



1 What is Zika ?

It is a viral disease spread by mosquitoes

2 What are the symptoms of this disease ?

The most common symptoms are acute onset of fever, skin rash, joint pain and conjunctivitis (red eyes). Other common symptoms include headache, muscle pain and pain around the eyes

3 Is Zika currently reported in Sri Lanka ?

No. Still there are no patients reported from Sri Lanka

4 What are the countries affected ?

- South America : Brazil, Colombia, Paraguay, Venezuela, Surinam, French Guiana, Ecuador, Guyana, Bolivia
- Central America : El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, Panama, Honduras
- Caribbean: Martinique, Saint Martin, Puerto Rico, Haiti, Barbados, Guadeloupe
- Other countries: Cape Verde

5 How does this virus spread ?

Zika virus is transmitted to humans primarily by the Aedes mosquitoes and these are the same mosquitoes that spread dengue and chikungunya

6 How long will it take to develop the disease after the bite of mosquito?

This is not clear, but is likely to be a few days to a week. Zika virus usually remains in the blood of an infected person for a few days but it can be found longer in some people

7 Is this a dangerous disease ?

This disease is generally mild and lasting from 2-7 days. Severe illness due to Zika virus disease requiring hospitalization is uncommon and deaths are very rare

8 Are pregnant mothers at high risk of getting the disease?

No. There is no evidence existing to suggest that pregnant women are more susceptible to Zika virus infection or experience more severe disease during pregnancy

9 Can this cause harm to pregnant mother ?

No. This is not harmful to the life of pregnant mother

10 Can this harm the foetus ?

Scientists suggest that there is potential association of Zika disease with microcephaly (small size head) but this needs further strong scientific evidence and research to prove

11 Is there a widely available test to identify this disease ?

No. There is no widely available common test in government or private sectors. But there are highly advanced tests available at the Medical Research Institute (MRI) Sri Lanka

12 What is the treatment ?

Zika virus disease is usually mild and does not require any specific treatment. There is no vaccine or anti viral drug currently available to treat the Zika virus disease

13 What should I do if I get Zika?

- Get adequate rest.
- Drink adequate fluid to prevent dehydration.
- Take Paracetamol to relieve fever and pain according to the advice of your doctor.
- Taking aspirin and other non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) like Ibuprofen and Naproxen is not recommended.
- Use bed nets to prevent spread of the disease to others.

14 Is there any disease similar to Zika seen in Sri Lanka?

Yes. Dengue fever also shows very similar symptoms to Zika. Because of this necessary tests should be done to rule out the possibility of Dengue

15 How can I avoid getting Zika ?

- Zika virus disease can be prevented by avoiding mosquito bites.
- A traveller to an affected area, showing symptoms compatible with Zika virus disease, within 2 weeks of returning from an affected area should consult his medical practitioner for evaluation of the condition.
- People should take personal protective measures to prevent mosquito bites such as usage of mosquito repellants; wearing clothes that cover as much of the body as possible all day long especially during mid-morning and late afternoon to dusk, which are the period of highest Aedes mosquito activity; using physical barriers such as screens, closed doors and windows; sleeping under mosquito nets.

16 Is there any travel restriction to the affected countries ?

No. Currently there is no travel restriction. But pregnant women who are planning to travel affected areas should consider postponing their travel to the affected areas, considering risk and benefit