

# Vital<sup>CDC</sup>signs™

## 4,800

Over 4,800 pregnancies in the US territories had a lab result showing confirmed or possible Zika from 2016-2018.

## 1 in 7

About 1 in 7 babies had health problems possibly caused by Zika reported, among 1,450 babies at least one year old.

## 1 in 3

Only 1 in 3 babies had the recommended eye exam reported, among 1,450 babies at least one year old.



## Zika in babies in US territories

### Monitoring early health and development

Zika virus ("Zika") infection during pregnancy can cause severe health problems in babies, such as birth defects, problems with vision and hearing, seizures, and developmental delays. More than 4,800 pregnancies in the US territories (American Samoa, Federated States of Micronesia, Puerto Rico, Republic of Marshall Islands, US Virgin Islands) had a lab result showing confirmed or possible Zika from 2016-2018. From these pregnancies, 1,450 babies were at least one year old and had some follow-up care reported for this analysis. About 1 in 7 (or 14%) of the 1,450 babies had one or more health problems possibly caused by Zika reported to the US Zika Pregnancy and Infant Registry. Some of these problems were not apparent at birth and were identified as the babies grew older. The full range of long-term health problems caused by Zika will remain unknown until these babies mature. Identifying health problems early can help babies and children get the care they need. For example, only about 1 in 3 (or 36%) of the 1,450 babies at least one year old had an eye exam by an eye doctor as recommended. These exams can help identify vision problems early, so that babies can get glasses or other services they may need. Throughout early childhood, healthcare providers should closely monitor the health and development of all babies born to mothers with Zika during pregnancy.

### Healthcare providers can:

- Ask every mother about possible Zika exposure during pregnancy, even if her baby appears healthy.
- Share Zika test results with all healthcare providers of both mother and baby.
- Provide recommended follow-up care and referrals, including early intervention services. <https://bit.ly/2JNQn6B>
- Report health information about babies and young children affected by Zika during pregnancy to their state, local, or territorial health department, even if they appear healthy.



Want to learn more?

Visit: [www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns](http://www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns)



**Centers for Disease  
Control and Prevention**  
National Center on Birth Defects  
and Developmental Disabilities



## PROBLEM:

**Babies exposed to Zika before birth might have long-term health problems.**

## ZIKA CAUSES BIRTH DEFECTS AND NERVOUS SYSTEM PROBLEMS.

Of the 1,450 babies at least one year old born to mothers with Zika during pregnancy in the US territories who had some follow-up reported

**6%**

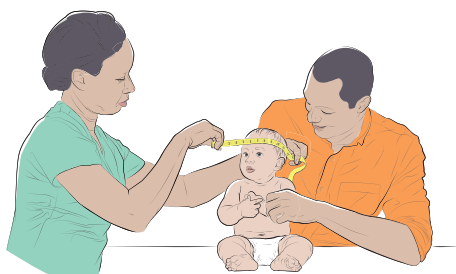
had Zika-associated birth defects, such as small head size, brain damage, or eye damage.

**9%**

had nervous system problems possibly caused by Zika, such as seizures, problems with swallowing and moving, or developmental delays.

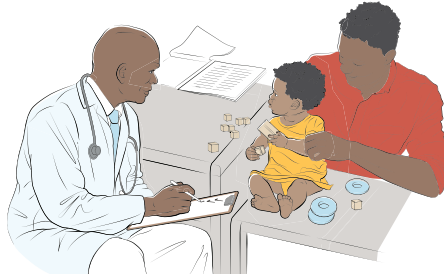
Without evaluation, some health problems may not be detected or treated.

