



Zika Virus

Illinois — PRAMS, 2016



Background

Zika virus is similar to viruses that cause West Nile, dengue, and yellow fever. Primarily transmitted through the bite of mosquitoes, Zika virus also can be transmitted from a pregnant woman to her fetus, through sexual activity, and from a blood transfusion. Because of our cold winters, the mosquito that typically carries Zika virus (*Aedes aegypti*) is rarely found in Illinois. People are at risk if they travel to areas where Zika virus is present (i.e., areas with warmer, tropical climates) or those who have sex with someone who traveled to such an area. Pregnant women can pass the Zika virus to their fetus, which can result in serious birth defects, such as microcephaly. A small number of people can develop Guillain-Barre syndrome; a disease that attacks the central nervous system causing muscle weakness and, sometimes, paralysis.¹

Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS)

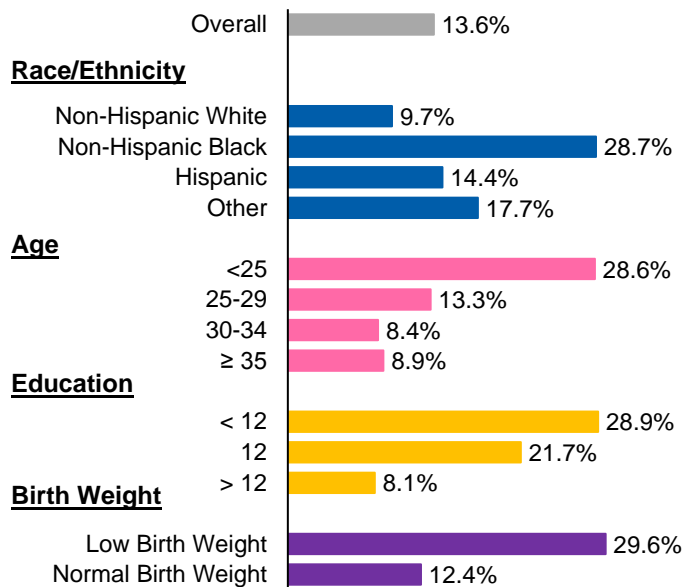
The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS) project is an ongoing survey of women who recently delivered a live born infant in Illinois. PRAMS is a grant-funded project conducted in collaboration with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Forty-seven states, New York City, Puerto Rico, Washington D.C., and the Great Plains Tribal Chairmen’s Health Board participate in the project. PRAMS collects state-specific, population-based data on maternal attitudes and experiences before, during, and shortly after pregnancy. Results presented in this report include supplemental questions asked by IDPH PRAMS during 2016-2017. IDPH PRAMS elected to add supplemental Zika virus questions to the Phase 7 survey to understand whether pregnant women were receiving Zika virus information and what actions they took in response to that information. During 2016, 333 women completed the Zika supplement questions representing 24 percent (weighted) of 2016 Illinois births.

To learn more about Illinois PRAMS’ methods or to access additional data visit:
<http://dph.illinois.gov/data-statistics/prams>

