

Information for travellers to areas with local transmission of Zika virus

- Travellers visiting countries where there is active transmission of Zika virus should be made aware of the ongoing outbreak of Zika virus infection. A list of countries and territories with documented local transmission is available on the Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Directorate at <https://health.gov.mt/en/health-promotion/idpcu/Pages/introduction.aspx>. This list is updated regularly.
- Travellers visiting these countries should take the following measures to prevent mosquito bites indoors and outdoors, especially from sunrise to sunset, the time when the *Aedes* mosquitoes are most active:
 - Use mosquito repellent in accordance with the instructions indicated on the product label. DEET-based repellents are not recommended for children under two months of age but pregnant women can use them.
 - Wear long-sleeved shirts and long trousers
 - Sleep or rest in screened or air-conditioned rooms, or under mosquito nets, also when resting during the day.
- Pregnant women and women who are aiming to become pregnant should consider postponing non-essential travel to affected areas until after delivery. If travel to affected areas cannot be avoided, pregnant women should follow strict personal preventive measures and consult their healthcare providers before departure and upon return.
- Travellers with immune disorders or severe chronic illnesses should consult their doctor or seek advice from a travel clinic before travelling, and receive advice on effective prevention measures.
- There is evidence that Zika virus can be transmitted sexually through semen, and there are indications that Zika virus can be present in semen for around 6 months after a man has recovered from a Zika virus infection. Travellers to Zika-affected areas should be advised that using condoms could reduce the risk of sexual transmission from an infected man to another person.

Information for travellers returning from areas with local transmission of Zika virus

- Travellers showing symptoms compatible with Zika virus disease within two weeks of return from an affected area are advised to contact their healthcare provider, mention their recent travel. Contact the Zika helpline on 213204086.
- Pregnant women who have travelled in areas with Zika virus transmission are asked to contact the helpline upon their return and should mention their travel during antenatal visits in order to be appropriately assessed and monitored.
- In order to protect pregnant women, male travellers returning from affected areas should consider using a condom with their pregnant partner until the end of pregnancy and with partners at risk of getting pregnant for six months.

This precautionary advice is based on available evidence and will be revised as more information becomes available.

For more information contact the helpline on 21324086.