



Huron County Public Health

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Zika Virus (ZIKV)

Frequently Asked Questions

What is Zika?

Zika is a disease that is transmitted by mosquitoes infected with the Zika virus.

What are the symptoms of Zika?

The most common symptoms of Zika are fever, rash, joint pain, and/or red eyes. Symptoms are usually mild, lasting for several days to a week. Only 1 in 5 people that have the virus will show symptoms or even know they are infected.

Though symptoms are mild Zika poses a real concern for pregnant women. Zika has been linked to Microcephaly, a condition in which a baby's head is smaller than expected due to underdevelopment of the brain, as well as other serious birth defects.

How is Zika spread?

Zika is primarily transmitted through the bite of an infected mosquito. This is referred to as active transmission or mosquito-borne transmission. This occurs when a mosquito bites a person infected with Zika, and becomes infected with the virus. When the infected mosquito bites another person it is able to pass the virus onto them.

Zika is also transmitted through sexual transmission, blood transfusions, and from a pregnant woman to her baby. Zika is not spread through casual contact.

If a person does not have symptoms can they still spread Zika?

Zika typically lasts up to a week in blood (it is unknown how long it lasts in semen or other body fluids). Even if a person shows no symptoms, they are still able to spread the virus to mosquitoes while the virus is in their blood.

Pregnant women who have Zika, but show no symptoms can spread the virus to their baby. Men with no symptoms are also capable of spreading the virus to sexual partners, through unprotected sex.

Is Zika being transmitted in the United States?

At this time, there have been no cases of mosquito-borne transmission in the continental United States.



What mosquitoes transmit Zika?

The primary mosquito species that transmits Zika is the *Aedes aegypti*, better known as yellow fever mosquitoes. This kind of mosquito is mainly found in tropical, warmer regions. The *Aedes albopictus*, the Asian tiger mosquito, also has the potential to transmit the virus. The Asian tiger mosquito can survive in more temperate climates and has been found in some parts of Northern Ohio.

If a person is infected with Zika, can it affect their future children?

At this time, it is not believed that the virus will effect future children. However, couples should wait 2 months before trying to conceive if either has had Zika and showed no symptoms or if they have traveled to an area with active transmission. If either partner has experienced symptoms, they should wait 6 months after the symptoms started to try to get pregnant.

If a person gets Zika, can they get the virus again?

If a person has had Zika they will likely then be immune to the virus for life.

Because of the body's immune response to the virus, there could be a vaccine in the future.

Is there a vaccine for Zika?

No. There is no vaccine at this time. The National Institute for Health and Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA) (part of U.S. Department of Health and Human Services) is working on a vaccine, and hopes to complete clinical trials by the end of the year.

Sources: www.CDC.gov/Zika





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Protecting Against Zika and Other Mosquito-Borne Diseases

At this time, there are no cases of Zika being transmitted by mosquitoes in Ohio; however, mosquitoes can still spread other diseases. Take action this summer to stay safe and prevent mosquito-borne illnesses.

Eliminate Areas of Standing Water

- Clean up objects, such as tires, buckets, toys, and other objects that could hold water out of yards and outdoor areas.
- Empty and scrub out outdoor containers that hold water weekly— e.g. birdbaths, flowerpots, or pet water dishes.
- Cover open vents, plumbing pipes, or other open containers with lids or mesh coverings.
- Use mosquito dunks for pools and ponds. Mosquito dunks kill mosquito larvae, but are not harmful to people, pets, fish, or other wildlife.



Prevent Mosquito Bites

- Use EPA registered insect repellent, such as DEET.
- When using sunscreen in combination with insect repellent, apply the sunscreen first. If you reapply sunscreen throughout the day, also reapply insect repellent.
- Wear long-sleeved shirts and pants when possible.
- Keep mosquitos outside by using air conditioning and window and door screens.
- If you are not able to keep mosquitos out, consider sleeping under a mosquito bed net.

Pregnant Women

- Postpone travel to areas with active Zika transmission. An updated listing of affected areas can be found at cdc.gov/travel/page/zika-travel-information.
- If your partner has traveled to areas with active transmission, either abstain from sexual activity or consistently use condoms for the duration of the pregnancy.
- Take measures to prevent mosquito bites, listed above.

