

# Zika FAQ and Resource Guide for Businesses & Employers

## What is Zika virus disease?

Zika virus disease is a disease caused by the Zika virus. It is most commonly spread to people through the bite of an infected Aedes species mosquito. About 80% of people infected with Zika virus may not experience any symptoms. Individuals who do experience illness usually report mild symptoms that last for several days to a week after being bitten by an infected mosquito. Once a person has been infected, they are likely to be protected from future infections.

## How is the Zika virus spread?

Zika virus is primarily transmitted through the bite of an infected Aedes species mosquito. The virus can spread to new areas where Aedes mosquitoes are known to exist when an infected, sick traveler from an area with active transmission of Zika virus gets bitten by a mosquito and that person transmits the virus to the mosquito, causing a new transmission chain to begin. Zika can also be sexually transmitted, transmitted from a mother to her baby and through a blood transfusion. There is no evidence that Zika can be transmitted through casual contact or through the air.

For more information, visit:

<http://www.cdc.gov/zika/transmission/index.html>

## What areas are affected by the Zika outbreak?

Many countries in Central and South America, the Caribbean, and U.S. territories have reported local transmission and are being significantly impacted by the Zika virus.

For more information, visit:

<http://www.cdc.gov/zika/geo/active-countries.html>

## Are Zika-transmitting mosquitoes found in Wisconsin?

The Aedes species of mosquitoes that can transmit Zika virus is not yet found in Wisconsin. It is possible that the Aedes species could come to Wisconsin, as the climate warms. Wisconsin Department of Health Services and the City of Milwaukee Health Department are monitoring for the existence of the Aedes mosquitoes in Wisconsin.

## How can I protect myself against Zika?

- **Prevent a bite.** Prevention of bites by infected mosquitoes is an effective means of avoiding infection.
- **Use insect repellents** containing either DEET, picaridin, IR3535, or certain oil of lemon-eucalyptus or para-menthane-diol products according to their label instructions.
- **Apply sunscreen first and then insect repellent.** Products that combine sunscreen and repellent are not recommended.
- **Use permethrin-treated clothing and gear** (such as boots, pants, socks, and tents). You can buy pre-treated clothing and gear or treat them yourself.
- **Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants when outdoors.** Tucking in shirts, tucking pants into socks, and wearing closed shoes instead of sandals may reduce risk.
- **Keep mosquitoes outside.** Use air-conditioning, and window/door screens to keep mosquitoes outside. If you are not able to protect yourself from mosquitoes inside, sleep under a mosquito bed net.
- **Empty standing water.** Reduce the number of mosquitoes inside and outside by emptying standing water from containers, such as flowerpots, gutters, or buckets.
- **Practice safe sex.** Sexual transmission of Zika virus from a male partner is possible. If you have sex (vaginal, anal, or oral) you should use condoms the right way every time. Condoms can also help prevent HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases. For more information, visit: <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/transmission/sexual-transmission.html>
- **Be up-to-date.** Visit the CDC website for updated travel alerts and warnings. <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/page/zika-travel-information>
- **Consult your health care provider.** If you are a woman of childbearing age, please consult your health care provider before traveling to a Zika affected area or before engaging in sexual activity with a male partner returning from or who resides in a Zika-affected area.

## What are the symptoms of Zika virus infection?

The most common symptoms are joint pain, rash, fever, and red eyes. About 80% of people who are infected with Zika virus may not have any symptoms. Illness may develop in 20% of infected people within 3 to 7 days after a bite from an infected mosquito. Symptoms are generally mild and can last for several days to a week.

*continued on other side*

### **Is Zika virus serious?**

Illness is rarely severe however the link to adverse effects to women who contract Zika virus during pregnancy is cause for serious concern. Risks to a developing fetus include microcephaly and other neurological syndromes. In addition, there is a potential link to Guillain-Barre syndrome, a neurological syndrome and Zika.

For more information, visit:

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/birthdefects/microcephaly.html>

### **How can I protect myself if I am pregnant and planning to travel to a Zika affected area?**

CDC recommends special precautions for pregnant women. Women who are pregnant should not travel to areas with Zika. If someone must travel to one of these areas, talk to your health care provider first.

### **What should I do if I have recently traveled to a Zika-affected area?**

After travel, it is crucial to prevent additional mosquito bites for 3 weeks to avoid spreading the disease. Men who have traveled to a Zika affected area and have a pregnant partner should abstain from sexual activity (vaginal, anal, or oral) for the duration of the pregnancy.

For more information, visit:

<http://www.cdc.gov/zika/transmission/sexual-transmission.html>

### **What is the treatment for Zika virus?**

Take medication such as acetaminophen to relieve fever and pain. Do not take aspirin or non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medications such as ibuprofen. Get plenty of rest and keep well hydrated by drinking plenty of fluids. Talk to your health care provider if you develop a fever with a rash, joint pain, or red eyes and tell them about your travel. There is no vaccine to protect against Zika.

### **How is Zika testing performed?**

Zika virus can be detected with a blood test, however the test is only positive during an acute infection, about 7 days after onset of symptoms. There are a limited number of laboratories available to do the testing. Please contact your healthcare provider if you need testing, and they will work with the public health laboratories to perform the testing for Zika.

### **Where can I find more information about Zika virus?**

If you have business travelers traveling to or returning from a Zika-affected area who have questions, please contact the City of Milwaukee Health Department at 414-286-3624, or visit our website at: <http://www.milwaukee.gov/health>

Additional information can be found at:

#### **Wisconsin Department Health Services:**

<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/arboviral/zika.htm>

#### **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:**

<http://www.cdc.gov/zika/about/index.html>



Tom Barrett, Mayor  
Bevan K. Baker,  
Commissioner of Health  
[www.milwaukee.gov/health](http://www.milwaukee.gov/health)