



EMBASSY OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
फिलीपीन्स गणराज्य का दूतावास
NEW DELHI

FILCOM CIRCULAR No. 16-2016

SUBJECT : PH DOH HEALTH ADVISORY ON ZIKA VIRUS

The Embassy of the Republic of the Philippines would like to inform Filipino Communities in India and Nepal on the response of the Philippine Department of Health – Bureau of Quarantine (BOQ) on the threat of the Zika Virus Disease (ZVD) and other global outbreaks.

The BOQ implements the following measures to ensure that arriving passengers are screened and the health of the general public is protected from possible threats:

1. Active Febrile Surveillance
 - a. Thermal scanning to detect arriving passengers with fever
 - b. Visual detection and interview of ill-looking passengers
 - c. Duly and truthfully accomplished Health Declaration Checklist (HDC)
The HDC contains relevant information such as age, contact details, address, travel history and if the passenger had been sick in the past 30 days. This vital information will aid BOQ personnel at all ports of entries assess passengers further for action like referral to a designated reference hospital or for isolation.
2. Travel advisories
 - a. Information materials in the form of visual material (tarpaulin) at the tubes and concourses of the arrival area of Philippine airports. These materials are strategically visible to all arriving passengers and crew.
 - b. Health Alert Notices (HAN) are distributed on arrival.
 - c. Audio-visual material have been distributed to different airline companies to be shown to passengers when the plane is about to descend into Philippine airports.

The DOH also provided Frequently Asked Questions on Zika, Chikungunya and Dengue and how these can be avoided (copy attached for reference).

The Filipino Community is enjoined to take the necessary precaution and to assist in the dissemination of this information.


MA. TERESITA C. DAZA
Ambassador

New Delhi, 13 June 2016

How is ZIKA, CHIKUNGUNYA & DENGUE infection prevented?



SEARCH & DESTROY

- Cover the drums, pails, and other waste containers at all times
- Clean and replace the water in flower vases once a week
- Cover the holes around the house with soil or sand
- Remove or pierce old tires that are being used as roof support, also those tires placed around the house that might hold water.
- Flip-over empty bottles, jars, tin cans and other items that can collect and hold water
- Clean and remove water on dish racks and other household items that can hold water



SELF-PROTECTION MEASURES

- Use mosquito repellants to avoid mosquito bites
- Use mosquito nets when sleeping at daytime
- Wear long sleeves or clothes that will protect your skin from mosquito bites



SEEK EARLY CONSULTATION

- Seek and consult with the nearest health facility if you already have fever for two days



SAY "YES" TO FOGGING ONLY DURING OUTBREAKS

- Fogging should be done when there is an impending and during outbreaks



Go to the nearest health center if you have fever for 2 days.



ZIKA VIRUS

Key facts

- Zika virus infection is a mosquito-borne disease caused by a flavivirus. This occurs in tropical countries with large mosquito population.

Transmission

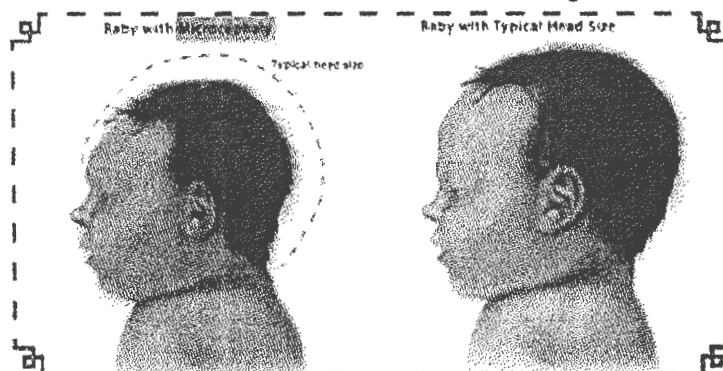
- Zika virus is transmitted to people through the bite of an infected mosquito from the Aedes genus, mainly Aedes aegypti in urban areas and Aedes albopictus in rural areas.
- Aedes bite aggressively during the day.
- This is the same mosquito that transmits Dengue and Chikungunya.
- Zika virus can also be transmitted through sex carrying Zika virus unprotected.
- Zika virus has been detected in blood, urine, amniotic fluids, semen, saliva as well as body fluids found in the brain and spinal cord.

Signs and Symptoms

- Common symptoms include fever, conjunctivitis, and skin rash.
- Other symptoms include headache, muscle pain, joint pain, pain behind the eyes, and vomiting.
- The illness is usually mild and self-limiting with symptoms lasting for 2-7 days.

Complication

- Neurological type of complication: Guillain-Barre' syndrome which is the sudden weakening of muscles.
- Neonatal malformation: Microcephaly which is a condition where a baby's head is smaller than those of other babies of the same age and sex.



Prevention and Treatment

- Avoid infection by preventing mosquito bites.
 - Use insect repellants.
 - Use window and door screens.
 - Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants or permethrin-treated clothing.
 - Once a week, empty and scrub, turn over, cover, or throw out items that hold water, such as tires, buckets, planters, toys, or trash containers.
- People sick with Zika virus should get plenty of rest, drink enough fluids, and treat pain and fever with common medicines.
- People with signs and symptoms of Zika virus infection should undergo diagnostic test (serology)
- If symptoms persists, they should seek medical care and advice immediately to the nearest health facility.



