

U.S. Department of State Department Notice
February 16, 2016
The Office of Medical Services

**Zika Travel Alert: Updated Guidance and New Information for
Employees and Family Members**

Important new interim guidance has been issued by the CDC regarding possible sexual transmission of the virus. Sexual transmission of Zika virus from a male partner is possible. If you have any form of sex with a male partner while traveling, you should use condoms the right way every time. Condoms can also help prevent HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases.

After travel:

- Men who have traveled to an area with ongoing Zika transmission should consider using condoms consistently and correctly to protect their sexual partners.
- Men who have traveled and have a pregnant partner should abstain from any form of sexual activity or consistently and correctly use condoms for the duration of the pregnancy.

All employees who are planning travel or TDY to one of these countries are advised to contact the MED Travel Medicine Clinic at medtravelclinic@state.gov, or telephone 202-663-3974 during regular working hours, for consultation and for answers to any questions. Comprehensive information regarding Zika and risks to travelers is posted on the [CDC Zika web page](#). For those with access to the Department of State's OpenNet, information can also be found at the MED OpenNet web site- MED Alert: Zika.

The following is general guidance regarding the Zika virus:

All travelers should be aware that the CDC issued a Travel Alert Level 2 "Practice Enhanced Precautions" for travelers to countries with current active spread of Zika virus infections listed by the CDC. As of February 12 the destinations under the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Travel Alert are American Samoa, Barbados, Bolivia, Brazil, Cape Verde, Colombia, Costa Rica, Curacao, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, French Guiana, Guadeloupe, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Martinique, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Puerto Rico, Saint Martin, Samoa, Suriname, Tonga, the U.S. Virgin Islands and Venezuela.

What can travelers do to prevent Zika?

There is no vaccine to prevent or medicine to treat Zika. Travelers can protect themselves by [preventing mosquito bites](#):

- Cover exposed skin by wearing 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.
- Pregnant and breastfeeding women can use all EPA-registered insect repellents, including DEET, according to the product label.

- Most repellents, including DEET, can be used on children aged >2 months.
- Use [permethrin-treated](#) clothing and gear (such as boots, pants, socks, and tents). You can buy pre-treated clothing and gear or treat them yourself.
- Stay and sleep in screened-in or air-conditioned rooms.

If you feel sick and think you may have Zika:

- Talk to your doctor or nurse if you develop a fever with a rash, joint pain, or red eyes. Tell him or her about your travel.
- Take medicine, such as acetaminophen or paracetamol, to relieve fever and pain. Do not take aspirin, or aspirin-containing products, or other nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs such as ibuprofen.
- Get lots of rest and drink plenty of liquids.
- Prevent additional mosquito bites to avoid spreading the disease.

If you are pregnant:

All pregnant travelers returning from areas with ongoing Zika transmission should consider to be tested for Zika virus infection. This includes both pregnant women with symptoms of Zika and pregnant women with no symptoms.

- If you do not have symptoms of illness, visit your doctor between 2 and 12 weeks after you return from travel for testing.
- If you develop a fever with a rash, joint pain, or red eyes, talk to your doctor or nurse immediately and tell him or her about your travel.