

ZIKA: *Public Information and Community Outreach*



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Public Information and Community Outreach

Communication tools developed by the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA), and in collaboration with regional and international partners are intended to promote public awareness and education about Zika and other mosquito borne diseases.

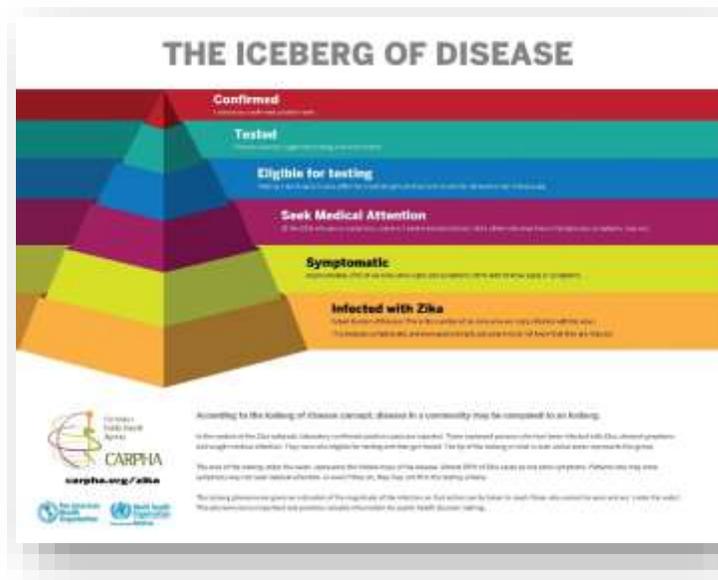
CARPHA launched the **Caribbean Mosquito Awareness Week**, May 7-11, 2016, in collaboration with CARICOM and PAHO/WHO. Under the theme, “Small Bites, Big Threats” key messages were conveyed on steps for avoiding mosquito bites, eliminating mosquito breeding sites, and protecting pregnant women from Zika.



This initiative included the development of a website (<http://caribbeanmosquitoweek.carpha.org/>), where various information could be accessed including; mosquito control documents, key contact information and listings of associated activities in CMS.

The week of activities includes a [Mosquito Awareness Mini Fair](#) at CARPHA headquarters. The fair was opened to school groups and the public and featured activities including exhibits, live demonstrations, interactive games and a "mosquito hunt". Throughout the week, events were also held across the Region to engage communities and inspire local action on mosquito control.

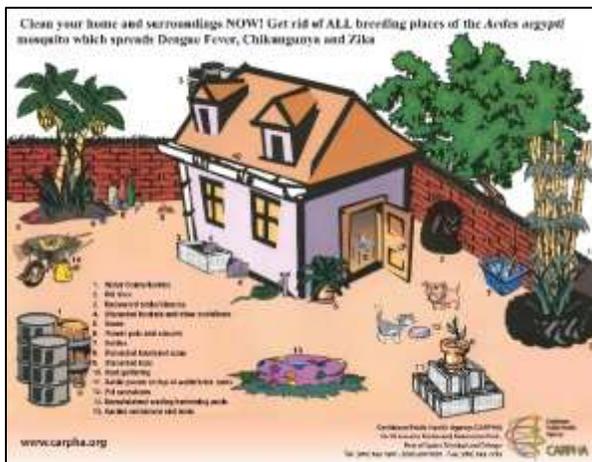
The **Iceberg of Disease**, published by CARPHA in collaboration with PAHO, explains why the reported figures are only laboratory confirmed positive cases and do not represent everyone who has been infected.



The diagram shows that only a small percentage of all infected persons end up being laboratory confirmed positive cases. The iceberg phenomenon is important and provides valuable information for public health decision making. It gives an indication of the magnitude of the infection so that action can be taken to reach those who cannot be seen and are ‘under the water’.

CARPHA, in collaboration with the Institute of Corporate Development (ICD), developed and launched an interactive **mobile game** application for android devices called [Zap-a-'quito](#). The game targets young people and provides educational materials about the identification and control of breeding sites of *Aedes aegypti*. The game was launched on Google Play and regular game updates have been provided.

[Zap-a-'quito Promotional video](#)



The backyard poster developed by CARPHA is designed to help persons identify mosquito breeding sites in and around their homes.

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ZIKA VIRUS

What is Zika virus?	This is a disease caused by the Zika virus (ZIKV), transmitted by mosquitoes of the genus <i>Aedes</i> particularly the <i>Aedes aegypti</i> mosquitoes.
Where did it come from?	This virus was first isolated in 1947 from rhesus monkey samples, in the Zika forest in Uganda. The virus was named after the region where it was first collected.
How is Zika virus transmitted?	The main route of transmission is through the bite of an infected <i>Aedes aegypti</i> mosquito. A pregnant woman can pass Zika virus to her fetus during pregnancy. Zika can be passed through sex from a person who has Zika to his or her partner.
What are the main signs and symptoms of a Zika virus infection?	Zika virus infection may present with few or no symptoms. In general, disease symptoms are short-lasting (2-7 days). Where present, they are similar to symptoms of chikungunya and dengue, and may include fever, joint and muscle pain, conjunctivitis (red eyes), retro-orbital pain (pain to the back of eyes), headache, weakness, rash, swelling of the lower limbs and to a lesser extent vomiting, diarrhoea or abdominal pain.
Is there a treatment or vaccine for Zika virus?	There is no specific medicine or treatment for Zika virus infection. Your doctor may advise rest and drinking plenty of liquids, and will recommend appropriate medication for pain and fever. There is no vaccine for Zika virus. Fortunately, Zika virus infection will resolve on its own with supportive therapy.
How severe is the disease?	Zika symptoms are generally mild. People usually don't get sick enough to go to the hospital, and they very rarely die from the disease. Zika infection during pregnancy can cause serious birth defects such as microcephaly and is associated with other pregnancy problems. Pregnant women are advised to exercise extra precaution in avoiding mosquito bites. Guillain-Barre syndrome is also linked to Zika virus infection. Prevention and control measures are the same as for chikungunya and dengue.
What can I do to protect myself and my family?	Do everything you can to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reduce mosquito breeding; • keep mosquitoes out of your house; • prevent them from biting. <p>The mosquitoes that carry Zika virus are the same ones that carry chikungunya and dengue. The mosquitoes breed in anything which can hold water including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discarded tyres; • tin cans and bottles; • flower pots; • water drums and barrels; • uncovered water tanks; • discarded buckets and containers. <p>The mosquito can rest in and around houses, schools, hospitals and other areas where it is dark, cool and shaded.</p> <p>Spend 10 minutes once a week to check around the house and yard to eliminate water sources that can provide breeding sites for mosquitoes. You should also check for clogged gutters on roofs, and trim weeds and tall grasses.</p> <p>Avoid mosquito bites by using screens on windows, keeping windows and doors closed, sleeping under a bednet, wearing long sleeve clothing and pants, and by using insect repellent applied to exposed skin or clothing.</p>
If I am bitten, how do I prevent other members of my family from becoming infected?	If you are infected, you should avoid being bitten by the <i>Aedes</i> mosquitoes during the first week of illness. Staying under a bednet, or remaining in a place with closed windows/door screens is recommended. Also, protect against mosquito bites by using insect repellent and wearing long sleeve clothing and pants.

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