

# ZIKA BASICS AND HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

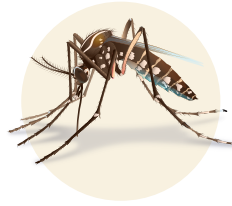


## How Zika Spreads

Zika virus spreads to people primarily through the bite of an infected *Aedes* species mosquito (*Ae. aegypti* and *Ae. albopictus*). The mosquitoes that spread Zika can bite at day and night.

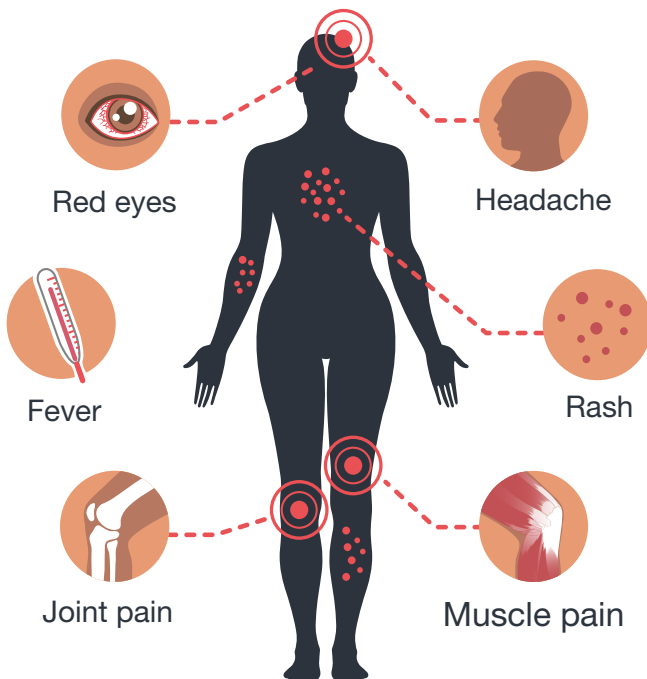
### Zika virus can also spread

- During sex with a person who has Zika to his or her sex partners.
- From a pregnant woman to her fetus during pregnancy or around the time of birth.
- Through blood transfusion (likely but not confirmed).



## Zika Symptoms

Many people infected with Zika won't have symptoms or will only have mild symptoms. The most common symptoms are fever, rash, headache, joint pain, red eyes, and muscle pain. Symptoms can last for several days to a week. People usually don't get sick enough to go to the hospital, and they very rarely die of Zika. Once a person has been infected with Zika, they are likely to be protected from future infections.



Visit our [Areas with Risk of Zika](#) webpage to find out where Zika is spreading.

[www.cdc.gov/zika](http://www.cdc.gov/zika)



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

## Why Zika is Risky for Some People

Zika infection during pregnancy can microcephaly and other birth defects. Microcephaly is a birth defect in which a baby's head is smaller than expected when compared to babies of the same sex and age. There have also been increased reports of Guillain-Barré syndrome, an uncommon sickness of the nervous system, in areas affected by Zika.



Microcephaly

## How to Prevent Zika

There is no vaccine to prevent Zika. The best way to prevent diseases spread by mosquitoes is to protect yourself and your family from mosquito bites and from getting Zika through sex.. **Here's how:**



- Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants.
- Stay in places with air conditioning and window and door screens to keep mosquitoes outside.
- Take steps to control mosquitoes [inside and outside your home](#).
- Treat your clothing and gear with permethrin or buy pre-treated items.
- Use [Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\)-registered](#) insect repellents. Always follow the product label instructions.
- When used as directed, these insect repellents are proven safe and effective even for pregnant and breastfeeding women.
  - Do not use insect repellents on babies younger than 2 months old.
  - Mosquito netting can be used to cover babies younger than 2 months old in carriers, strollers, or cribs to protect them from mosquito bites.
  - Do not use products containing oil of lemon eucalyptus or para-menthane-diol on children younger than 3 years old.
- Sleep under a mosquito bed net if air conditioned or screened rooms are not available or if sleeping outdoors.
- [Prevent sexual transmission of Zika by using condoms or not having sex](#).

## What to Do if You Have Zika

**There is no specific medicine to treat Zika. Treat the symptoms:**

- 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.
- If you are taking medicine for another medical condition, talk to your healthcare provider before taking additional medication.

**To help prevent others from getting sick, strictly follow steps to prevent mosquito bites during the first week of illness.**

