FACT SHEET

ZIKA

Zika virus disease, also called Zika fever, is caused by a virus transmitted primarily by *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes.

First identified in Ugandan monkeys in 1947, then in humans in 1952, the Zika virus was almost dormant for six decades.

Global outbreaks in 2015 were recorded in Africa, the Americas, Asia and the Pacific.

On 1 February 2016, the World Health Organization declared a Public Health Emergency of International Concern in response to clusters of microcephaly and Guillain-Barre Syndrome in the Americas, which were suspected to be associated with congenital Zika virus infection. Zika virus infection during pregnancy was subsequently found to be associated with a range of birth defects, classified as Congenital Zika Syndrome.

Causes of Zika

Zika is caused by a virus transmitted primarily by *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes, which bite during the day usually just after sunrise and around sunset.

Symptoms of Zika

- HEADACHE
- CONJUNCTIVITIS
- RASH
- HIGH FEVER
- MUSCLE AND JOINT ACHES

Most people with Zika virus infection do not develop symptoms; for those who do, symptoms tend to last for two to seven days.

In some cases, women who are infected by Zika virus during pregnancy bear children with serious health conditions, including microcephaly and other congenital malformations, which can cause life-long disability. There is evidence than Zika virus infection can also trigger the auto-immune condition Guillain-Barre Syndrome, which can cause muscle weakness and other neurological symptoms that can last weeks or months.

More about Zika

Zika is a mosquito-borne disease caused by the Zika virus. Here are answers to some frequently asked questions about this disease and its symptoms, treatments and prevention techniques.

Where does Zika occur?

It is possible to contract Zika in Africa, the Americas, Asia and the Pacific.

Zika cases have been reported from more than 80 countries.

How many people have been affected by Zika?

Because Zika virus infection often causes little or mild illness, it is difficult to quantify the incidence of infection. Since 2015, more than 900,000 suspected cases of Zika have been reported.

How does Zika spread?

Zika can spread where *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes are present. It is a virus transmitted between humans primarily by this mosquito, which is commonly found around homes and urban areas.

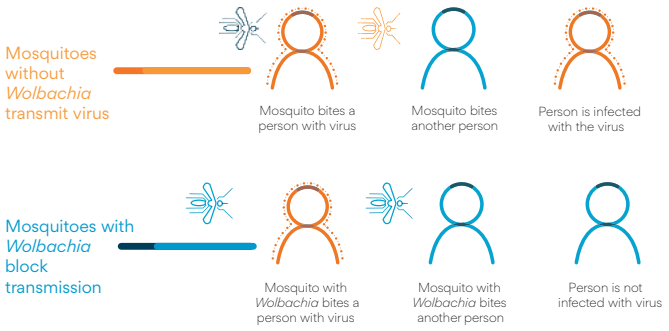
How is Zika treated?

There is no treatment for Zika, other than rest fluids, and management of symptoms with common medicines. Symptoms of Zika virus infection are usually mild, and resolve within seven days.

How can we help prevent Zika?

There is no vaccine for the Zika virus. Prevention relies on reducing exposure to mosquito bites, by removing mosquito breeding sites, using insecticides to suppress the mosquito population, and wearing protective clothing and repellents.

However, the World Mosquito Program's *Wolbachia* method is showing promising results internationally. It is helping to block the transmission of Zika, as well as other viruses transmitted by *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes, such as dengue, chikungunya and yellow fever.



How can I find out more about Zika?

Contact your local health authority for guidance. Or, for general information, read the Zika virus fact sheet from the World Health Organization.

READ THE ZIKA FACT SHEET FROM THE WHO

About us

The World Mosquito Program (WMP) is a not-for-profit group of companies owned by Monash University that works to protect the global community from mosquito-borne diseases. The World Mosquito Program uses naturally occurring bacteria called *Wolbachia* to reduce the ability of mosquitoes to transmit viruses to humans.

Following decades of research and successful field trial results, the World Mosquito Program is currently partnering with communities in 11 countries around the world to implement our ground-breaking solution. We have staff working in countries across Oceania, Asia, Europe, and the Americas, and offices established in Australia, Vietnam, France and Panama.

Our approach has widespread support from communities, governments, research institutes and philanthropic partners around the world. Through collaboration and innovation, we are making a difference to millions of lives.

Contact us

A collaboration between:

World Mosquito Program | MONASH University