Zika virus is a mosquito-borne virus that is transmitted to people through the bite of an infected *Aedes* species mosquito. Prior to 2015, Zika virus outbreaks have occurred in areas of Africa, Southeast Asia, and the Pacific Islands. Zika has now been identified in Mexico, Central America, the Caribbean and South America.

The most common symptoms of Zika are fever, rash, joint pain, and conjunctivitis (red eyes). The illness is usually mild with symptoms lasting from several days to a week. Severe disease requiring hospitalization is uncommon.

Zika virus can be spread from a pregnant woman to her baby. There have been reports of a serious birth defect and other poor pregnancy outcomes in babies of mothers who were infected with Zika virus while pregnant.

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has issued a travel alert for people traveling to regions and certain countries where Zika virus transmission is ongoing. The CDC and the World Health Organization (WHO) are continuing to monitor the spread of the Zika virus.


Key Facts

- Zika virus is transmitted to people primarily through the bite of an infected *Aedes* species mosquito.
  - The virus is known to circulate in Africa, the Americas, Asia and the Pacific.
  - This type of mosquito is an aggressive daytime biter.
  - People with Zika virus disease usually have a mild fever, skin rash (exanthema) and conjunctivitis. These symptoms normally last for 2-7 days.
  - There is no specific treatment or vaccine currently available.
  - The best form of prevention is protection against mosquito bites.
- Mosquitoes that spread Zika virus also spread dengue and chikungunya viruses.
- Mosquitoes can spread other viruses, including but not limited to Eastern Equine Encephalitis and West Nile Virus.
- An important part of controlling mosquitoes is to remove mosquito habitats.
  - Get rid of standing water in rain gutters, old tires, buckets, etc.
  - Empty and change the water in bird baths, rain barrels and potted plants.
  - Keep swimming pools and other pools of water treated and circulating.

CDC Travel Alert - Level 2
Practice Enhanced Precautions

- Travelers should protect themselves by preventing mosquito bites:
  - Cover exposed skin by wearing long-sleeved shirts and long pants.
  - Use EPA-registered insect repellents containing DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus (OLE), or IR3535.
    - NOTE: Always use as directed and according to the product label.
  - Use permethrin-treated clothing and gear (such as boots, pants, socks, and tents).
  - Stay and sleep in screened-in or air-conditioned rooms.
- Special precautions for women who are pregnant or trying to become pregnant:
  - Consider postponing travel to any area where Zika virus transmission is ongoing.
  - If you must travel to one of these areas, talk to your doctor first.
  - Strictly follow steps to prevent mosquito bites during your trip.

Travel Health Questions?
Contact a health care provider knowledgeable in travel medicine.

Stony Brook University Student Health Services
(631) 632-6740.

Stony Brook Medicine, Preventive Medicine
Travel Medicine and Adult Vaccination Program
(631) 444-6250

If you are sick?
Let your healthcare provider know if you develop a fever, rash, joint pain, or conjunctivitis (red eyes), after traveling to an area with ongoing transmission of the Zika virus.

To help prevent others from getting sick, avoid mosquito bites during the first week of illness.