ✓ Zika is **ALSO sexually transmitted**, meaning an infected person can pass Zika to his or her partners during sex.
- ✓ Most people with Zika don't get sick, so they may not even know they have it. Those who do get symptoms of Zika may have fever, rash, joint pain and/or red eyes. Other symptoms include headache and muscle pain.
- ✓ There is no specific medicine or vaccine for Zika.

What you should know about Zika:

- ✓ The greatest risk from Zika is to a pregnant woman's developing baby.
- ✓ If a pregnant woman gets Zika, by being bitten by an infected mosquito or by having unprotected sex with someone who is infected with Zika, she can pass the virus to her developing baby, which can cause miscarriage, stillbirth and severe birth defects.

If you are pregnant:

- ✓ **Protect yourself from mosquito bites and sexual transmission of Zika.**
- ✓ **If possible, don't go to areas with risk of Zika.**
- ✓ If you must go to areas with Zika, prevent mosquito bites by using EPA-registered insect repellent, which are safe and effective for pregnant and breastfeeding women to use.
- ✓ If you or your partner must go to an area where Zika is spreading, practice safer sex by using a condom (male or female) and dental dam—from start to finish, every time during all types of sex (vaginal, anal and oral)—or do not have sex during travel or after you return.
- ✓ If you have recently been to an area with Zika or had unprotected sex with someone who has been to an area with Zika, see your doctor, whether or not you feel sick. (For up-to-date information on areas with Zika, visit the [CDC Zika webpage](http://www.cdc.gov/zika/geo/index.html) at <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/geo/index.html>.)

If you are planning pregnancy:

- ✓ Both you and your partner should talk to your doctor about the risks of going to areas with Zika.
- ✓ If you must travel or have recently returned from an area with risk of Zika, practice safer sex: wear condoms (male or female) and dental dams every time during all types of sex (vaginal, anal and oral). Talk to your doctor about your family plan – it may be a good time

to delay pregnancy if you must travel.

- ✓ **If only the female traveler is exposed: practice safer sex or do not have sex for at least 2 months** after travel (if she doesn't have symptoms) or for **at least 2 months** from the start of her symptoms (or Zika diagnosis) before trying to conceive.
- ✓ **If only the male is exposed: do the same, but for at least 3 months.** This period is longer for men because Zika stays in semen longer than in other body fluids.
- ✓ **If a male and female travel together and both are exposed: practice safer sex or do not have sex for at least 3 months** after travel (if they don't have symptoms) or for **at least 3 months** from the start symptoms (or Zika diagnosis) before trying to conceive.
- ✓ Couples who are waiting to get pregnant should not have sex, or use condoms (male or female) or other barriers **in combination with an effective form of birth control** for the same time periods during or after travel to areas with Zika.

Everyone can help keep California's mothers and babies safe from Zika by preventing mosquitoes from breeding and biting:

- ✓ Use window and door screens at home, and drain standing water where mosquitoes can lay eggs in your yard.
- ✓ When outdoors, wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants, and use an EPA-registered insect repellent.
- ✓ If you have recently returned from an area with Zika, wear EPA-registered insect repellent for 3 weeks after returning home to prevent mosquitoes from biting you and spreading Zika in your neighborhood.

REFERENCES

Interim Guidance for Preconception Counseling and Prevention of Sexual Transmission of Zika Virus for Persons with Possible Zika Virus Exposure, United States, September (MMWR, September 30, 2016)

Interim Guidance for Prevention of Sexual Transmission of Zika Virus, United States, July 2016 (MMWR, July 25, 2016)

Interim Guidance for Health Care Providers Caring for Pregnant Women with Possible Zika Virus Exposure, United States, July 2016 (MMWR, July 25, 2016)

Update: Interim Guidance for Preconception Counseling and Prevention of Sexual Transmission of Zika Virus for Men with Possible Zika Virus Exposure, United States, August 2018 (MMWR, August 10, 2018)