Unplanned Pregnancy and the Zika Virus

The Zika virus is appropriately garnering much attention from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and others concerned about the nation’s health. Although the illness is usually mild with “symptoms lasting for several days to a week,” Zika virus infection during pregnancy can cause serious birth defects.

Despite promising declines in unplanned pregnancy rates in recent years, 45% of pregnancies in the United States are still unplanned. With the CDC watching closely for cases of Zika in the U.S., it’s more important than ever to provide comprehensive access to the full range of birth control methods.

Around 6 in 10 American adults say they know little or nothing about the Zika virus and, of those who know something about the virus, less than half know that Zika can be transmitted through sexual contact, according to the results of a new nationally representative survey of 1,009 adults age 18-45.

Although most (89%) are aware that the Zika virus can be transmitted through mosquito bites, far fewer are aware (49%) that the virus can be sexually transmitted.

As far as you know, can the Zika virus be passed from a pregnant woman to her baby during pregnancy?

- 84% Yes
- 7% No
- 9% Don’t know

Have concerns about the Zika virus caused you to change your sexual behavior or current birth control use in any way (Asked of those who know Zika can be transmitted sexually)?

- Sexual Behavior
  - Yes: 12%
  - No: 86%
  - Don’t know: 1%

- Birth Control use
  - Yes: 7%
  - No: 88%
  - Don’t know: 1%

For additional results from this survey, including breakdowns by region, gender, and race/ethnicity, please visit www.TheNationalCampaign.org. Data presented here are drawn from a national telephone survey conducted for The National Campaign by SSRS, an independent research company. Telephone interviews were conducted from May 25 through June 7, 2016 among a nationally representative sample of 1,009 respondent age 18-45. The margin of error for total respondents is +/- 3.35% at the 95% confidence level.