Awareness about Zika Virus

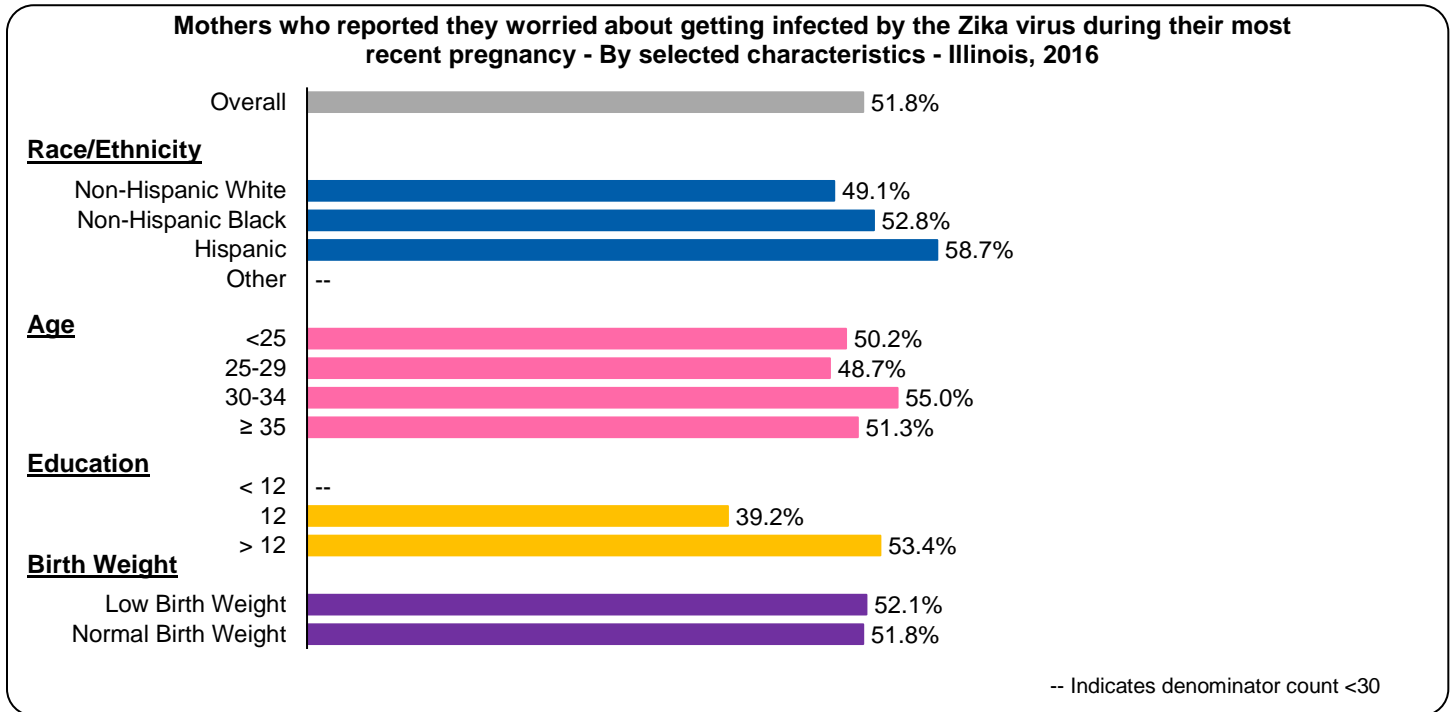
Illinois PRAMS asked women who recently gave birth about their knowledge of Zika virus and if they were concerned about the virus. About one in ten women never heard of the Zika virus. Women who are non-Hispanic Black, <25 years old, have <12 years of education, or who had a low birth weight baby are least likely to have heard about Zika virus.

Mothers who reported they had never heard of Zika virus during their most recent pregnancy -
By selected characteristics - Illinois, 2016



