

ZIKA VIRUS



The Zika virus seems to be on pregnant patients' minds. It is also worrying those who plan on becoming pregnant in the near future. Here is a review of the most recent information from the CDC.

First of all, what is Zika? Zika is a virus that is spread mainly by an infected mosquito. There are now concerns that the virus may also be passed through an infected sexual partner and blood transfusions.

What are the symptoms? Symptoms of the virus are usually very mild and include a rash, fever, red eyes and joint pain. These symptoms are usually mild and can last two to seven days. As many as 80% of infected people won't even notice any symptoms.

How do you protect yourself? If you must travel to an area where there are concerns for Zika, the most important advice is to protect yourself against mosquitos. Try to wear long sleeve clothing and pants if possible. Stay indoors in well ventilated air conditioned areas as much as you can. EPA mosquito repellent is advised on any skin-exposed surface—be sure to apply sunblock first. Look at the [CDC website](#) for travel health notices.

Currently the CDC advises against travel to areas affected by the Zika virus for pregnant women or their partner. If there is any concern for possible exposure in the male partner, he should wear a condom for the duration of pregnancy.

If a patient has any concern for exposure, even if asymptomatic, testing can be done through a blood test. If the blood test is positive, amniocentesis will confirm whether there had been transmission to the fetus. Serial ultrasounds would then be done to follow the developing fetus.

New information is coming out daily on the Zika virus that that is causing patients to be very nervous. It's important to keep in mind that the numbers of affected babies worldwide are still very low. This of course does not negate our concern but just should reassure you that that as long as you use caution, you and your baby should be fine.

In short, please let us know if you are pregnant and if you have traveled during your pregnancy to an at-risk part of the world. We strongly discourage travel to infected areas for the pregnant woman at this time.

For more detailed information, please visit :<http://www.cdc.gov/zika/>.