

What Is Zika Virus?

- **Zika virus (ZIKV) is spread primarily by the bite of an infected *Aedes aegypti* mosquito, which bites mainly in daytime.**
- ***Aedes aegypti* mosquitos spread other diseases, like dengue, chikungunya, and yellow fever.**
- **ZIKV can also be transmitted from an infected pregnant woman to her baby and by sexual activity with an infected person.**



Photo Credit: Daily News Los Angeles

SYMPTOMS

Most persons with ZIKV infection show no symptoms. If symptoms appear, they are often mild:

- Rash and itching all over the body
- Fever
- Headache
- Joint pain
- Muscle pain
- Conjunctivitis (red eyes)

Symptoms last about 2–7 days. Symptoms of ZIKV are similar to other viruses spread through mosquito bites, like dengue and chikungunya. In rare cases, ZIKV can lead to Guillain-Barré syndrome, which can cause muscle weakness and paralysis.

PREVENTION

No vaccine exists at this time to protect against infection with ZIKV. Preventing contact with mosquitos will reduce the chances of getting ZIKV infection and other mosquito-borne diseases. Here are some ways to protect you and your family:

- Protect yourself from mosquito bites.
- Get rid of standing water and other mosquito breeding sites. More advice on mosquito control is available from Trinidad and Tobago's Insect Vector Control Division.
- Use condoms to avoid contracting ZIKV through sexual intercourse.
- Family planning can help you avoid an unplanned pregnancy affected by ZIKV infection.

ZIKA FAST FACTS

- February 1, 2016–November 18, 2019: Per the World Health Organization (WHO), ZIKV was a “Public Health Emergency of International Concern” after several cases of microcephaly and rare disorders of the nervous system occurred in Brazil.
- In February 2016, Trinidad and Tobago recorded its first case of ZIKV infection.
- The most significant, long-term public health impact of ZIKV is congenital Zika syndrome in children.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION:

- **W.H.O. Fact Sheet: Zika Virus (July 2018)**
<https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/zika-virus>
- **Caribbean Public Health Agency:** <http://www.carpha.org/zika>
- **Ministry of Health Trinidad and Tobago:**
Zika Virus - Public Health Advisories & Brochure (Zika Frequently Asked Questions)
<http://www.health.gov.tt/search/default.aspx?srch=zika>

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

- **Health Centres in your area**
- **Ministry of Health Website:** (<http://www.health.gov.tt/>)
Phone: 1-868-627-0010
- **North Central Regional Health Authority's Customer Service Hotline**
Phone: 1-868-715-9785

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