



Frequently Asked Questions: *Zika Virus*

What is the status of Zika virus in Florida?

Currently, there are no locally-acquired cases of Zika virus in Florida. The current number of **travel-associated cases** of Zika virus in Florida can be found at, <http://www.floridahealth.gov/diseases-and-conditions/zika-virus/index.html>. The *Aedes aegypti* mosquito, the type of mosquito that spreads the Zika virus, is present in Florida and throughout the southern United States.

Do you think Zika virus will spread in Florida?

From learned experience with dengue virus and chikungunya virus in Florida, which are spread by the same mosquito, travelers who come back infected can infect local mosquito populations. With what we know from dengue and chikungunya, it is very unlikely we will have large outbreaks of Zika virus in the United States. One major reason for this is we have better constructed housing with air conditioning and intact screens that protect us from being bitten by mosquitoes in our homes. When locally acquired mosquito-borne illness is present, the department works closely with mosquito control to stop further transmission of the virus of concern. Mosquito control and the health department jointly provide public education whenever possible as well since it is very important all residents cooperate and drain containers on their property at least weekly to help successfully control this mosquito.

Where can I find the most current information on Zika virus activity in Florida?

DOH has created a webpage with a variety of resources for the public and health care community, <http://www.floridahealth.gov/diseases-and-conditions/zika-virus/index.html>. Each day, the department updates the website and issues a press release with case count information. Recently, the department proactively sent Zika educational and outreach materials to health care professionals across the state - specifically obstetricians.

Why do people say that pregnant mothers should be aware of this virus?

The Ministry of Health of Brazil has reported an increase in the numbers of newborns with microcephaly as well as other poor pregnancy outcomes in areas experiencing Zika virus outbreaks. The CDC is conducting research to further characterize the relationship between Zika virus and poor pregnancy outcomes. Additional studies are planned to learn more about the risks of Zika virus infection during pregnancy. There are many causes of microcephaly in babies, including genetic abnormalities.

How can I protect myself and my family?

The Florida Department of Health urges Florida residents and visitors to protect themselves from all mosquito-borne illnesses by draining standing water; covering their skin with repellent and clothing; covering windows with screens; and other basic **Drain** and **Cover** precautions.

Is it safe to travel to Florida?

Yes, traveling to Florida is safe. There is no evidence of Zika virus spreading in Florida. Travelers to Florida should always take precautions to protect against mosquito bites (such as repellents) and sun burns (sun screen, sun glasses). Always read manufacturer's instructions carefully before using repellents or insecticides.

Should I postpone my trip to Florida?

No, there is no reason related to Zika virus to postpone your travel to Florida. There is no evidence that Zika virus is spreading in Florida.

I am pregnant and want to travel to Florida is it safe?

Yes, traveling to Florida is safe. There is no evidence of Zika virus spreading in Florida among any people, including pregnant women. Travelers to Florida should always take precautions to protect against mosquito bites (such as repellents) and sun burns (sun screen, sun glasses).

Do you have Zika virus in Florida?

No, we currently do not have any local spread of Zika virus in Florida. Florida has reported some Zika fever cases among people who traveled to other countries where Zika virus is currently spreading in mosquito populations local to that area.

What is being done to prevent transmission of Zika virus in Florida?

State and local health departments are working closely with other partners to make sure people at risk for Zika virus infections as well as health care providers stay informed with the most current science and public information about the Zika virus. We also provide education about effective repellents and insecticides. These include products with DEET, picaridin, IR 3535 and some oil of lemon eucalyptus and para-methane-diol products. In addition, county health department staff report suspect Zika fever cases to local mosquito control staff to make sure mosquito control activities are put in place.

I heard that you can contract Zika virus by sexual contact, is it true?

There have been two cases where a female has developed Zika virus infection after sexual contact with a male infected with the virus. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance, if a male partner of a pregnant woman lives in or travels to an area with active Zika virus transmission, the couple should abstain from sex or use condoms every time they have sexual contact for the duration of the pregnancy.

Who can I call to have the area around my home sprayed for mosquitoes?

In Florida, many counties and cities have mosquito control services. Please contact your county or city government offices to find out if these services are available in your area. The mosquitoes that spread Zika breed in small containers so you can also limit your risk by making sure to regularly dump all sources of standing water in bird baths, flower pots, etc. on your property - at least weekly.

Additional Information

For more information on mosquito bite prevention, visit Florida Department of Health at <http://www.floridahealth.gov/diseases-and-conditions/mosquito-borne-diseases/prevention.html> and http://www.floridahealth.gov/diseases-and-conditions/zika-virus/index.html?utm_source=flhealthIndex.

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention, <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/>; also available in Spanish, at http://www.cdc.gov/spanish/mediosdecomunicacion/comunicados/d_recomendaciones_viajeros_virus_del_zika_011516.html.

For Mosquito-borne disease and vector surveillance, please visit <http://www.floridahealth.gov/diseases-and-conditions/mosquito-borne-diseases/surveillance.html> and <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/vector/index.html>.