

Full CDC Report can be found here:

https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/65/wr/mm6539e1.htm?s_cid=mm6539e1_w

CDC's Updated Guidance for Couples Planning to Conceive & Prevention of Sexual Transmission of Zika Virus



CDC's updated interim guidance:

For men and women considering travel

- Women and men who are planning to conceive in the near future should consider avoiding nonessential travel to areas with active Zika virus transmission.

For men and women who have traveled to areas where Zika is actively spreading

- Regardless of whether they have symptoms, men with possible Zika exposure who are considering pregnancy with their partner should wait at least 6 months after last possible exposure (if asymptomatic) or symptom onset (if symptomatic) before trying to conceive.
- Women with possible Zika virus exposure who are thinking about becoming pregnant should wait at least 8 weeks before trying to conceive; this recommendation remains unchanged from the previous guidance.
- Women with possible Zika virus exposure who are not pregnant and do not plan to become pregnant and their male partners who want to minimize their risk of sexual transmission should use condoms in addition to their chosen birth control method or not have sex for the same time periods listed above. Correct and consistent use of condoms also reduces the risk for other sexually transmitted infections.
- Women of reproductive age with possible Zika virus exposure who do not want to become pregnant should consistently use effective contraception.

For men and women who live in an area with Zika

- Women and men who live in areas with active Zika transmission and who are considering pregnancy in the near future should talk with their healthcare providers about their pregnancy plans during a Zika virus outbreak, the potential risks of Zika, and how they can prevent Zika virus infection during pregnancy.

What has changed?

The primary change in the updated guidance is extending the timeframe for men with possible Zika exposure but no symptoms to wait before attempting conception with their partner. The recommendation for this group is now consistent with the recommendation for men who did experience Zika symptoms. This change is based on the following new data:

- There are now reports of possible sexual transmission from men without symptoms to their sex partner.
- Zika virus genetic material (RNA) has been found in the semen of at least 1 man without symptoms.
- Zika virus genetic material has been detected in semen of symptomatic males for up to 6 months.
- There are no data indicating that men without symptoms shed virus for less time than men with symptoms.

Despite these emerging data, many questions remain. Scientists don't know whether Zika virus genetic material (RNA) in the semen can pass infection to an uninfected sex partner. One way to answer this question is by culturing Zika virus collected from semen. Culturing virus from an infected person (testing whether the virus can create new versions of itself) shows whether the virus has the potential to infect another person. However, there are currently no routine procedures for viral culture, and it is not widely available. To date, Zika virus genetic material (RNA) have been detected in semen up to 6 months after symptoms started, but the virus has not been cultured in semen collected more than 3 months after symptoms started.

These updated recommendations incorporate what we've learned since the previous guidance was released. These time periods are expected to minimize the risk of sexual transmission around the time of conception and prevent possible early fetal exposure. As new information becomes available, this guidance will be updated.