

Watch: Level 1

Zika Fever in New Caledonia

What is the current situation?

The Board for Health and Social Affairs of New Caledonia has confirmed an outbreak of Zika fever. As of February 3, 2014, 49 cases have been laboratory confirmed. Thirty of the 49 cases occurred in people with a travel history to French Polynesia, where an outbreak of Zika fever is ongoing. (See [Zika Fever in French Polynesia](#).) Other confirmed cases were spread by local transmission in New Caledonia. Local transmission means that mosquitoes in the area have been infected with Zika virus and are spreading it to people. The government of New Caledonia is working to control the outbreak.

CDC recommends that travelers to New Caledonia protect themselves from mosquito bites.

What is Zika fever?

Zika fever is an illness caused by a virus that spread through mosquito bites. It is closely related to [dengue](#) virus and causes a similar illness. Symptoms of Zika fever may include fever, headache, red eyes, rash, muscle aches, and joint pains. The illness is usually mild and lasts 4-7 days.

Who is at risk?

Travelers who go to certain places in Africa, Asia, and the Western Pacific are at risk of getting Zika virus ([see map](#)). The mosquito that carries Zika virus can bite during the day and night, both indoors and outdoors, and often lives around buildings in urban areas.

What can travelers do to prevent Zika fever?

There is currently no vaccine or medicine to prevent Zika fever. Travelers can protect themselves by preventing mosquito bites.

Prevent mosquito bites:

- Cover exposed skin by wearing long-sleeved shirts, long pants, and hats.
- Use an appropriate insect repellent as directed.
- Higher percentages of active ingredient provide longer protection. Use products with the following active ingredients:
 - **DEET** (Products containing DEET include Off!, Cutter, Sawyer, and Ultrathon)
 - **Picaridin** (also known as KBR 3023, Bayrepel, and icaridin. Products containing picaridin include Cutter Advanced, Skin So Soft Bug Guard Plus, and Autan [outside the US])
 - **Oil of lemon eucalyptus (OLE)** or **PMD** (Products containing OLE include Repel and Off! Botanicals)

- **IR3535** (Products containing IR3535 include Skin So Soft Bug Guard Plus Expedition and SkinSmart)
- Always follow product directions and reapply as directed:
- If you are also using sunscreen, apply sunscreen first and insect repellent second.
- Follow package directions when applying [repellent on children](#). Avoid applying repellent to their hands, eyes, and mouth.
- Treated clothing remains protective after multiple washings. See the product information to find out how long the protection will last.
- If treating items yourself, follow the product instructions carefully.
- Do **not** use permethrin directly on skin.
- Use [permethrin-treated](#) clothing and gear (such as boots, pants, socks, and tents). You can buy pre-treated clothing and gear or treat them yourself:
- Stay and sleep in screened or air-conditioned rooms.
- Use a bed net if the area where you are sleeping is exposed to the outdoors.

If you feel sick and think you may have Zika Virus:

- Talk to your doctor or nurse if you feel seriously ill, especially if you have a fever.
 - Tell them about your travel.
 - For more information about medical care abroad, see [Getting Health Care Abroad](#) and a list of [International Joint Commission-accredited facilities](#).
- Get lots of rest, and drink plenty of liquids.
- Avoid spreading the disease by preventing more mosquito bites.

Traveler Information

- [Avoid Bug Bites](#)-Information for travelers
- [Insect Repellent Use and Safety](#)

Clinician Information

- [Zika Virus Outside Africa](#) (EID article)
- [Protection against Mosquitoes, Ticks, & Other Insects & Arthropods](#)