

# ZIKA: What you need to know.

## WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT ZIKA

- **Zika is a viral disease spread to people mostly through the bite of an infected mosquito.** It is transmitted primarily by the yellow fever mosquito (*Aedes aegypti*). The Asian tiger mosquito (*Aedes albopictus*), which is common in Northern Virginia, can also spread the virus. These are both aggressive, daytime-biting mosquitoes.
- **There is a risk of Zika being imported into Virginia and being transmitted by local mosquitoes.**
- Zika can be passed through sex from a person who has Zika to his or her partners even if the infected person does not have symptoms.
- Zika may be transmitted through blood transfusions.
- Zika can pass from a pregnant woman to her fetus.
- **Infection with Zika during pregnancy can cause birth defects in babies, including microcephaly** (a condition in which a baby's head is smaller than expected).
- **Pregnant women should not travel to areas with active Zika transmission.**
- **There is no vaccine or medicine for Zika.**
- Based on information about similar infections, once a person has been infected with Zika, he or she is likely to be protected from future Zika virus infections.
- Local mosquito-borne Zika virus transmission has been reported in the continental United States.



(*Aedes albopictus*, or Asian tiger mosquito, is common in Northern Virginia.)

## SYMPTOMS OF ZIKA

Most people with Zika won't even know they have it. The illness is usually mild with symptoms lasting for several days to a week.

**The most common symptoms of Zika are fever, rash, joint pain and conjunctivitis (red eyes). Other symptoms include muscle pain and headache.** If you suspect you may be infected with Zika, contact your medical practitioner, especially if pregnant. Even if you do not feel sick, take steps to prevent mosquito bites for three weeks by staying indoors or wearing protective clothing and insect repellent. This will help prevent mosquitoes from biting you and spreading the virus to others in the community.

## DO YOUR PART FROM THE START: Prevent & Protect Against Mosquito Bites!

### Control Mosquitoes in Your Yard

- *Aedes* mosquitoes lay eggs in containers. **To prevent mosquitoes in your yard, eliminate standing water weekly.** Tip and toss water from containers like tires, buckets, flower pots, drain pipes, tarps, bird baths, toys, etc. Scrub the inside of containers, discard them or place indoors.
- If you cannot dump water from a container, **treat it with a larvicide** like *Bacillus thuringiensis var. israelensis* (follow label instructions).
- If mosquitoes are biting, **use insecticides in your yard** to control them. Treat areas where they rest, such as dense vegetation or ground cover (follow label instructions).



### Prevent Mosquito Bites

- **Use EPA-registered insect repellents** containing DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus or IR3535 (follow label instructions).
- **Cover exposed skin.** Wear light-colored, long-sleeved shirts and long pants.
- **Treat clothing with permethrin.** Treated clothing remains protective after multiple washings. Never apply permethrin to skin (follow label instructions).
- **Keep window and door screens in good repair** to keep mosquitoes out.

## RESOURCES

[www.fairfaxcounty.gov/hd/westnile/zika-virus.htm](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/hd/westnile/zika-virus.htm)  
<http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/zika/>  
<https://www.cdc.gov/zika/>

Fairfax County Health Department

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