

**EPI Update, January 29, 2016**  
**Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology (CADE)**  
**Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH)**

**Zika virus**

About 20 percent of people infected with Zika virus will become ill. The most common symptoms of Zika are fever, rash, joint pain, or conjunctivitis. While illness is usually mild and severe disease requiring hospitalization is uncommon, there is a possible link between Zika virus infection in pregnant women and subsequent birth defects (such as microcephaly and other poor pregnancy outcomes). Knowledge of the link between Zika and these outcomes is evolving.

Zika virus infection should be considered in patients with acute fever, rash, arthralgia, or conjunctivitis, who traveled to areas with ongoing transmission in the two weeks prior to onset of illness. Zika virus infection should also be considered in infants with microcephaly or intracranial calcifications born to women who traveled to or resided in an area with Zika virus transmission while pregnant.

There are no commercially available diagnostic tests for Zika virus disease, but testing is performed at the CDC. Healthcare providers suspecting Zika virus infection in their patient should contact CADE at **800-362-2736**. CADE staff will consult with the provider to determine whether the case meets the CDC testing criteria. If testing is warranted, CADE staff will work with the provider to determine which specimens to collect and make arrangements for the courier to pick up collected specimens and deliver them to the State Hygienic Laboratory where they will be packaged and sent to the CDC for testing.

General healthcare provider information on Zika: [www.cdc.gov/zika/hc-providers/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/zika/hc-providers/index.html)

Information for obstetrical healthcare providers:

- [Interim Guidelines for Pregnant Women During a Zika Virus Outbreak—United States, 2016](#)
- [Questions and Answers for Obstetrical Health Care Providers: Pregnant Women and Zika Virus Infection](#)
  - [Spanish version](#)

Information for pediatric healthcare providers:

- [Interim Guidelines for the Evaluation and Testing of Infants with Possible Congenital Zika Virus Infection – United States, 2016](#)
- [Questions and Answers for Pediatric Healthcare Providers: Infants and Zika Virus Infection](#)

Zika virus is transmitted to people primarily through the bite of an infected *Aedes* species mosquito. These mosquitos are present in many tropical and subtropical environments and are aggressive daytime biters. The mosquitoes become infected when they feed on a person already infected with the virus. Infected mosquitoes can then spread the virus to other people through bites. The *Aedes* mosquitoes that are transmitting Zika virus in other areas of the world are not established in Iowa, so the risk to lowans occurs when they travel to Zika-affected areas.

If a mother is infected during pregnancy, it can rarely be passed from mother to child. Zika may possibly be passed through infected blood and sexual contact (these transmission mechanisms are still being studied as reports are exceedingly rare).

It is recommended that women who are pregnant (in any trimester) consider postponing travel to any area where Zika virus transmission is ongoing. CDC has issued Level 2 Alerts to Zika-affected areas advising all travelers to take measures to prevent mosquito bites.

For more information on travel recommendations, visit [wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/page/zika-travel-information](http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/page/zika-travel-information).

A new page has been created on the IDPH website to disseminate the latest Zika virus information. Visit <http://idph.iowa.gov/ehi/zika>.