



Sexual and Reproductive Health Considerations for Persons at Risk for Zika Virus: Guidance for Clinicians

Zika virus infection can be transmitted sexually, and an infected woman can pass the virus to her fetus, causing severe birth defects. [Therefore, CDC recommends](#) that health care providers discuss contraception and reproductive options with women and men at risk for Zika virus infection, either through travel or sex. See a [list of countries](#) with active Zika transmission and [risk factors for sexual transmission](#).

Other than abstinence, barrier protection (including condoms) is the only way to prevent sexual transmission of Zika virus.

Health care providers should counsel patients about:

- The use of barrier protection (male or female condoms for vaginal and anal sex, and dental dams for oral sex) to reduce the risk of sexual transmission of Zika virus
- The use of contraceptive methods to prevent unintended pregnancy, including the full range of FDA-approved contraceptive options
- The potential effects of Zika virus infection on a fetus
- The interval during which persons exposed to Zika should wait before attempting to conceive
- Pregnancy options for women exposed to Zika during pregnancy, such as continuing or terminating a pregnancy

Guidance To Avoid Spreading Zika Sexually	
While traveling to a Zika-affected area	Use birth control and condoms consistently and correctly
After returning home from a Zika-affected area	WOMEN <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue using birth control to prevent pregnancy for eight weeks after returning home • Use barrier protection correctly every time you have vaginal, anal or oral sex for eight weeks after returning home
	MEN <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use barrier protection correctly every time you have vaginal, anal and/or oral sex for six months after returning home

For pregnant women with possible Zika virus exposure, providers should call the NYC Zika Call Center Provider Access Line at 1-866-692-3641 to request testing.

For pregnant women with Zika virus infection who are planning to continue their pregnancies, please see [CDC guidelines](#).

For pregnant women with Zika virus infection who are considering pregnancy termination:

- Providers should avoid making assumptions about the woman's pregnancy intentions. It is critical to communicate that we do not know the proportion of Zika-affected pregnancies that will result in adverse outcomes for the pregnancy. She may choose to consult her provider, partner, or other trusted persons while making the decision to continue or terminate a pregnancy.
- If her regular provider does not perform induced abortions, referral to physicians who perform pregnancy termination should be provided. Pregnancy termination is available in NYC up to 23 6/7 weeks of pregnancy. Providers can refer her to www.bookofchoices.org for information on abortion services across New York State. For information on where to refer for abortions past 24 weeks, call the National Abortion Federation hotline 1-877-257-0012.
- Providers should call the NYC Provider Access Line at 1-866-692-3641 to arrange testing of the products of conception after an abortion or of neonatal specimens after a live birth by a Zika positive/indeterminate Mom.

Resources for providers

- Additional information on counseling pregnant women with or at risk for Zika virus is available at [Guidance on Counseling Pregnant Patients With or at Risk for Zika Virus](#).
- Information about effectiveness of various contraceptive methods is available from the [CDC](#), [ACOG](#), and the [NYC Health Department](#).
- Under the Affordable Care Act, health insurance plans are required to cover all FDA approved birth control methods with no copay and no deductible.
- Some people are eligible for the Medicaid Family Planning Benefit Program, a public insurance program for New Yorkers that pays for family planning services. Call 1-800-541-2831 to find out more.
- Call 311 or the [NYC Health Department](#) for information on where to go for free or low-cost birth control.

Resources for patients

- Birth Control/Contraception Fact Sheets for patients (English and Spanish) are available at: www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/birthcontrol.html
- Printable CDC Fact Sheets are available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/fs-posters/>.
- “Build Your Own Zika Prevention Kit” available at www.cdc.gov/zika/prevention/preventionkit.html.
- “Zika and Pregnancy” materials available at: www.cdc.gov/zika/pregnancy/ or Visit bedsider.org for provider locations and contraception resources.
- The Health Department has Zika Awareness Kits for pregnant women available to providers; go to [Zika Awareness Kits](#) for more information. Call 311 to request a kit.