

Zika virus pandemic:

A number of mosquito-borne viruses have been detected, or are currently being transmitted within the U.S., including La Crosse encephalitis virus, St. Louis encephalitis virus, Western equine encephalitis virus, West Nile virus, and sporadic cases of Dengue virus. The recent pandemic level of Zika virus spreading throughout Central and South American countries suggest it is only a matter of time before Zika virus is transmitted locally. Over 544 cases of Zika virus disease have already been detected in the U.S., as of May 18th, 2016. Although all of these cases were acquired from mosquito bites abroad, the geographical range of the mosquito species that transmit Zika virus spans about half of the U.S., with states along the Gulf and Eastern coasts at a higher risk.



Zika virus disease:

Only about 20% of individuals infected with Zika virus will become ill. The symptoms, including fever, rash, joint pain, and/or conjunctivitis, are typically mild and last a few days to a week. However, a **Zika virus infection during pregnancy may lead to significant birth defects. The virus can also be transmitted through sexual contact. Therefore, the CDC recommends pregnant women to avoid travel to Zika virus-affected areas, and men who have traveled to affected areas should consistently and correctly use condoms, or abstain from sexual activity with partners that may become pregnant, and for the duration of pregnancy, for those with pregnant partners.** Testing should be carried out on anyone who has traveled to affected areas and is symptomatic. Currently, only palliative treatments are available. Aspirin and other NSAIDS should be avoided until dengue fever is ruled out.

General measures to protect against mosquito-borne illnesses:

- **Avoid outbreak locales.** If possible, resist traveling to locations that are experiencing an epidemic. The CDC maintains a [travelers' health advisory site](http://www.cdc.gov/travel/qa/faq-zika-virus.html), which informs travelers of regional disease transmission patterns and outbreaks.
- **Insect repellents.** Application of an [EPA-registered insect repellent](http://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/) to skin and clothing is one of the easiest and most effective measures for avoiding mosquito bites. These include products containing DEET, picaridin, IR3535, oil of lemon eucalyptus, and para-menthane- diol.
- **Wear protective clothing.** Minimize exposed areas of skin by wearing long-sleeved shirts, pants, boots, close-toed shoes with socks, and hats. Insect repellents applied to clothing offer added protection.
- **Eliminate breeding grounds.** Get rid of mosquito breeding sites by emptying standing water from flowerpots, buckets and barrels. Change the water in pet dishes and replace the water in birdbaths weekly. Drill holes in tire swings so water drains out. Keep wading pools empty and on their sides when they are not being used.



Additional resources:

General information on Zika virus: <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/index.html>
<http://www.adph.org/mosquito/index.asp?id=7427>

General travel information: <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/>

Avoiding vector-borne disease: <http://www.cdc.gov/ncezid/dvbd/index.html>