

## **Zika virus and you**

### **What is Zika virus disease (Zika)?**

Zika virus disease (Zika) is spread mainly through the bite of certain mosquitos. A pregnant woman can spread the virus to her unborn baby. It can also be spread by a man or woman with Zika to their sex partners.

### **Is Zika dangerous?**

For most people, Zika is a mild illness; however, when an infected pregnant woman passes the virus to her unborn baby, it can cause serious birth defects. For women who do not want to get pregnant, you can prevent an unplanned pregnancy by using effective birth control like an intrauterine device (IUDs) or implants.

### **Where are Zika-carrying mosquitos found?**

The mosquitos that can carry Zika are found in many countries, including some parts of the United States. They are also in nearby regions including Puerto Rico, Mexico and Central and South America. **To find the latest countries where Zika is spreading, visit [www.cdc.gov/travel](http://www.cdc.gov/travel).**

### **How do I prevent Zika infection?**

The best way to prevent Zika is to not visit areas that have the Zika-carrying mosquitos. If you do travel to an area with the Zika virus, follow these tips to avoid being bitten by mosquitos:

- Wear long sleeves and pants.
- Use air conditioning or window and door screens to keep mosquitos outside. If mosquitos can get inside while you are sleeping, use bed nets.
- Use U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-registered insect repellents. To check if your repellent is EPA-registered, look on the bottle for an EPA registration number. When used as directed, these repellents are safe and effective for pregnant and breast-feeding women.

Using condoms, or not having sex at all, will prevent spreading the virus through sexual activities.

### **What are the symptoms of Zika?**

Most people who get the infection have no symptoms or mild symptoms. These symptoms are rash, fever, headache, joint pain and red eyes. They can last for several days to a week. Once a person has been infected, he or she is unlikely to get the virus again.

**What should I do if I think I have it?**

If you're pregnant or planning to get pregnant, ask your health care provider if you should get tested. Tell your provider if you have traveled to an area that has Zika or if you have had sex with a person who either has gotten the virus or has traveled to an area that has the Zika virus.

Want to learn more? Call Member Services at 1-800-600-4441 (TTY 711). Or visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website at [www.cdc.gov/zika](http://www.cdc.gov/zika).

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website: [cdc.gov/zika](http://cdc.gov/zika)

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