

# Zika Virus in the Southeast

October 3 2016

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As of the end of July 2016, there have been 1,658 cases of Zika virus infections diagnosed in the United States. It is believed that most of these infections were contracted outside the United States. While the Zika virus is transmitted primarily through the bite of an infected mosquito, it can also be transmitted through sexual contact with a person who is infected with the Zika virus.

The Florida Department of Health has identified an area in south Florida where Zika is being spread by mosquitoes. The Aedes species mosquito that transmits Zika is found throughout the Southeast.

Symptoms of the infection are generally mild and include fever, rash, joint pain, and conjunctivitis (red eyes). These symptoms generally last from several days to a week. It is uncommon for individuals who are infected with the disease to require hospitalization.

The most significant complication of Zika infection is seen in infants born from infected mothers. Zika infection can cause serious birth defects and possibly death of the unborn fetus. In the US, there is no recommendation at this time for routine screening during pregnancy.

Since currently there is no vaccine or medicine to treat the Zika virus, the best way to prevent Zika is to protect yourself from mosquito bites. Mosquitoes breed in standing water, so even small areas of stagnant water need to be drained. Even an overturned bottle cap filled with rainwater can be a breeding place. In addition to eliminating stagnant water, it is essential that anyone spending time outdoors use an effective

mosquito repellent containing ingredients such as [DEET or Picaridin](#). Please refer to the [CDC website](#) for the most up to date information.

**More information:** Top Five Things Everyone Needs to Know About Zika: [www.cdc.gov/zika/pdfs/top5.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/zika/pdfs/top5.pdf)

CDC's Response to Zika: What we Know and What We Don't Know:  
[www.cdc.gov/zika/pdfs/zika-wha ... know-infographic.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/zika/pdfs/zika-wha...know-infographic.pdf)

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