

Module Eight

Psychosocial Support Resources

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Tactics for Communication with a Family Dealing with Zika Virus Syndrome



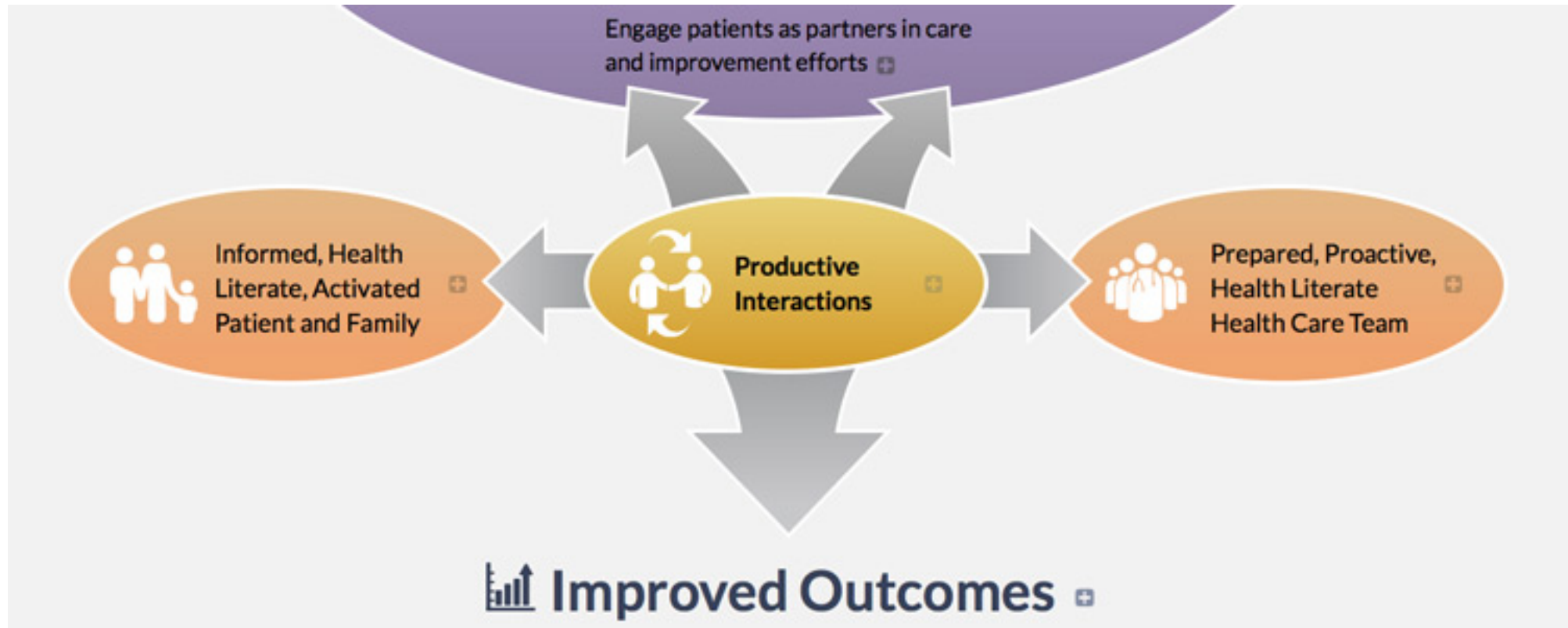
A Pediatrician should....

- Be up to date with the latest scientific information on the Zika virus and its potential consequences.
- Be aware of the latest guidance on assessment and management of Zika virus and its potential consequences.
- Get acquainted with available services and support / referral systems for people and their families affected by Zika virus infection during pregnancy and/or microcephaly.



Conveying Health Information

Health information should be conveyed in a manner that considers people's well-being



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A Pediatrician should....

- Encourage women to involve and invite a trusted person (partner, friend, family member, or friend) to the session or to any follow-up sessions.
- Ensure confidentiality of any care provided.
- Emphasize that many babies with microcephaly may have developmental disorders or other severe neurological complications.



