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Health Department

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## Zika Virus

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### What is Zika virus?

Zika virus is a virus that can infect humans, mosquitoes, and monkeys. The majority of Zika virus cases in the continental United States have been reported in travelers returning from countries where Zika virus is spreading. A current list of these countries can be found at [www.cdc.gov/zika](http://www.cdc.gov/zika).

### How is Zika virus spread?

Most often, Zika virus is spread by the bite of an infected *Aedes* species mosquito. Mosquitoes become infected when they feed on infected humans. Mosquitoes can then spread Zika virus to other humans when they bite.

A small number of cases of sexual transmission of Zika virus have been identified. Zika virus infection can be transmitted from a pregnant woman to her fetus and also through blood donation. Red Cross Blood Donation Centers in the U.S. are screening donors for potential Zika virus infection.

### What are the symptoms of Zika virus?

Only about one in five people infected with Zika virus get sick, and the illness is usually mild. The most common symptoms are acute onset fever, rash, joint pain, or red eyes. Other symptoms include muscle pain and headache. Symptoms typically appear between two and seven days after infection. Severe Zika virus disease requiring hospitalizations is uncommon, and deaths are rare.

### How is Zika virus treated?

There is no specific treatment for Zika virus infection. Those infected with Zika virus should undergo supportive care, including getting plenty of rest, drinking fluids to prevent dehydration, and taking medicines such as acetaminophen to reduce fever or pain. Aspirin or other non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs should be avoided.

### What should I do if I think I have Zika virus?

If you have recently traveled to a country or area in the U.S. with ongoing Zika virus transmission and develop symptoms, contact your healthcare provider, especially if you are pregnant. Avoid being bitten by mosquitoes to prevent further transmission.

### How can I prevent Zika virus infection?

There is no vaccine for Zika virus. The best way to prevent infection is to avoid mosquito bites,

- Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants.
- Stay in places with air conditioning or that use window screens to keep mosquitoes outside.
- Use insect repellents containing DEET.
- Treat clothing and gear with permethrin or purchase permethrin-treated items.
- Sleep under a mosquito bed net if you are overseas or outside and are not able to protect yourself from mosquito bites.

Anyone who has recently traveled to an area with ongoing Zika virus transmission and has symptoms should abstain from sexual intercourse or use condoms correctly for six months to avoid transmitting Zika virus to their partners.

### What is the risk of Zika virus infection during pregnancy?

When a woman is infected with Zika virus during pregnancy, her baby could be born with a serious birth defect of the brain called microcephaly (baby's head is smaller than expected). The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends women who are pregnant or planning to become pregnant avoid travel to areas where Zika virus spread is ongoing. If a woman must travel to one of these areas, she must strictly follow steps to

#### For More Information:

Contact the Sedgwick County Health Department Epidemiology Program at 316-660-7300 or visit the Sedgwick County website at [www.sedgwickcounty.org](http://www.sedgwickcounty.org).