## BASED ON REPORTED DATA, BABIES AFFECTED BY ZIKA HAVE RECEIVED THESE RECOMMENDED EXAMS...



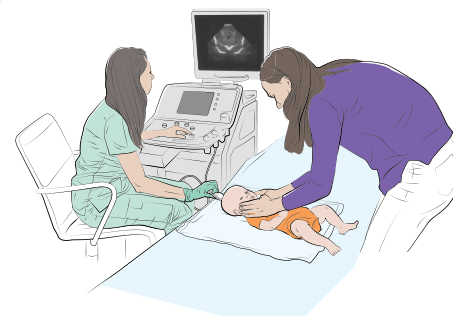
**95%**

Physical Exam



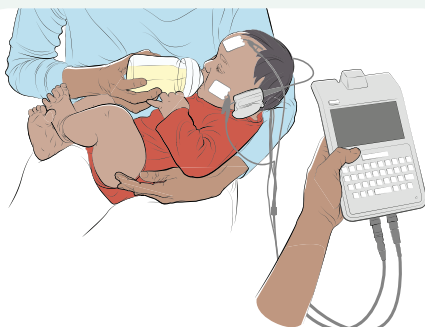
**76%**

Developmental Screening



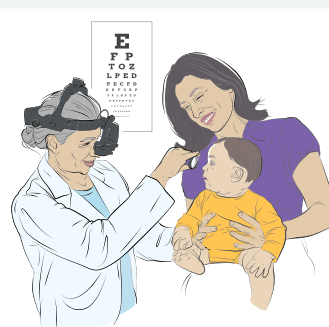
**60%**

Brain Imaging After Birth



**48%**

Auditory Brainstem Response (ABR)-Based Hearing Test



**36%**

Eye Examination

# Working together to care for babies and children affected by Zika

Babies born to mothers with Zika during pregnancy should receive special follow-up care, **even if they appear healthy**. Detecting health problems early and getting help can make a difference. Parents and healthcare providers can work together to make sure that each affected baby gets the care he or she needs.

Parents can tell their healthcare providers about possible Zika exposure during pregnancy, check to make sure their baby is meeting milestones for development, and mention any concerns.

Should my baby be following objects with his eyes?

I might have been exposed to Zika during my pregnancy.



Healthcare providers can ask mothers about possible Zika exposure during pregnancy and ask parents about any concerns with development.

Did your doctor test you for Zika during pregnancy?

Do you have any concerns about your baby's development?



## MONITORING AND CARE FOR BABIES BORN TO MOTHERS WITH ZIKA DURING PREGNANCY



Well-Baby Exam with Comprehensive Physical Exam including Head Measurement



Hearing Exam (Automated Auditory Brainstem Response)



Zika Virus Lab Test



Eye Exam by an Eye Doctor



Brain Imaging



Well-Baby Exam with Age-Appropriate Developmental Screening using a Validated Tool



**AT BIRTH**  
(2-5 days)

**BY 1 MONTH OLD**

**2, 4, and 6 MONTHS**

**9 MONTHS**

**12 and 15 MONTHS**

**18 MONTHS**

**24 MONTHS and beyond**



(If not performed at birth.)



Babies should have a doctor's visit at each time point above and receive the indicated care. If problems are observed at any point, babies may be referred to specialists as clinically indicated.

# WHAT CAN BE DONE

## THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IS:

- Tracking the health of the largest monitored group of pregnant women with confirmed or possible Zika infection and their babies in the world.
- Analyzing data to better understand how Zika affects babies and their families.
- Working with clinical experts and organizations to update clinical care guidance for pregnant women and babies as new findings emerge.
- Finding the best ways to protect mothers and babies from Zika and other emerging threats, including developing potential vaccines.

## HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS CAN:

- Ask every mother about possible Zika exposure during pregnancy, even if her baby appears healthy.
- Share Zika test results with all healthcare providers of both mother and baby.
- Provide recommended pediatric follow-up care and referrals, including early intervention services. <https://bit.ly/2JNQn6B>
- Report health information about babies and young children affected by Zika during pregnancy to their state, local, or territorial health department, even if they appear healthy.

## HEALTH DEPARTMENTS CAN:

- Work with healthcare providers to collect and report medical information about babies in the US Zika Pregnancy and Infant Registry.
- Share CDC clinical guidance for mothers and babies affected by Zika, and CDC's resources for checking development. <https://bit.ly/2sViQ0q>
- Keep raising awareness about the risks of Zika during pregnancy and how people can protect themselves.
- Connect families affected by Zika with support groups and services and encourage communication between healthcare providers and families.

## PARENTS OF A BABY WITH POSSIBLE ZIKA INFECTION CAN:

- Work with healthcare providers to make sure their baby gets the recommended monitoring and care.
- Monitor their baby's development using CDC's Milestone Tracker app. <https://bit.ly/2yLJLPJ>
- Contact early intervention services if there are concerns about their baby's development. <https://bit.ly/2sUj1Js>
- Connect with community support groups for families of babies with health problems.

## EVERYONE CAN:

- Prevent Zika during pregnancy by
  - Avoiding travel to areas with risk of Zika during pregnancy.
  - Protecting themselves from mosquito bites.
  - Preventing the spread of Zika through sex if they or their partners live in or travel to an area with risk of Zika.
- Follow CDC recommendations for waiting to try to conceive after travel to an area with risk of Zika. <https://bit.ly/2DAIkaU>



[www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/zika-territories](http://www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/zika-territories)  
[www.cdc.gov/mmwr](http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr)

### For more information, please contact

Telephone: 1-800-CDC-INFO (232-4636)  
TTY: 1-888-232-6348 | Web: [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

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