

Talk ZIKA: Sex Education

Key Discussion Points that Providers and Health Educators Can Share



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ZIKA 101:

- ✓ Zika is a virus that spreads to people primarily through mosquito bites in areas of the world with Zika, including Mexico, Central America, South America and the Caribbean Islands.
- ✓ Zika is **ALSO sexually transmitted**, meaning an infected person can pass Zika to his or her partners during sex.
- ✓ Most people with Zika don't get sick, so they may not even know they have it—but they can still spread the virus.
- ✓ Those who do get symptoms of Zika may have fever, rash, joint pain and/or red eyes. Other symptoms include headache and muscle pain.
- ✓ There is no specific medicine or vaccine for Zika.
- ✓ The greatest risk from Zika is to a pregnant woman's developing baby.
 - If a pregnant woman gets Zika, by being bitten by an infected mosquito or by having unprotected sex with someone who is infected with Zika, she can pass the virus to her developing baby, which can cause miscarriage, stillbirth and severe birth defects.

ZIKA Prevention Tips:

- ✓ Not having sex is the only way to prevent sexual transmission of Zika.
- ✓ Practice safer sex by using barriers like condoms (male or female) and dental dams to reduce the chances of getting Zika from sex. To be effective, condoms and dental dams should be used from start to finish, every time during all types of sex (vaginal, anal and oral) and when sharing sex toys.
- ✓ If you or your partner have recently been to an area with Zika and are sexually active, practice safer sex or do not have sex and delay pregnancy.
 - Women: for at least 2 months after travel or symptom onset.
 - Men: for at least 3 months after travel or symptom onset.
- ✓ Condoms (male or female) and dental dams will help prevent sexual transmission of Zika, but should not be the only source of contraception for pregnancy prevention.
 - In addition to barriers, use an effective form of birth control to prevent pregnancy.
- ✓ The most effective type of reversible birth control is long-acting, reversible contraception (LARC), specifically intrauterine devices (IUDs) and implants. These methods require no effort to use after insertion and can prevent unintended pregnancy for up to 3 to 10 years; however, they can also be removed at any time if a woman decides she wants to become pregnant.
 - LARC and permanent methods (e.g., vasectomy and tubal sterilization) are known as

highly effective methods.

- <1 in 100 women experience a pregnancy during the first year of typical use with these methods.
- Contraceptive shots, pills, patches and rings require more effort to use correctly and consistently, and are known as moderately effective methods:
 - 6 to 9 in 100 women experience a pregnancy during the first year of typical use with these methods.

Protect Your Community:

- ✓ The mosquitoes that can carry the Zika virus are in parts of California.
- ✓ After returning from an area with Zika, use an EPA-registered insect repellent for 3 weeks to prevent mosquitoes from biting you and spreading Zika back home in your neighborhood.
- ✓ It's important to prevent these mosquitoes from breeding and biting.
 - Use window and door screens at home, and drain standing water where mosquitoes can lay eggs in your yard. Mosquitoes can breed and lay eggs in a container as small as a bottle cap.
 - Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants and use an EPA-registered insect repellent. EPA-registered insect repellents when used as directed are safe to use by pregnant and breastfeeding women.

REFERENCES

Interim Guidance for Preconception Counseling and Prevention of Sexual Transmission of Zika Virus for Persons with Possible Zika Virus Exposure, United States, September (MMWR, September 30, 2016)

Interim Guidance for Prevention of Sexual Transmission of Zika Virus, United States, July 2016 (MMWR, July 25, 2016)

Interim Guidance for Health Care Providers Caring for Pregnant Women with Possible Zika Virus Exposure, United States, July 2016 (MMWR, July 25, 2016)

Update: Interim Guidance for Preconception Counseling and Prevention of Sexual Transmission of Zika Virus for Men with Possible Zika Virus Exposure, United States, August 2018 (MMWR, August 10, 2018)