

# HEALTH ADVISORY

## ZIKA VIRUS IN LATIN AMERICA

### CDC Travel Alert

Earlier this month a person in Texas was diagnosed with Zika virus after coming back from a trip to Latin America. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has issued a [travel alert \(Level 2-Practice Enhanced Precautions\)](#) for people traveling to regions and certain countries where Zika virus transmission is ongoing:

- Brazil
- Colombia
- El Salvador
- French Guiana
- Guatemala
- Haiti
- Honduras
- Martinique
- Mexico
- Panama
- Paraguay
- Suriname
- Venezuela
- Commonwealth of Puerto Rico

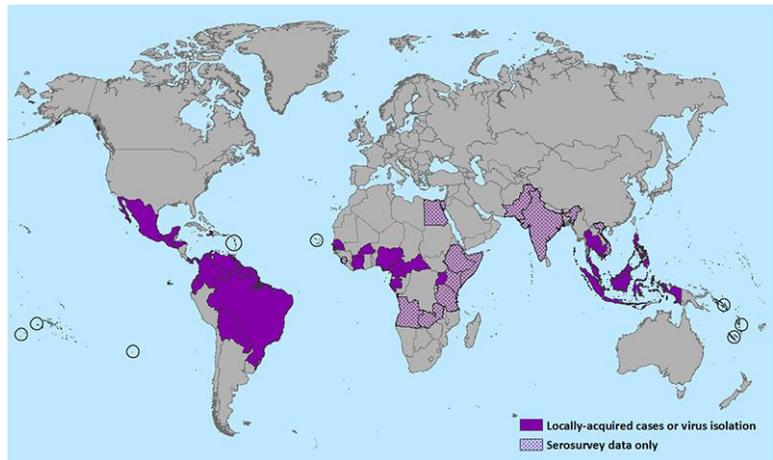


Figure. Countries with evidence of past or current Zika virus transmission  
Source : CDC

This alert follows reports in Brazil of [microcephaly](#) (abnormal smallness of the head) and other poor pregnancy outcomes in babies of mothers who were infected with Zika virus while pregnant. Additional studies are needed, however, to further characterize this relationship. More studies are planned to learn more about the risks of Zika virus infection during pregnancy. Currently, there is no vaccine to prevent or medicine to treat Zika. Four in 5 people who acquire Zika infection may have no symptoms.

### Travel Recommendations for Pregnant Woman and Women Trying to Become Pregnant

Until more is known, and out of an abundance of caution, Southern Nevada Health District (SNHD) recommends special precautions for pregnant women and women trying to become pregnant:

- Pregnant women in any trimester should consider postponing travel to the areas where Zika virus transmission is ongoing. Pregnant women who must travel to one of these areas should talk to their doctor or other healthcare provider first and strictly follow [steps to avoid mosquito bites](#) during the trip.
- Women trying to become pregnant should consult with their healthcare provider before traveling to these areas and strictly follow [steps to prevent mosquito bites during the trip](#).
- Women who traveled to an area with ongoing Zika virus transmission during pregnancy should be evaluated for Zika virus infection and tested in accordance with CDC Interim Guidance.

Because specific areas where Zika virus transmission is ongoing are difficult to determine and likely to change over time, SNHD will update this travel notice as information becomes available. Check the CDC travel [website](#) frequently for the most up-to-date recommendations.

## Information for Travelers

SNHD strongly urges travelers going to areas with on-going Zika virus transmission to protect themselves by [preventing mosquito bites](#):

- Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants.
- Use EPA-registered insect repellents containing DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus (OLE), or IR3535. Always use as directed.
  - Insect repellents containing DEET, picaridin, and IR3535 are safe for pregnant and nursing women and children older than 2 months when used according to the product label. Oil of lemon eucalyptus products should not be used on children under 3 years of age.
- Use [permethrin-treated](#) clothing and gear (such as boots, pants, socks, and tents).
- Stay and sleep in screened-in or air-conditioned rooms. If you are not able to protect yourself from mosquitoes inside your home or hotel, sleep under a mosquito bed net.

Pregnant women and women trying to become pregnant should review the recommendations listed earlier. If you have returned from an affected region and have fever with rash and/or joint pain within the week following your return, please contact your medical provider and say where you have traveled.

## Zika Virus Disease

Zika is an infectious disease caused by the Zika virus, which is transmitted to people by *Aedes* mosquitoes. Most people have no symptoms. If symptoms develop, the most common are fever, rash, joint pain, and conjunctivitis (red eyes). Symptoms usually begin 3-7 days after a person is bitten by an infected mosquito. The illness is usually mild with symptoms lasting from several days to a week. Severe disease requiring hospitalization is uncommon. There is no vaccine to prevent or medicine to treat Zika. The only treatment option available is the provision of supportive care including rest, fluids, and use of analgesics and antipyretics.

## For More Information

- CDC Travel Health Notices: <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/pregnancy/travel-health-notice.html>
- CDC general information about Zika: <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/index.html>
- MMWR Early Release (January 19, 2016): Interim guidelines for pregnant women during a Zika virus outbreak—United States, 2016: [http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/65/wr/mm6502e1er.htm?s\\_cid=mm6502e1er\\_e#F1\\_dow\\_n](http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/65/wr/mm6502e1er.htm?s_cid=mm6502e1er_e#F1_dow_n)
- CDC Zika Fact Sheets and Posters: <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/fs-posters/index.html>
- If you have further questions, please call SNHD Office of Epidemiology at 702-759-1300