



Zika Virus Disease

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Why in News

Recently, Zika Virus Disease (ZVD) was reported for the first time in Kerala.

Key Points

- **About:**

Zika virus is a **mosquito-borne flavivirus** that was **first identified in Uganda** in 1947 in monkeys. It was later identified in **humans in 1952 in Uganda** and the **United Republic of Tanzania**.

- **Transmission:**

- ZVD is caused by a virus **transmitted primarily by Aedes mosquitoes (AM)**, mainly *Aedes aegypti*.

This is the same mosquito that **transmits dengue, chikungunya and yellow fever**.

- Zika virus is **also transmitted** from mother to fetus during pregnancy, through sexual contact, transfusion of blood and blood products, and organ transplantation.

- **Symptoms:**

- Symptoms are generally mild and include fever, rash, conjunctivitis, muscle and joint pain, malaise or headache. Most people with Zika virus infection do not develop symptoms.
- Zika virus infection during pregnancy **can cause infants to be born with microcephaly** (smaller than normal head size) and other congenital malformations, known as congenital Zika syndrome.

- **Treatment:**

There is **no vaccine or medicine for Zika**. Instead, the focus is on relieving symptoms and includes rest, rehydration and acetaminophen for fever and pain.

- **Related Government Programme/Initiatives:**

- **Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme**: To strengthen/maintain decentralized laboratory based and IT enabled disease surveillance systems for epidemic prone diseases to monitor disease trends.
- **National Vector Borne Disease Control Programme**: The central nodal agency for prevention and control of six vector borne diseases i.e. Malaria, Dengue, Lymphatic Filariasis, Kala-azar, Japanese Encephalitis and Chikungunya in India.
- **Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram (RBSK)**: An initiative under the **National Health Mission**, has a **surveillance for Microcephaly** (system for monitoring birth defects).

Dengue

- Dengue is transmitted by several species of **mosquito within the genus Aedes**.
- Symptoms include **fever, headache, muscle, and joint pains, and a characteristic skin rash** that is similar to measles.
- The **dengue vaccine CYD-TDV or Dengvaxia** has been approved in about 20 countries.

Chikungunya

- Chikungunya is caused by a **mosquito-borne virus**.
- It is transmitted by **Aedes aegypti and Aedes albopictus mosquitoes**.
- Its symptoms are characterized by **abrupt fever and severe joint pain**, often in hands and feet, and may include headache, muscle pain, joint swelling or rash.
- There is no **specific antiviral drug** treatment for chikungunya.
- There is **no commercial chikungunya vaccine**.

Yellow Fever

- It is an **acute viral haemorrhagic disease** transmitted by infected mosquitoes. The "yellow" in the name refers to the jaundice that affects some patients.
- **Symptoms** of yellow fever include **fever, headache, jaundice, muscle pain, nausea, vomiting and fatigue**.
- Yellow fever vaccine which is **known as 17D** and according to the **World Health Organization (WHO)** also it is safe and affordable. However, there are reports of multisystem organ failure following vaccination.

Source: IE