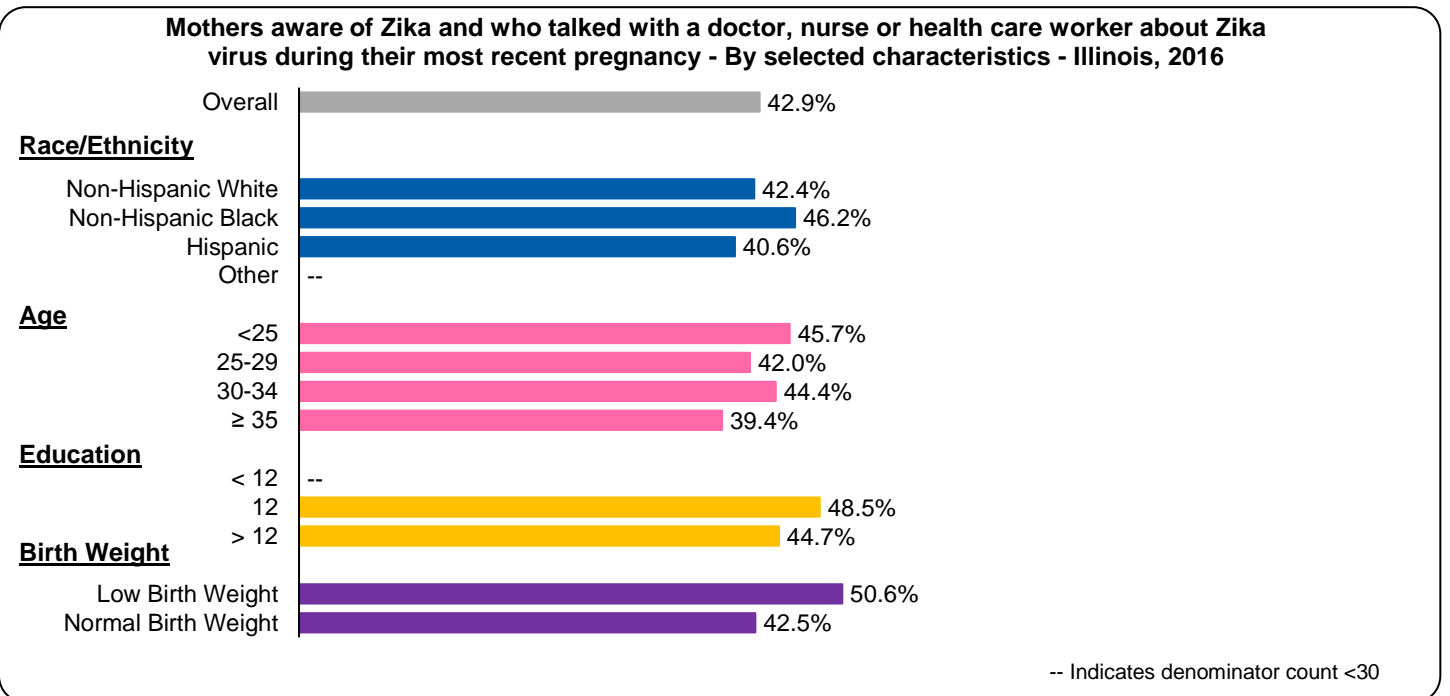
Worry about Zika Virus

Mothers were asked how worried they were about being infected with Zika virus during their most recent pregnancy. Half of those who heard about Zika virus were “Very worried” or “Somewhat worried” about being infected by Zika during their most recent pregnancy.



Prenatal Counseling Experiences

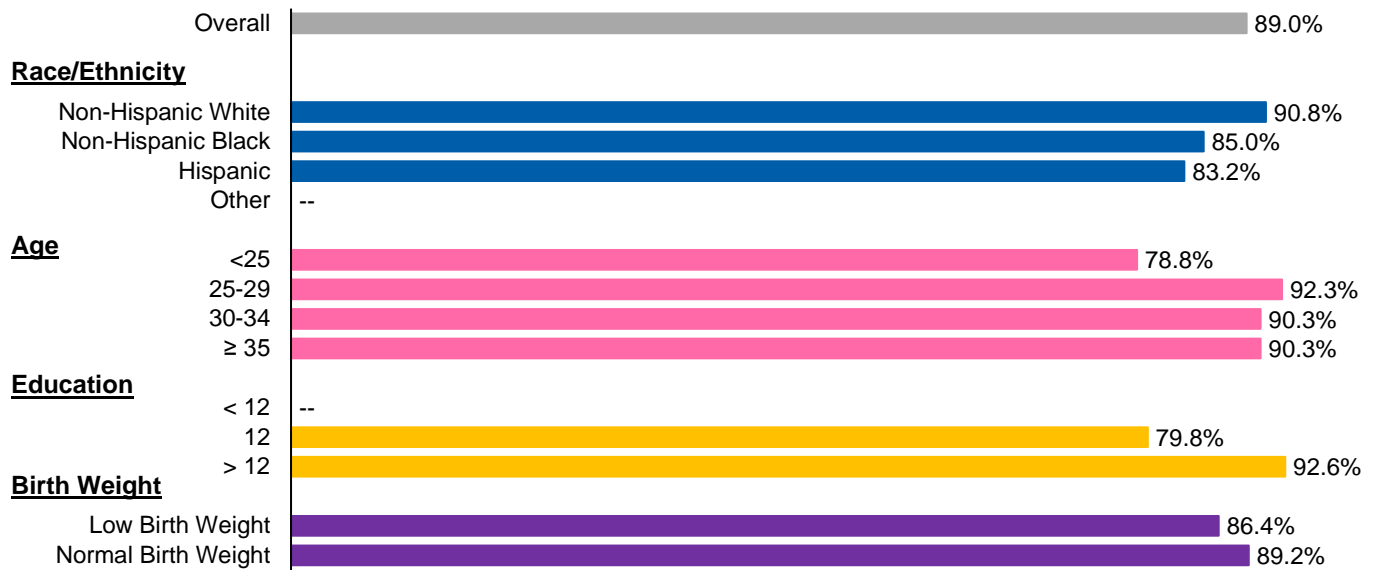
Healthcare workers have an important role in educating patients about the Zika virus to minimize exposure to the virus. However, less than one-half of women aware of Zika virus had talked with a doctor, nurse, or health care worker about Zika during their pregnancy.



