

# Zika Virus

## Guidance for University of Nebraska-Lincoln travelers



### What is Zika?

On February 1, 2016, the World Health Organization declared the Zika virus and its suspected link to birth defects an **international public health emergency**. Zika is a disease that is spread to people primarily through the bite of an infected *Aedes* species mosquito. The most common symptoms of Zika are fever, rash, joint pain, and conjunctivitis (red eyes). The illness is usually mild with symptoms lasting for several days to a week. People usually don't get sick enough to go to the hospital, and they very rarely die of Zika.

- **No vaccine** exists to prevent Zika.
- Only 20% of patients have symptoms.
- Prevent Zika by **avoiding mosquito bites**.
- Mosquitoes that spread Zika virus bite mostly during the **daytime**. They also spread **dengue and chikungunya** viruses.
- Scientists suspect that Zika can also be **transmitted sexually**.

### Recommended Resources:

- CDC: <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/>
- WHO: <http://bit.ly/20wMLbj>
- New York Times: <http://nyti.ms/1TIKDsF>

### Where is Zika?

Prior to 2015, Zika virus outbreaks have occurred in areas of **Africa, Southeast Asia, and the Pacific Islands**. In May 2015, Zika virus infections were confirmed in Brazil and now affect much of **South America, Central America, and the Caribbean**.

UNL student travel is planned in Spring, Summer, and Fall 2016 to Brazil, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Ecuador, and Nicaragua.



### Travel Guidance

While UNL is deeply concerned about the health of those in the affected areas and in the U.S., experts advise that it is safe for most people to travel to these areas while **practicing enhanced precautions**. However, **pregnant women** are advised to postpone travel to affected areas.

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May UNL faculty, staff, and students travel to affected areas? UNL trips planned for Spring, Summer, and Fall 2016 have not been canceled or postponed. As of February 5, 2016, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has issued an Alert Level 2.



### Prevention

- **Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants.** Mosquitoes may bite through thin clothing.
- Stay in places with **air conditioning** or window/door **screens**.
- Sleep under a mosquito **bed net** if needed.
- Use Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-registered **insect repellents**. Always follow instructions. Reapply as directed. Do not spray on the skin under clothing.
- If you are using sunscreen, **apply sunscreen before applying insect repellent**.
- Treat clothing and gear with **permethrin** or purchase permethrin-treated items.

### If you have Zika, protect others!

- **Avoid mosquito bites** during the first week of illness.
- **Visit a clinic immediately and announce your travel history** if you are ill.
- Avoid sexual contact or practice **safe sex** (condoms).

### What if the CDC issues a Warning Level 3?

UNL will follow the guidelines of the University of Nebraska Executive Memorandum No. 25:

- A program of travel for **students and members of the general public** may not depart
- Any **faculty or staff member** must first obtain prior approval for travel

[http://nebraska.edu/docs/president/25\\_Participation\\_in\\_Sponsored\\_Travel\\_to\\_Countries\\_with\\_Travel\\_Advisories.pdf](http://nebraska.edu/docs/president/25_Participation_in_Sponsored_Travel_to_Countries_with_Travel_Advisories.pdf)



Mosquitoes that spread chikungunya, dengue, and Zika are aggressive daytime biters. They can also bite at night.



**Use insect repellent.**  
Look for the following active ingredients:  
• DEET • PICARIDIN • IR3535  
• OIL of LEMON EUCALYPTUS  
• PARA-MENTHANE-DIOL



Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants or use insect repellent. For extra protection, treat clothing with permethrin.

[http://www.cdc.gov/zika/pdfs/protect\\_yourself\\_from\\_mosquito\\_bites.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/zika/pdfs/protect_yourself_from_mosquito_bites.pdf)