

Brazil scientists: *Culex* mosquito not transmitting Zika

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In this Jan. 27, 2016 file photo, an *Aedes aegypti* mosquito known to carry the Zika virus, is photographed through a microscope at the Fiocruz institute in Recife, Pernambuco state, Brazil. The U.N. health agency is changing its advice to travelers returning from areas facing a Zika virus outbreak, saying both men and women should now practice safe sex or abstinence for six months. (AP Photo/Felipe Dana, File)

Brazilian researchers say they have concluded that the common *Culex*

mosquito is not transmitting Zika, the rapidly spreading virus that has been linked to severe birth defects.

Rio de Janeiro's Fiocruz institute reported Tuesday that the *Culex quinquefasciatus* mosquito has not played a role in the Zika epidemic that has hit Brazil over the last year.

For the study, researchers gathered and fed several hundred mosquitoes from four areas in Rio Zika-infected blood. Only two showed an early infection 14 days later, and the virus was not detected on their heads or in their saliva.

Culex is 20 times more common than the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito, the main spreader of Zika. The *Aedes* also transmits [dengue fever](#) and [chikungunya](#).

Previous studies have suggested *Culex* may not be effective at spreading Zika.

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