Minimizing Exposure to Zika Virus

CDC recommends pregnant women do not travel to areas with a high risk of Zika virus transmission and that they abstain from sex or engage in safe sex by using condoms. Among those aware of Zika, PRAMS asked about knowledge of the recommendation that pregnant women not travel to areas with Zika virus. Nine of ten women were aware of the travel advisory during their most recent pregnancy.

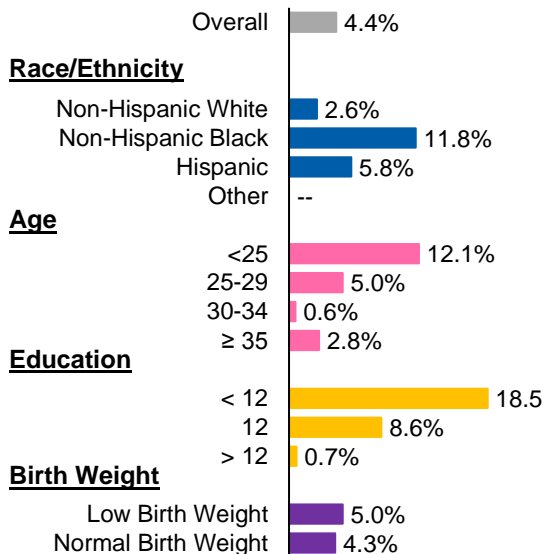
Mothers aware of Zika and who were aware of recommendation regarding travel to areas with Zika virus during their most recent pregnancy - By selected characteristics - Illinois, 2016



-- Indicates denominator count <30

Mothers were asked how often they used condoms or if they abstained from sex during their most recent pregnancy. Among those who were sexually active during their pregnancy, approximately one in twenty used condoms every time.

Mothers who were sexually active during their most recent pregnancy and who used condoms every time during sex - By selected characteristics - Illinois, 2016



-- Indicates denominator count <30

Public Health Action

One-half of mothers (51.8%) reported they worried about getting infected with Zika virus during their most recent pregnancy.

Nine in ten mothers (89.0%) aware of the Zika virus also were aware of travel recommendations to avoid Zika virus during their most recent pregnancy.

Among mothers who were sexually active during their most recent pregnancy, about one in 20 (4.4%) reported they used condoms every time.

To sustain awareness and encourage action, public health efforts can focus on continuing to provide pregnant women with information about the risks of Zika virus and to reinforce personal prevention activities to void Zika virus infection.

Resources

IDPH Zika virus website: <http://dph.illinois.gov/topics-services/diseases-and-conditions/zikavirus>

CDC Zika virus website: <https://www.cdc.gov/zika/index.html>

References:

1. IDPH Zika Virus Fast Facts and Frequently Asked Questions: http://dph.illinois.gov/sites/default/files/Publications_OHP_One-Page%20Zika%20Virus%20FAQs_0.pdf

Acknowledgement:

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