

# Informing Yourself on Zika Virus

# Virus Background

Zika virus was first reported over 50 years ago.

- 1947: First identified in the Zika forest in Uganda.
- 2007: First major outbreak in Yap (Micronesia).
- 2013: Outbreak in French Polynesia.
- 2014: Cases in Pacific Islands.
- 2015: Outbreak in Brazil.
- 2016: In greater than 30 countries in the Americas.



# How do you get Zika?

- Spread through the bite of an infected mosquito
  - *Aedes aegypti* and *Aedes albopictus*.
    - Same mosquitoes that spread illnesses such as: dengue, chikungunya, and yellow fever.
- Mother-to-child during pregnancy or delivery.
  - Zika is a cause of microcephaly and other severe fetal brain defects.
- Sexual transmission
  - Can be spread by a man to his partner during vaginal, anal, or oral sex.
- Blood transfusion
  - No confirmed cases of this in the United States at this time.

# Aedes Mosquitoes

*Aedes aegypti*



*Aedes albopictus*



# *Aedes Aegypti*

- *Aedes aegypti* mainly breeds in the domestic environment.
- Preferred habitat: water storage tanks and jars inside and outside houses. Also roof gutters, leaf axils, and bamboo stumps.
- Temporary containers such as jars, drums, used car tires, tin cans, bottles and plant pots.
- All these habitats typically contain relatively clean water.
- Bite primarily at dusk and dawn.
- Lives mainly in towns and cities.

# *Aedes albopictus*

- It breeds in temporary containers but prefers natural ones in forests, such as tree holes, leaf axils, ground pools and coconut shells.
- Often breeds outdoors in gardens and less frequently indoors in artificial containers.
- Bite primarily during the day.
- Lives mainly away from towns and cities.

# Symptoms of Zika Infection

- Only 1 in 5 people (20%) develop symptoms.
- Most common symptoms: fever, rash, joint pain, or red eyes (conjunctivitis).
- Other possible symptoms: muscle pain and headache.
- Usually last a few days to a week.
- Incubation period is unknown, likely a few days to a week.
- Virus likely in blood for 1 week after illness.



# Control of *Aedes* Mosquitoes

- Reduce or eliminate habitats.
- Limit storage of water inside and outside the house.
- Prevent accumulation of water in tins, can, bottles, tires, etc.



# Prevention: Avoid Mosquito Bites

- Use insect repellents (e.g. DEET).
  - DEET should not be used on children under 2 years of age.
- Wear bite-proof long sleeves and pants.
- Treat clothing and gear with insecticides (e.g. permethrin).
- Secure screens on windows and doors.
- Sleep under a mosquito bed net if you are overseas or outside.
- Dress children in clothing that covers arms and legs.



# Prevention: Sexual Transmission

- Travelers to Zika-affected areas who were not diagnosed with Zika and who do not experience symptoms:
  - Should wait at **least 8 weeks** after the last date of possible exposure before attempting conception.
  - Male travelers with a **pregnant** partner should consistently and correctly use condoms or abstain from sex **for the duration of the pregnancy**.
- Travelers to Zika-affected areas with diagnosed Zika or who experience symptoms:
  - Male travelers should be advised to wait **at least 6 months** after symptom onset before attempting conception.
  - Female travelers should wait **at least 8 weeks** after symptom onset before attempting conception.

# Recommendations for Pregnant Women

- Avoid travel to Zika-affected areas
- Avoid sexual contact with anyone who may have been infected with the Zika virus, or use condoms consistently and correctly for the duration of the pregnancy.



# Getting Tested for Zika

- Anyone who suspects they may have Zika should visit their health care provider
- Testing is currently recommended for the following groups of people:
  - Persons who travelled to a Zika-affected area and who experience one of the following symptoms **within 2 weeks of travel:** fever, rash, red eyes, joint pain.
  - Pregnant women who travelled to a Zika-affected area in the last 2-12 weeks.
  - Women who travelled to a Zika-affected area during the eight weeks before conception (6 weeks before the last menstrual period).
    - Travel must have taken place in the last 12 weeks.

# DC DOH Zika Contact Information

DC DOH Zika Resource Page:

<http://doh.dc.gov/publication/zika-virus-information>

Email Address:

[DOH.EPI@dc.gov](mailto:DOH.EPI@dc.gov)

CDC Zika Website:

<http://www.cdc.gov/zika/>