Do's and Don'ts of Supportive Communication

DO'S

- Try to find a quiet place to talk, and minimize outside distractions.
- Provide actual information, if you have it. Be honest about things you know and don't know. "I do not know, but I will try to find out about that for you and will let you know as new information on this becomes available."
- Let them know you are listening; for example, nod your head or say: "hmmmm...."
- Be patient and calm.
- Give information in a way that people can understand- keep it simple.
- Respect people's right to make their own decisions.
- Be aware of and set aside your own biases and prejudices.
- Make it clear to people that even if they refuse help now, they can still access help in the future.
- Respect privacy and keep the person's story confidential, if appropriate.
- Acknowledge the person's strengths and how they have helped themselves.
- Allow for silence.
- Make sure you understand what people say by repeating what you understood to them, and asking them if you understood them correctly.
- Behave appropriately by considering the person's culture, age and gender.
- Be sensitive. Acknowledge how they are feeling about things: "I am so sorry. I can imagine this is very sad for you".



Do's and Don'ts of Supportive Communication

DON'TS

- Don't pressure someone to tell their story.
- Don't take away the person's strength and sense of being able to care for themselves.
- Do not blame the person for becoming pregnant.
- Do not blame the person for not using insect repellent.
- Don't interrupt or rush someone's story (like looking at your watch or speaking too rapidly).
- Don't make up things you do not know.
- Don't feel, think and act as if you must solve all the person's problems for them.
- Don't use overly technical terms.
- Don't give false promises or false reassurances.
- Don't feel you have to try to solve all the person's problems for them.
- Don't tell them someone else's story.
- Don't judge what the person has done or has not done, or how they are feeling. Don't say... "You shouldn't feel that way".
- Don't talk about your own troubles.



Common Reactions to Difficult News

- Irritability, anger
- Guilt, shame
- Insomnia, nightmares
- Physical symptoms (shaking, headaches, feeling very tired, loss of appetite, aches and pains) without an organic cause
- Crying, sadness, depressed mood, grief
- Excessive worries, anxiety, fear
- Unhealthy behaviors



"I'm afraid Mr. Bickles has some bad news."

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Some Patients will Suffer from Serious Psychological Distress...

Unless you are trained to assess and manage severe symptoms of distress, you should refer people with severe symptoms of distress to specialized care.



Other causes of distress

Always ask about any other needs or concerns the person may have.

- Do not presume that Zika and its possible consequences are people's main worries (May have other concerns such as financial and family problems, including domestic violence, as well as other health problems, including mental health problems)
- Link these people to the relevant services and supports to address these needs and concerns.



Basic Psychological Support

- Ask about needs and concerns around
 - Pregnancy and having had Zika virus,
 - Carrying a child with microcephaly, or
 - Having a child with microcephaly
- Listen to them carefully. Try to understand what is most important to them at this moment, and help them work out what their priorities are.
- Help people address urgent needs and, where possible, their concerns
- Give accurate information
- Help people with any decision-making, as necessary
- Help connect people with loved ones and social support
- If feasible, consider discussing with women affected by Zika how they can help one other.
- If relevant, teach people basic stress management techniques



Encourage Positive Coping Strategies

Encourage positive coping strategies

- Get enough rest
- Eat as regularly as possible and drink water
- Talk and spend time with family and friends
- Discuss problems with someone you trust
- Do activities that help you relax (walk, sing, pray)
- Do physical exercise

Discourage negative coping strategies

- Don't take drugs, smoke or drink alcohol
- Don't sleep all day
- Don't work all the time without any rest or relaxation
- Don't isolate yourself from friends and loved ones
- Don't neglect basic personal hygiene
- Don't be violent



Advice for Parents

After child birth: for mothers of children with microcephaly without evident neurological complications

- Help the mother become aware of her baby's positive characteristics and build her confidence in caring for the baby.
- Remind the mother that many children with microcephaly do not develop developmental disorders or other severe neurological complications.
- Model a positive and caring attitude towards the child with microcephaly.
- Counsel on breastfeeding.
- Emphasize the importance of play and communication activities for promoting infants' and children's development throughout childhood. Involve fathers/other caregivers as much as possible.
- If the mother or primary caregiver presents significant psychological distress, help identify a person who can assist her with taking care of the baby.
- Provide basic psychosocial support, including stress reduction and strengthening of social supports
- Offer further assessment and follow up care for developmental monitoring to all children born with microcephaly.