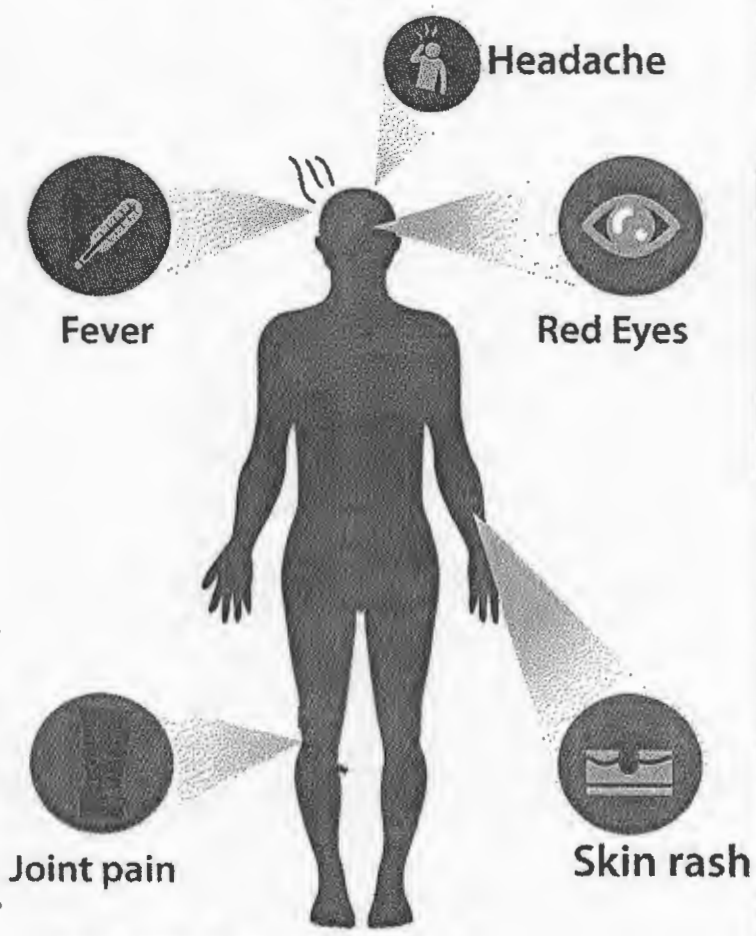
ZIKA VIRUS



What is Zika?

Zika virus is transmitted by Aedes mosquitoes which also transmit Dengue and Chikungunya.

Zika can cause:



2-7 days

Onset of symptoms is usually 2-7 days after the mosquito bite



1 in 4 people with Zika infection develops symptom



Complication: The baby inside the womb of a pregnant mother may develop abnormality in the size of its head due to incomplete brain development called microcephaly.



Go to the nearest health center if you have fever for 2 days.

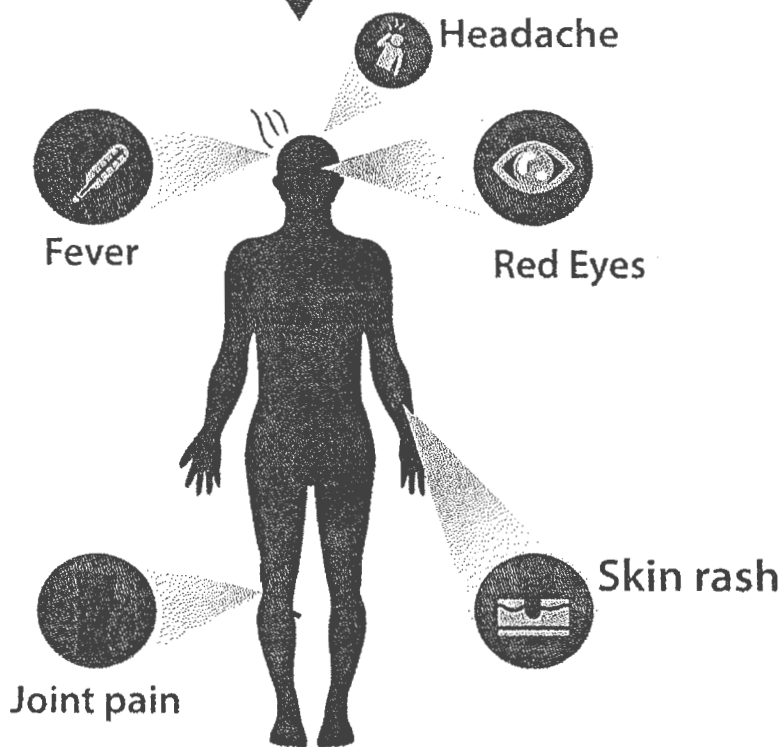


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For more information, visit the Department of Health website at www.doh.gov.ph or call the National Health Line at 1-800-888-8888.

