

The following is general information for those involved in the laboratory-based research of Zika virus.
Contact occupational.health@cuanschutz.edu if you have any questions.



ABOUT ZIKA VIRUS

Zika virus is a mosquito-borne zoonotic pathogen, with transmission most commonly occurring through the bite of an infected mosquito. Infection with ZIKV has been associated with a number of adverse health outcomes, including reproductive complications and Guillain-Barré syndrome. Individuals working directly with Zika virus in research settings may be at elevated risk for occupational exposure.

EXPOSURE TO ZIKA VIRUS

- Zika virus is carried by mosquitoes and can be transmitted through human blood, semen, and vaginal fluid
- Accidental exposure to Zika virus may occur through
 - Punctures, cuts, and needlesticks
 - Mucous membranes or broken skin contact with contaminated materials
 - Contact with infected animal materials (blood or other bodily fluids)

ZIKA VIRUS INFECTION

- Approximately 80% of people infected with Zika virus are asymptomatic
- Symptoms
 - Fever with rash
 - Nonpurulent conjunctivitis (non-infectious pink eye)
 - Joint pain
 - Muscle aches and headache
- Symptoms typically appear 3-14 days after exposure and can last for several days to a week
- **Zika virus infection during pregnancy, even asymptomatic, can cause congenital infection (congenital Zika virus syndrome)**
 - Brain abnormalities and severe microcephaly
 - Chorioretinal and optic nerve abnormalities
 - Fetal loss

ZIKA VIRUS INFECTION PREVENTION



- BSL-2 + containment facilities and practices
- Personal protective equipment (PPE) includes but is not limited to:
 - Laboratory coat, gloves, eye protection, surgical mask
- Always wash your hands after handling biohazardous materials and removing gloves
- Additional special practices may be recommended based on laboratory procedures
- Prevention and Treatment
 - There are currently no approved vaccines or specific antiviral medications available for the prevention or treatment of Zika virus infection so appropriate PPE is key

ZIKA EXPOSURE SAFETY

If you are pregnant or planning to become pregnant, Occupational Health is available to provide guidance and education on pregnancy risks associated with your research, and offer advice on additional precautions. All inquiries are kept confidential. To schedule a consultation, contact Occupational Health by [email](mailto:occupational.health@cuanschutz.edu) or by calling (303) 724- 9145.

Follow proper exposure reporting protocols

- If you are injured on the job, promptly report the incident to your supervisor
 - Immediately call or email Occupational Health (303) 724-9145 during business hours
 - Outside of normal hours seek medical attention at emergency department or other healthcare provider
 - Fill out incident report for exposure to biological hazards
 - File a claim with University Risk Management
 - <https://www.cu.edu/risk/file-claim>
- Minor cuts and abrasions should be immediately cleansed with antibacterial soap
 - Protect injuries from exposure

Tell your physician you work with Zika virus

- Whenever you are ill, mention to your physician that you work with Zika virus



For more information, refer to the Occupational Health website:
<https://research.cuanschutz.edu/ehs/home/divisions/occupational-health>
or contact Occupational Health at occupational.health@cuanschutz.edu