



Zika Fever - Information for Obstetricians

Zika fever has been identified in South and Central America as well as Mexico and the Caribbean including Puerto Rico. **The Ministry of Health of Brazil has reported an increase in the numbers of babies born with microcephaly in areas experiencing Zika virus outbreaks.** Further studies are being conducted to investigate this concern. In response to this concern and out of an abundance of caution, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has issued a travel alert recommending:

- Pregnant women in any trimester should consider postponing travel to areas where Zika virus transmission is ongoing. Pregnant women who must travel to one of these areas should talk to their doctor or other health care provider first and strictly follow steps to avoid mosquito bites during the trip.
- Women trying to become pregnant should consult with their health care provider before traveling to these areas and strictly follow steps to prevent mosquito bites during the trip.
- 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.

Transmission occurs through the bite of an infected mosquito. Perinatal and in utero transmission has been reported but, to date, transmission through breastfeeding has not been reported.

Pregnant women or women trying to become pregnant who decide to travel to areas with Zika virus activity should take appropriate precautions to avoid mosquito bites.

- **Bring 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 hotel rooms**
 - Choose a hotel or lodging with air conditioning or 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 returning home should be advised to avoid being bitten by mosquitoes for three weeks following travel, especially while ill, to prevent infection of local mosquitoes.
- While at home, draining standing water near residences and businesses at least weekly is recommended to keep local mosquito populations low and prevent local introductions.

Guidance will be updated as additional information becomes available.

Resources:

Florida Department of Health in Monroe County: 305-293-7500

DOH: <http://www.floridahealth.gov/diseases-and-conditions/mosquito-borne-diseases/index.html>

CDC Zika virus: <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/>

CDC microcephaly: <http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/birthdefects/microcephaly.html>