



Zika Fever: Information for Obstetricians

Version 3.0 (August 23, 2016)

DOH: www.flhealth.gov/zika

CDC: www.cdc.gov/zika/

CDC microcephaly: www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/birthdefects/microcephaly.html

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Zika fever has been identified in South and Central America as well as Mexico and the Caribbean including Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Focal activity has also been reported in Miami-Dade County. **Zika virus infection during pregnancy can cause certain birth defects including microcephaly.** In response, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends:

- Pregnant women in any trimester should consider postponing travel to areas where Zika virus transmission is ongoing. Pregnant women who must travel to these areas should talk to their doctor or other health care provider first and strictly follow steps to avoid mosquito bites during the trip.
- Pregnant women and their sexual partners should consistently and correctly use condoms or other barrier precautions or abstain from sex for the duration of the pregnancy if the partner travels to an area with Zika virus activity.
- Women trying to become pregnant should consult with their health care provider before traveling to areas with Zika virus activity and strictly follow steps to prevent mosquito bites during the trip. Couples should consider delaying attempts to become pregnant for 2 months following either partner's travel. Couples should consider delaying attempts to become pregnant for 6 months if male partners experienced signs/symptoms of Zika fever during or within two weeks of travel.
- Fetuses and infants of women infected with Zika virus during pregnancy should be evaluated for possible congenital infection and neurologic abnormalities, including microcephaly or intracranial calcifications, hearing, vision or developmental abnormalities.

Transmission occurs through the bite of an infected mosquito. Perinatal, in utero, sexual, transfusion and bodily fluid transmissions have been reported; to date, transmission through breastfeeding has not been reported. The benefits of breastfeeding outweigh the risks of Zika virus.

Pregnant women or women trying to become pregnant should take appropriate precautions to avoid mosquito bites.

- **Use EPA registered insect repellent** with any of the following active ingredients
 - DEET
 - Oil of lemon eucalyptus
 - Picaridin
 - IR3535

It is safe for pregnant or nursing women to use EPA-approved repellents **if applied according to package label instructions.**
- **Cover skin** with long-sleeved shirts and long pants
 - Apply a permethrin repellent directly to clothing or purchase pre-treated clothing. Follow the manufacturer's directions and **do not apply directly to skin.**
- **Keep mosquitoes out of homes and other buildings**
 - Use air conditioning and maintain intact screens on windows and doors.
- Other mosquito-borne diseases such as dengue fever, chikungunya fever, and malaria may also impact the fetus or newborn and pose a risk in many of the same areas Zika virus is present, emphasizing the need to strictly follow steps to prevent mosquito bites.
- Travelers can protect family members and prevent infection of local mosquitoes by avoiding mosquito bites for at least 3 weeks following return home.
- Protect family members by draining standing water near residences and businesses at least weekly to keep local mosquito populations low and prevent local introductions.