

Evidence shows that the Zika virus continues to spread throughout the world. It is spread primarily through the bite of an infected *Aedes* species of mosquito. As summer is upon us and we all begin to do more and more outside, remember to take the appropriate precautions, when possible, to prevent mosquito bites.

Prevention tips

- Keep windows and doors shut. If windows or doors are open, ensure that they have proper screens on them to keep mosquitoes outside.
- Empty items around your house that may hold water, such buckets, planters, flowerpot saucers and so on. Mosquitoes often lay eggs near water.
- Use an outdoor flying insect spray where mosquitoes may rest. They tend to rest in dark, humid places like under patio furniture or in your carport or garage.
- Use insect repellents with one of the following active ingredients: DEET, picaridin, IR3535, oil of lemon eucalyptus, or para-menthane-diol. Always follow the product label instructions. Reapply repellent as directed.
- If you are using both sunscreen and insect repellent, apply sunscreen first.
- Insect repellent should not be used on babies younger than two months old. For children under three years of age, do not use insect repellents containing oil of lemon eucalyptus or para-menthane-diol.
- Do not apply insect repellent onto a child's hands, eyes, mouth or cut/irritated skin.
- Adults: Spray insect repellent on your hands and then apply to your child's face.
- Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants, when possible.
- Use mosquito netting to protect your child or yourself if sleeping outside.

Anyone can be infected by the Zika virus, but the biggest concern is for expectant mothers.

"The biggest concern with the Zika infection is related to women that are pregnant, as the infection can cause serious problems for the baby," says Dr. Michael Atwood, BCBSKS M.D., CHIE and Chief Medical Officer. "Most other people that get infected with Zika will have generally mild symptoms that resolve on their own. Fortunately, there have been no cases of Zika acquired in Kansas to date, though two cases involving Kansans that traveled to high risk areas have been reported."

Symptoms of the Zika virus include fever, rash, joint pain, red eyes, muscle pain or headaches. The symptoms are usually mild, lasting for several days to a week.

To learn more, visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's website [here](#).

Sources: [CDC](#)