

ZIKA: Get The Facts

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Mosquitos have been getting a lot of attention in the news recently! There are many viruses that mosquitos can spread, but Zika is the most current topic of interest.

a condition where the immune system attacks the peripheral nervous system.

What is Zika?

Zika is a virus, discovered in Africa in 1947, that is spread by mosquitos. It has made its way to the US largely due to our highly mobile society. The symptoms of Zika are sudden onset of fever with rash, joint pain, and pink eye. Symptoms may include headache and muscle aches.



Aedes Aegypti,
Yellow Fever Mosquito

There are several different types of mosquito. Zika-carrying mosquitoes bite primarily in the day. This mosquito is also responsible for spreading dengue fever and chikunguna.

The first step of prevention is to avoid or limit exposure to mosquito bites. To protect yourself and your family from mosquito bites, wear protective clothing such as long pants and long sleeves, use a mosquito repellent, avoid areas where mosquitoes are abundant, and use window and door screens to keep mosquitoes outside.

What is the treatment for Zika?

Currently, there is no vaccine or medication to treat Zika. Treatment suggestions include: rest, drink plenty of fluids, and take fever and pain relief medication such as acetaminophen.



Aedes Albopictus,
Asian Tiger Mosquito

Zika can also be transmitted through intercourse. It is not known how long the virus can be spread in this manner therefore precautions should be taken to avoid transmission of the virus through intimate contact.

What is all the fuss about?

There appears to be an association between the Zika virus and newborn babies being born with congenital microcephaly. Microcephaly is a rare neurological condition where due to abnormal brain development in the womb, a newborn baby's head is smaller than the heads of infants that are the same age and sex. There also appears to be a link between Zika and the development of Guillain-Barré syndrome;

If you or someone you know has traveled to an area with Zika such as the US Virgin Islands or Costa Rica, steps should be taken to prevent mosquito bites to prevent the spread of Zika to mosquitoes for no less than 3 weeks even if they do not feel ill. Visit <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/page/zika-travel-information> for more information on Zika and traveling.

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What type of repellent should I use?

Choose a mosquito repellent that is registered with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and contains active ingredients such as DEET, picaridin, IR3535, para-menthane-diol, and oil of lemon eucalyptus. These repellents provide long lasting protection and when used as directed are safe and effective.



You can also treat your clothing with permethrin or purchase clothing that has been treated. Clothing that has been treated with permethrin can be washed multiple times and still remain protective. Follow all directions and read all product information to determine how to apply the product, if doing it yourself, and to learn how long the protection will last. Permethrin is for use only on clothing, never apply directly to skin.



Has Zika been found in the United States?

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as of June 1, 2016 in the United States there have been no cases reported of locally acquired Zika. However, there have been 618 cases of travel acquired Zika reported. Of these 618 reported cases, 11 of them were through intercourse. The US territories, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, have reported 1,110 local acquired cases of Zika and 4 cases of travel acquired Zika.

More Information:

Websites

- http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_zika
- <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/index.html>
- <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/prevention/index.html>
- <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/geo/united-states.html>

ZIKA: Get the Facts and Know What to Do

If you've been hearing a lot about the Zika virus, join Extension staff to hear more about what this means to you.

Lakes Region Library
1511 Druid Rd
Inverness
Friday, August 12, 10:00am - 11:30am

Coastal Region Library
8619 W Crystal St
Crystal River
Friday, August 19, 1:30pm - 3:00pm