10) Given the current health issue on Zika, can an individual still travel?

The Department of Health (DOH) still encourages people to travel but with extra care. Travelers should know the right information about Zika virus and other mosquito-borne diseases. If they happen to have fever after travelling, they need to seek medical attention immediately.

However, pregnant women should be advised not to travel to areas with on-going Zika virus transmission; pregnant women whose sexual partners live in or travel to areas with Zika virus transmission should ensure safer sexual practices or abstain from sex for the duration of their pregnancy.

11) How can I protect myself from Zika virus?

- Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants.
- Use door and window screens to keep mosquitoes outside.
- Use insect repellent.
- Clean and remove water on dish racks and other household items that can hold water.

12) I am pregnant. Am I at risk on having Zika infection?

Anybody can be at risk of getting infected by Zika. Extra caution in avoiding mosquito bites should be exercised if pregnant.

13) How does an individual know he/she has Zika virus?

4 out of 5 people won't have symptoms or even know they are infected with the virus. If an individual has common symptoms that includes fever, conjunctivitis, skin rash and other symptoms such as joint pain, muscle pain, headache, pain behind the eyes and vomiting should seek medical attention immediately to be tested for Zika virus infection.

14) Where can I get the test for Zika infection?

The Research Institute for Tropical Medicine (RITM) is capable of testing suspected cases of Zika virus through Real-Time Polymerase Chain Reaction (RT-PCR). The test is also available in Vicente Sotto Memorial Medical Center- AFRIMS (Visayas) and Southern Philippines Medical Center (Mindanao).

15) What is the government doing to address the problem?

- Monitoring and reporting cases of Zika (Case surveillance)
- Providing guidance to Filipino travelers living in areas with current outbreaks
- Conducting information, education and communication campaign about Zika Virus
- Strengthening vector (mosquito) control measures

ZIKA VIRUS

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Baby with Microcephaly



Baby with Typical Head Size



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FOR ZIKA

1) How can I be infected with Zika virus?

Zika virus is primarily transmitted to people through the bite of an infected *Aedes* mosquito, which also transmits chikungunya, dengue and yellow fever. It can also be transmitted through unprotected sex, blood transfusion and transplacentally (pregnant mother to newborn).

2) What are the possible ways I can do to prevent Zika virus?

- Search and destroy the potential breeding sites in order to prevent the spread of *Aedes* mosquitoes that serve as vector of the virus.
- Use repellents and mosquito nets. Wear long sleeves or clothes that will protect the skin from mosquito bites.

3) If I am pregnant and confirmed infected with Zika infection, does my new born will be infected too?

Zika virus infection could be possibly transmitted during both pregnancy and at childbirth, although this has not been scientifically proven to date. Pregnant women are encouraged to consult health care providers to monitor their pregnancy.

4) If I am confirmed with Zika infection, can I breastfeed my child?

Currently, there is no evidence that the virus can be transmitted to babies through breastfeeding although Zika virus has been detected in breast milk.

5) My child was born with microcephaly, was it because of Zika virus?

Microcephaly does not necessarily mean the mother is infected with Zika. There are many potential causes, but often the cause remains unknown.

The common causes include:

- infections in the womb: toxoplasmosis (caused by a parasite found in cat feces, rubella, herpes, syphilis, cytomegalovirus and HIV;
- exposure to toxic chemicals: maternal exposure to heavy metals like arsenic and mercury, alcohol, radiation, and smoking;
- genetic abnormalities such as Down syndrome; and
- Severe malnutrition during fetal life.

6) Who will be tested for Zika?

According to the Department of Health (DOH), the suspected case and are subject for testing are the following:

- A patient with fever ($\geq 38^{\circ}\text{C}$), conjunctivitis, skin rash and any of the following signs and symptoms that cannot be explained by other medical conditions such as: headache, muscle, joint pain, retro orbital pain OR history of travel to an area reporting Zika cases OR patient presenting as Guillain-Barre Syndrome

- A mother whose fetus, newborn or infant also developed abnormality in the size of the head due to incomplete brain development called microcephaly.

- A fetus, newborn or infant whose mother had confirmed or presumed infection with Zika virus during pregnancy

7) What is Guillain-Barre Syndrome?

Guillain-Barré syndrome is a rare condition in which a person's immune system attacks his or her nerves. People of all ages can be affected, but it is more common in adult men. Most people recover fully from even the most severe cases of Guillain-Barré syndrome.

8) Is it also because of Zika virus?

Substantial new research has strengthened the association between Zika infection and fetal malformations and neurological disorders. During the first outbreak of Zika from 2013 - 2014 in French Polynesia national health authorities reported an unusual increase in Guillain-Barré syndrome. During 2015 and 2016, several countries and territories have reported an increase in people with Guillain-Barré syndrome and/or laboratory confirmation of Zika virus infection among people with Guillain-Barré syndrome.

9) Is there a threat of Zika virus in the Philippines?

Yes there could be a threat of Zika virus in the country because the mosquito carrying Zika is the same with Dengue, Chikungunya and Yellow Fever.