

India reports 80 Zika cases, 22 pregnant women

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India has reported an outbreak of the Zika virus with 80 confirmed cases since last month including 22 pregnant women in the western state of Rajasthan, officials said Wednesday.

India, where the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito which carries Zika and other viruses is widely prevalent, reported its first Zika cases in January 2017 in neighbouring Gujarat.

Since Zika erupted on a large scale in 2015, more than 1.5 million people in more than 70 countries have been infected, with most in South America.

In rare cases, if [pregnant women](#) contract the virus their babies can develop brain defects.

In Rajasthan's capital Jaipur, 330 special teams have been spraying and fumigating houses and almost 440,000 people are under surveillance.

"Awareness is key in controlling [vector borne diseases](#). No stone should be left unturned to reach out to the people," Indian Health Minister J P Nadda said in a statement.

Zika was also detected in the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu in July 2017. The World Health Organization has said no vaccine is likely to be available until 2020.

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