

## ZIKA VIRUS

### Important information for travellers to and from Zika-affected countries

The Zika virus is passed to humans when an infected *Aedes* mosquito bites them. This mosquito type may also spread dengue, yellow fever and chikungunya virus. Recently, there have been cases of Zika virus spreading from men to their partners through sexual contact.

The symptoms of Zika include:

- Fever
- Rash
- Joint and muscle pain
- Conjunctivitis (red eyes)
- Headache

Symptoms are usually mild, resolve on their own and require no or little treatment. However, babies born to women infected with Zika virus may have small heads (microcephaly) and other disorders affecting the nervous system. To reduce the risk of getting Zika while travelling to and from Brazil and other Zika virus affected countries:

- Pregnant women and women who plan to get pregnant should not travel to any area affected by Zika. If you must travel, consult your doctor and strictly follow his or her instructions during the trip.
- Zika virus-carrying mosquitoes bite all day; prevent mosquito bites by:
  - Wearing long-sleeved shirt and long pants
  - Applying insect repellent containing DEET to exposed skin
  - Sleeping under mosquito-proof bed nets
  - Spraying the inside of houses or rooms with an approved repellent
  - Staying and sleeping in screened-in or air-conditioned rooms
  - Eliminating mosquito breeding sites where possible
- Remember when travelling to adhere to other protective and preventive measures:
  - If necessary, get a yellow fever vaccination at least 10 days before departure.
  - Take malaria preventive medication if travelling to a malaria area.
- Monitor your health for at least 12 days after returning from Brazil or other Zika-affected countries. Seek medical care immediately at their nearest health facility if you develop fever, rash, joint and muscle pain, red eyes and headache. Tell the doctor about your recent travel and symptoms.
- Men who travelled to a Zika area and whose partner is pregnant should use a condom every time they have sex or should not have sex during the pregnancy. For more

Information one can visit: <http://www.who.int/csr/disease/zika/information-for-travelers/en/> & <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/pdfs/zika-key-messages.pdf> (page 7).

Send all travel-related enquiries to the National Department of Health at [Nathoc1@health.gov.za](mailto:Nathoc1@health.gov.za) and [Nathoc2@health.gov.za](mailto:Nathoc2@health.gov.za), or call 012 395 9636.

For more information, visit the following websites:

[www.health.gov.za](http://www.health.gov.za)

[www.nicd.ac.za](http://www.nicd.ac.za)

[www.who.int](http://www.who.int)

[www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)