What is Zika?
Zika virus disease is caused by the Zika virus, which is spread to people primarily through the bite of an infected mosquito. The illness is usually mild with symptoms lasting up to a week, and many people do not have symptoms or will have only mild symptoms. However, Zika virus infection during pregnancy can cause a serious birth defect called microcephaly and other severe brain defects.

How is it transmitted?
Zika is spread to people primarily through the bite of an infected mosquito. A pregnant woman can pass Zika to her fetus during pregnancy or around the time of birth. Also, a person with Zika can pass it to his or her sex partners.

What are the symptoms of Zika virus disease?
The most common symptoms of Zika virus disease are fever, rash, headache, joint pain, red eyes, and muscle pain. Many people infected with Zika won’t have symptoms or will have mild symptoms, which can last for several days to a week.

How can I protect myself?
The best way to prevent Zika is to protect yourself and your family from mosquito bites:
- Use Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-registered insect repellents
- Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants
- Sleep under a mosquito bed net if air conditioned or screened rooms are not available or if sleeping outdoors.
Zika can be spread by a person infected with Zika to his or her sex partners. Male and female condoms can reduce the chance of getting Zika from sex. To be effective, condoms should be used from start to finish, every time during vaginal, anal, and oral sex and the sharing of sex toys.

Sources