

INDIA AND ZIKA

VIRUS

WHY IN NEWS?

Recently the United States sent out an advisory informing its citizens in India about the number of confirmed Zika infections in India.

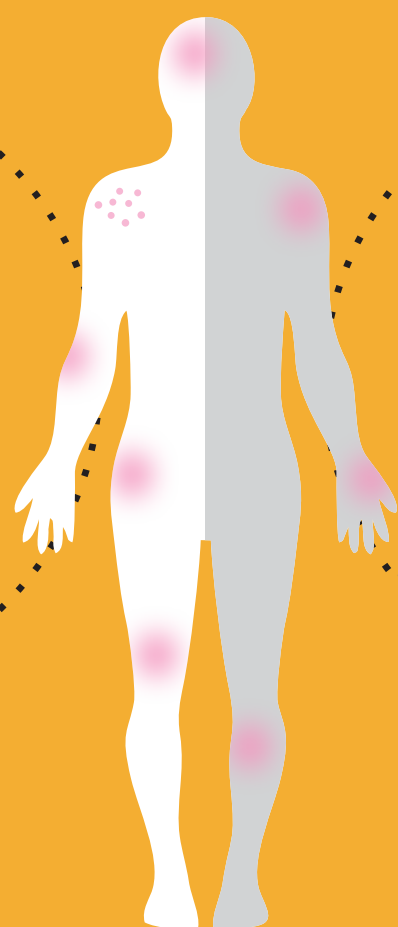
BACKGROUND



The WHO has placed India as a 'Category-2' country for Zika risk.



Until April, India was a Category-4 country.



A Category-2, the second highest on a four-point scale and that also includes 2015 Zika-hotspot Brazil, indicates that the virus is being actively transmitted within the country.



The three cases of Zika virus were reported from Bapunagar area in Ahmedabad, Gujarat.

ZIKA VIRUS MANAGEMENT IN INDIA

India has high prevalence of malaria, dengue, chikungunya, etc. Now India is at risk of spread of Zika epidemic. The factors which add to vulnerability are:



Poor health facilities



Lack of effective vaccination against Zika virus



Lack of awareness



Lack of after care in case of microcephaly occurrence.

ABOUT ZIKA VIRUS



Zika virus disease is caused by a virus transmitted primarily by Aedes mosquitoes.



There is scientific consensus that Zika virus is a cause of microcephaly and Guillain-Barré syndrome.



Zika can be passed through sex from a person with Zika to his or her partners.



In the meantime, the virus will have ample time to spread through the population unless public health interventions to control mosquitoes are implemented on a war footing.



An additional area of concern is the difference between Zika on the one hand and dengue or chikungunya on the other. While the latter conditions occur soon after a mosquito bite, the presence of the Zika virus will be known six months later, after the birth of microcephalic infants.



People with Zika virus disease can have symptoms including mild fever, skin rash, conjunctivitis, muscle and joint pain, malaise or headache. These symptoms normally last for 2-7 days.

