Zika Virus and Pregnancy

Zika virus is a disease you can get from being bitten by a mosquito carrying the virus or from having unprotected sex with an infected person. Zika virus may make you feel like you have the flu. The most common symptoms are fever, rash, joint aches, pink eye, and headache. It can take up to two weeks for a person with Zika virus to notice any symptoms. A blood test is the only way to confirm that someone has the virus. Not all mosquitoes carry Zika virus. A pregnant woman who has Zika virus can spread the virus to her baby.

Serious birth defects have been reported in babies born to women who had Zika virus during pregnancy:

- Microcephaly (abnormal smallness of the head associated with incomplete brain development).
- Other severe brain defects.
- Eye defects.
- Hearing loss.
- Impaired growth.

If you are planning to have a baby and you have been diagnosed with Zika virus or have symptoms of Zika virus, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends:

- You call your health care provider.
- Women wait at least eight weeks after their symptoms first appeared before trying to get pregnant.
- Men wait at least six months after their symptoms first appeared to have unprotected sex. The Zika virus lives longer in semen than in blood.
- Both men and women who have been exposed to Zika virus, but have not had the Zika infection, wait at least eight weeks before having unprotected sex.
- Women use contraception to avoid Zika-related pregnancy complications.

If you are pregnant and have symptoms or have been exposed to the Zika virus, call your health care provider right away.
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More cases of Zika virus are showing up in the United States. That’s why everyone needs to know about the potential danger. If you are already pregnant:

• Avoid or delay traveling to areas where there is active Zika virus transmission.
• Protect yourself from mosquito bites. Use insect repellent or wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants.
• Prevent transmission if your partner has been exposed by using condoms or not having sex during pregnancy.

Prestige Health Choice covers several over-the-counter (OTC) insect repellent products. Visit www.prestigehealthchoice.com to view our OTC benefits list.

Talk to your health care provider if you have any questions about your health. If you are pregnant, you can also call Bright Start®, the Prestige Health Choice maternity program, at 1-855-371-8076, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. Visit www.cdc.gov/zika for the most up-to-date information about the Zika virus.