

ZIKA in TEXAS

Currently, there is no vaccine or treatment for the Zika virus. Your best protection to avoid infection is to prevent mosquito breeding and protect yourself from mosquito bites.

Prevent Mosquito Breeding

- At least weekly empty or get rid of cans, buckets, old tires, pots, plant saucers and other containers that hold water.
- Keep gutters clear of debris and standing water.
- Remove standing water around structures and from flat roofs.
- Change water in pet dishes daily.
- Rinse and scrub vases and other indoor water containers weekly.
- Change water in wading pools and bird baths several times a week.
- Maintain backyard pools or hot tubs.
- Cover trash containers.
- Water lawns and gardens carefully so water does not stand for several days.
- Screen rain barrels and openings to water tanks or cisterns.
- Treat front and back door areas of homes with residual insecticides if mosquitoes are abundant nearby.
- If mosquito problems persist, consider pesticide applications for vegetation around the home.

Protect Yourself from Mosquito Bites

- **Wear Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-registered insect repellents.** When used as directed, these insect repellents - including those that contain DEET - are proven safe and effective even for pregnant and breastfeeding women.
 - **Mosquito Repellent Available as a Statewide Benefit**
- Cover up with long-sleeved shirts and long pants.
- Keep mosquitoes out with air conditioning or intact window screens.

- Limit outdoor activities during peak mosquito times. People who are traveling to areas where Zika is being spread should protect themselves from mosquito bites while abroad and for 21 days after returning home to help prevent themselves from becoming infected, and to keep from spreading the virus to mosquitoes in Texas in case the **travelers** were exposed to Zika. Zika can also be spread from a pregnant mother to her fetus.

Protect Against Sexual Transmission

If you have Zika, it's important to protect others from getting sick by avoiding mosquito bites the first week of illness and by following the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) **guidance for prevention of sexual transmission and advice for Women & Their Partners Trying to Become Pregnant**.

The CDC also recommends that:

- Pregnant women should discuss with their health care provider their own and their sex partner's history of having been in areas with active Zika virus transmission and history of **illness consistent with Zika virus disease**.
- Pregnant women with sex partners (male or female) who live in or who have traveled to **an area with active Zika virus transmission** should consistently and correctly use barriers against infection during sex or abstain from sex for the duration of the pregnancy.
- Men and women who want to reduce the risk for sexual transmission of Zika virus should use barrier methods against infection consistently and correctly during sex or abstain from sex when one sex partner has traveled to or lives in an area with active Zika virus transmission.

Take Action in Communities

- Initiate or enhance monitoring and surveillance of mosquito activity.
- Accelerate mosquito abatement efforts.
- Develop a local contingency plan for mosquito abatement and surveillance; plan for additional control measures if needed.

- Encourage people to report illegal dumpsites and standing water, and respond quickly to these complaints.
- Implement efforts to clean up illegal dumpsites and collect heavy trash.
- Keep public drains and ditches clear of weeds and trash so water will not collect.
- Treat standing water with larvicide (such as mosquito “dunks”) when it cannot be drained and the water will be present for more than seven days.
- Conduct neighborhood outreach about precautions people can take to protect themselves and their families from mosquito bites.

Protection for Outdoor Workers

If you work or spend a lot of time outdoors, there is a greater chance that you could be bitten by a mosquito that may carry the Zika virus. Although rare, the Zika virus may also be among the causes of [Guillain-Barré syndrome](#), a condition in which your immune system attacks part of your nervous system.

When you’re outside:

- **Use insect repellents according to the CDC's guidance.** When used as directed, these insect repellents - including those that contain DEET - are proven safe and effective even for pregnant and breastfeeding women.
 - **Mosquito Repellent Available as a Statewide Benefit**
- Wear clothing that covers their hands, arms, legs, and other exposed skin. This can include hats with mosquito netting and socks to cover your ankles.
- In warmer weather, wear lightweight, loose-fitting pants and long-sleeve shirts.

Improve your outdoor settings:

- Remove standing water in cans, bottles, buckets, tires, wheel barrows or any container that can hold water.
- Cover trash cans or containers where water can collect.

More information about [preventing Zika Virus](#) and Controlling Mosquitoes at Home is on the CDC website.

