

# Zika Virus Disease and Sex

## 1. What is Zika virus disease?

Zika is a disease caused by a virus (germ) that spreads to people mostly by mosquito bites. Mexico, Central America, the Caribbean, and many other areas of the world currently have mosquitoes that are spreading Zika. Mosquitoes in Los Angeles County currently do not spread Zika.

## 2. Can you get Zika from having sex?

Zika mostly spreads from mosquito bites, but it also can spread through sex. Infected men and women can spread Zika virus to their sexual partners. Sex includes vaginal, anal, oral, and also the sharing of sex toys.

## 3. What are the symptoms?

Symptoms of Zika are fever, joint pain, rash, red eyes and muscle pain. These begin 3–7 days after being infected. Illness is usually mild with symptoms lasting up to a week. Most people who are infected have no symptoms at all. People are rarely hospitalized or die from this disease.

## 4. Should I be tested for Zika?

Anyone with symptoms and risk of Zika should be tested. This includes people bitten by mosquitoes during travel, or those who had unprotected sexual intercourse with a partner who travelled. Talk to your doctor if you are pregnant or planning on becoming pregnant, and either you or your sexual partner travelled to an area with Zika.

## 5. How is this disease treated?

There are no medicines to treat this disease and no vaccines to prevent it. Medicines can help reduce fever and pain.

## 6. How can you prevent getting Zika from sex?

Condoms (male or female) should be used from start to finish, every time during sex. If you're pregnant and your sex partner travelled to an area with Zika, use protection every time you have sex or avoid sex throughout your pregnancy.

If a female partner has travelled to an area with Zika risk, use condoms or avoid sex for at least 2 months. If a male partner has travelled to an area with Zika risk, use condoms or avoid sex for at least 3 months. If the couple contains both a male and female partner and both travelled to an area with risk of Zika, use condoms or avoid sex for at least 3 months.



### Key Points:

- Infected men and women can spread Zika to their sexual partners.
- Talk to your doctor if you or your partner traveled to an area with Zika.
- Your doctor might recommend using condoms, avoiding sex during pregnancy, or waiting before trying to become pregnant.

### For more information:

Los Angeles County,  
Department of Public Health  
[www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/acd/  
vectorZika.htm](http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/acd/vectorZika.htm)

Centers for Disease Control and  
Prevention (CDC)  
<http://www.cdc.gov/zika>

Pan American Health Organization  
(PAHO)  
[http://www.paho.org/hq/index.php?opti  
on=com\\_topics&view=article&id=427  
&Itemid=41484&lang=en](http://www.paho.org/hq/index.php?option=com_topics&view=article&id=427&Itemid=41484&lang=en)