

Zika virus is a member of the virus family *Flaviviridae*. It is spread by daytime-active *Aedes* species mosquitos. Zika virus may also be spread sexually, by contact with infected body fluids, and by a pregnant woman to her fetus. Zika virus is now endemic to many parts of the world. It has also been recovered from mosquitos in Miami-Dade County.

Most people infected with Zika virus will be asymptomatic or present with a very mild viral prodrome. When symptoms do occur, they typically begin 2-5 days after being infected. Symptoms may include mild fever, headache, conjunctivitis, maculopapular rash, myalgia, and arthralgia.

Testing for Zika virus should be performed on patients with:

1. signs and symptoms of Zika virus infection, and
2. an appropriate travel history or exposure to a known Zika virus patient.

Rapid PCR testing for Zika virus (ZIKA) can be performed on Houston Methodist patients using plasma, serum, cerebrospinal fluid or urine specimens.

For patients with a remote exposure history (greater than 1 week from time of presentation), serology testing may be considered (ZMISC).

Rapid PCR testing for Chikungunya virus (CHIKV), Dengue virus (DENV) and West Nile virus (WNLV) should also be considered.

To order ZIKA, submit one purple top blood sample, one red top blood sample and a fresh random urine specimen to any Houston Methodist laboratory. It will be tested at the Houston Methodist Hospital Molecular Diagnostics Laboratory. For more information, please see: <http://www.houstonmethodist.org/molecular/>

Zika virus is a reportable illness. Confirmatory testing will be performed by the public health service laboratory or CDC when appropriate.