

Zika: Protecting Camp Staff and Campers



As a camp administrator, you want to keep your staff and campers healthy while at camp. Mosquitoes can spread viruses like Zika and West Nile, which can make people sick. By preventing mosquito bites, you'll improve everyone's experience.

About Zika

- ◆ Zika virus is primarily spread through the bite of an infected *Aedes* species mosquito (*Ae. aegypti* and *Ae. albopictus*). These mosquitoes live in [several US states](#).
- ◆ Zika can also pass from a pregnant woman to her fetus during pregnancy, which can result in serious birth defects. Zika can also be transmitted during sex. People cannot pass Zika to each other through touching, coughing, or sneezing.
- ◆ Many people infected with Zika won't have symptoms or will only have mild symptoms. The most common symptoms are fever, rash, joint pain, and red eyes. Symptoms can last for several days to a week.

Risks to Staff and Campers

State health department notify the public when Zika virus is spreading in an area. Mosquitoes that spread Zika virus live inside and outside and are aggressive daytime biters. They can also bite at night. Staff and campers are at risk of mosquito bites when they are

- ◆ Working outdoors
- ◆ Participating in [outdoor activities](#)
- ◆ Sleeping outside or in buildings that do not have window and door screens

Prevention and Control Steps for Camp Administrators

1. Train staff about



- ◆ The risks of mosquito bites and how to protect themselves
- ◆ [Symptoms of Zika](#)
- ◆ How to [apply insect repellent to children](#)
- ◆ How to [talk to children about Zika](#)

2. Provide the following items or encourage their use



- ◆ [Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\)-registered insect repellents](#) containing one of these active ingredients: DEET, picaridin, IR3535, or oil of lemon eucalyptus or para-menthane-diol
- ◆ Long-sleeved shirts and long pants
- ◆ Clothing and gear treated with permethrin provides an added layer of protection
- ◆ Bed nets for use if air-conditioned and screened rooms are not available or if staff and campers sleep outdoors. Permethrin-treated bed nets provide more protection than untreated nets.
- ◆ In warm weather, encourage workers to wear lightweight, loose-fitting clothing. Take additional steps to prevent [heat-related illnesses](#) (for example, drink additional water and take rest breaks).

3. Educate campers' parents and caregivers



- ◆ If Zika virus has been detected in your area, send an email to parents and caregivers. The email can include a link to [CDC's Camp Toolkit](#), which includes informative fact sheets.
- ◆ Provide a packing list that includes EPA-registered insect repellent, long-sleeved shirts, long pants, permethrin-treated clothing and gear, and a [bed net](#).

4. Conduct routine mosquito control around your camp



- ◆ Once a week, empty and scrub, turn over, cover, or throw out any items that hold water where mosquitoes can lay eggs.
- ◆ [Repair septic tanks](#) and screens on windows and doors.
- ◆ You do not need to drain pools or cancel pool activities if the water is treated with chlorine or other chemicals, which prevent mosquitoes from laying eggs.
- ◆ Use [larvicides](#) to treat standing water that cannot be removed and will not be used for drinking or swimming.
- ◆ Use [outdoor](#) and [indoor](#) insecticides according to label instructions to kill mosquitoes.
- ◆ Contact your local mosquito control district for assistance with applying insecticides and conducting larval control in water that will not be used for drinking.

5. Support your staff



- ◆ If requested by a staff member, consider reassigning anyone who indicates she is or may become pregnant, or who is male and has a sexual partner who is or may become pregnant, to indoor tasks to reduce their risk of mosquito bites.
- ◆ Ensure that workers receive prompt and appropriate medical evaluation and follow-up after a suspected exposure to Zika virus.

Staff or Campers Who Get Sick with Zika

There is no vaccine or medicine for Zika. If a camper gets sick, follow camp guidelines for reporting illness to parents or caregivers. Anyone who is sick should

- ◆ Get plenty of rest.
- ◆ Drink fluids to prevent dehydration.
- ◆ Take medicine, such as acetaminophen, to reduce fever and pain.
- ◆ Do not take aspirin or other non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs).
- ◆ Talk to your healthcare provider before taking additional medication if you are already taking medicine for another medical condition.
- ◆ Help prevent others from getting sick by strictly following steps to prevent mosquito bites during the first week of illness.
- ◆ Prevent sexual transmission by not having sex or by using condoms. See [Zika and Sexual Transmission](#) for more information.

Toolkit for Camps

Find everything you need to keep staff and campers healthy this summer in the [CDC's Zika Communication Toolkit for Camps](#).