

# Zika virus advice – Depot Hill

As of February 2016

## Current situation – Depot Hill

A person in Depot Hill was infected with Zika virus while they were overseas. On returning to Australia, they started feeling sick and have now tested positive for Zika virus.

As a precaution, Queensland Health and Rockhampton Regional Council will be spraying for mosquitoes in the Depot Hill area to kill mosquitoes that may have bitten the infected person so that these mosquitoes cannot pass the virus to anyone else. The type of mosquito that can have Zika virus does not fly very far, which is why we are spraying in parts of the Depot Hill area.

## About Zika virus

The *Aedes aegypti* mosquito is the species in Queensland that can pass on the virus to people. Although these mozzies are not born with Zika virus, they can spread the virus if they bite a person who has the virus and then bite another member of the community.

These mosquitoes are mostly found in northern Queensland and some areas of central and South West Queensland. They bite during the day and live, and breed around houses and other buildings. People often do not see them because they are silent and found in dark areas including under beds and other furniture as well as behind curtains. Sometimes people don't know they are being bitten because the bite is not painful.



*The Aedes aegypti mosquito*

Zika virus doesn't usually make people really sick. There are some areas overseas with lots of Zika virus. Some of these areas have had an increase in women having babies with birth defects and doctors are not sure if this is linked to Zika virus in their community. Because doctors in Australia and around the world aren't sure, Queensland Health is asking women who are pregnant or planning a pregnancy to take extra precautions if they are living in areas with *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes and to postpone travel to countries with Zika virus outbreaks, just to be safe.

## Advice - pregnant women

To be safe, Queensland Health is visiting houses in Depot Hill and giving pregnant women information about Zika virus and their options to test. If pregnant women have immediate concerns about their health, or the health of their baby, they should speak to their doctor or phone 13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84).

## Advice – general community

Queensland Health advises those community members who have concerns about their health to speak to their doctor or phone 13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84).

## Protecting yourself from Zika virus

Residents of Depot Hill can help stop Zika virus spreading by doing the following:

- Spray surfaces inside the house with Interior Residual Spray (insect surface spray) and regularly spray behind and under furniture and curtains. Use mosquito vaporisers.
- Mosquitoes can breed in anything that holds water. Check and empty water from pot plant bases, buckets, tarpaulins, old tyres, coconut shells, roof gutters, and even palm fronds.
- If you have old containers around the house, throw them out or store them in a dry place.
- Make sure your rainwater tank is properly screened to stop mosquitoes getting in and out.
- Wash out pet water bowls regularly.
- Have screens on your windows and doors.

It's important to check for water in un-used rainwater tanks, boats, tubs or pools as they can breed mosquitoes. Check in and around your home and business every week, especially after rain.

## Avoiding mosquito bites:

- Wear light coloured clothing that covers your skin, including long-sleeved shirts, long pants and cover your feet. Use mosquitospray containing DEET or picaridin and reapply as per the instructions. Sprays with DEET and picaridin are safe for pregnant and breastfeeding women, and children older than two months when used as per instructions.
- If you sleep during the day, sleep in screened-in or air-conditioned rooms or use a bed net.

## Symptoms

Members of the community who have any of these symptoms should see their local doctor:

- fever
- headache
- muscle and joint pain
- red rash
- red itchy eyes

Non-serious symptoms usually go away within four to seven days. Your doctor can do tests to confirm if you have Zika virus.

## Treatment

Members of the community, who have any of the above symptoms and have recently come back from travelling to an area with Zika virus, should see their local doctor and do the following:

- Rest at home and drink lots of water, even if you can't eat.
- Get someone to stay home to look after you if you are very sick.
- Avoid mosquito bites.
- Paracetamol may be useful for a fever. Don't have more than the recommended dose.

## More information

For more detailed clinical information about Zika virus visit our website - [www.health.qld.gov.au/zika](http://www.health.qld.gov.au/zika)

For more information and travel advice visit <https://smartraveller.gov.au>