13 Mar 2018

Zika virus risk in Myanmar upgraded to moderate

Implications for pregnant women, women planning pregnancy and their partners

As of 12 March 2018, Myanmar has been upgraded to a moderate risk area for Zika virus transmission.

Pregnant women should consider postponing non-essential travel to Myanmar until after the pregnancy.

Women should avoid becoming pregnant while travelling in, and for 8 weeks after leaving an area with active ZIKV transmission or 8 weeks after last possible ZIKV exposure.

Couples should follow guidance on prevention of sexual transmission of Zika and avoid conception while travelling and for up to 6 months on return.

As of 18 January 2018, the first serological evidence for presence of Zika virus infection in Myanmar has been published. The report suggests infections occurred in at least two different locations since 2006 [1].
Zika virus (ZIKV) is a viral infection transmitted by mosquitoes which predominantly feed between dawn and dusk. A small number of cases of sexual transmission of ZIKV have also been reported. Most people infected with ZIKV have no symptoms. When symptoms do occur they are usually mild and short-lived. Serious complications and deaths are not common. However, there is now scientific consensus that Zika virus is a cause of congenital Zika syndrome (microcephaly and other congenital anomalies) and Guillain-Barré syndrome.

Detailed travel guidance can be found on the Myanmar country information page.

Further information about the Zika virus and the rationale for the travel guidance are available from Public Health England and Diseases in Brief: Zika Virus

Resources

- Zika virus in brief
- Public Health England: Zika virus clinical and travel guidance

References