Advice for Parents

After childbirth: for mothers of children with both microcephaly and neurological complications (e.g. developmental disorders, epilepsy)

- Help the mother become aware of her child's positive characteristics and build her confidence in caring for the child.
- Model a positive and caring attitude towards the child.
- Inform caregivers about the health conditions and explain the problems.
- Ask the caregivers' about their explanation for and knowledge of the conditions. Explain that the child's health problems are not the mother's fault and, if relevant, are not related to sins, witchcraft, or other things.
- Promote child development.
- All children, including those with developmental delays and neurological complications, can learn and develop skills. Caregivers can help children develop by engaging with them in everyday activities and play.



Advice for Parents (cont'd)

- Provide or refer children for further assessment and management of health and neurological complications (feeding difficulties, epilepsy, visual and hearing impairment) as required.
- Inform about other available services, such as community-based rehabilitation and social services.
- If necessary, support the mother to overcome barriers that may prevent her from accessing the care and services she and/or her infant require.
- Provide basic psychosocial support, including stress reduction and strengthening of social supports.
- Offer parent skills training and encourage informal parent support groups.
- Offer or organize follow up care for developmental monitoring to all children born with microcephaly. Offer follow up care for epilepsy or other neurological conditions, as required.
- Promote and protect the human rights of the child and family: be vigilant about human rights, dignity and safety. Try to address any discrimination in collaboration with available social services,



Resources

AAP Zika Virus: Psychosocial Support Videos and Handouts

For clinicians: “Zika: Ten Tips for Pediatricians Supporting Families”

For families: “Pediatrician Advice for Families: Responding to your Concerns about Zika” (English/Spanish)

www.aap.org/zika

World Health Organization (WHO)

Psychosocial support for pregnant women and for families with microcephaly and other neurological complications in the context of Zika virus: Interim guidance for health-care providers

<http://www.who.int/csr/resources/publications/zika/psychosocial-support/en/>

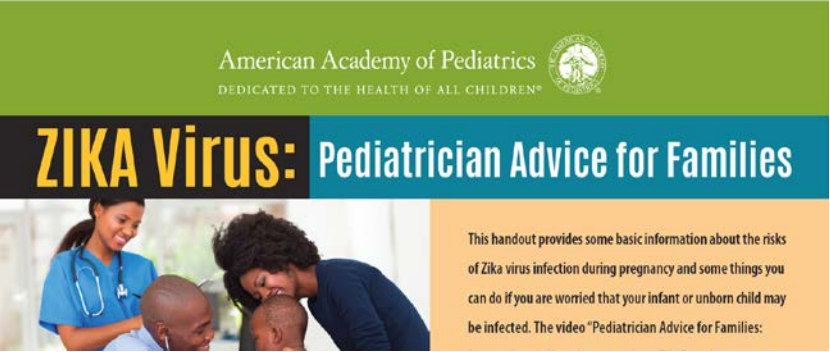
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)

Behavioral health resources on Zika virus

www.samhsa.gov/dtac/zika

Psychological First Aid for Parents and Children:

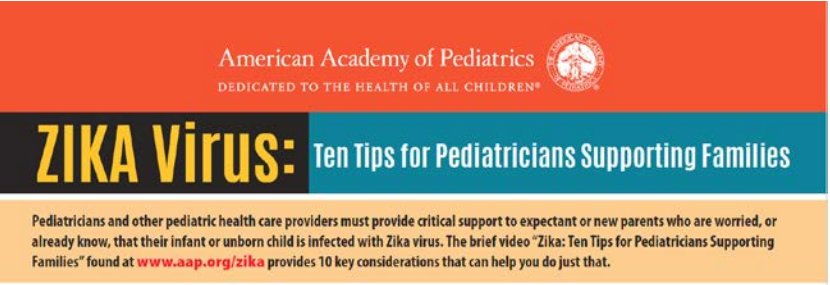
<https://sowkweb.usc.edu/download/about/centers-affiliations/ncscb-psychological-first-aid-parents>



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ZIKA VIRUS: Pediatrician Advice for Families

This handout provides some basic information about the risks of Zika virus infection during pregnancy and some things you can do if you are worried that your infant or unborn child may be infected. The video “Pediatrician Advice for Families:



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ZIKA VIRUS: Ten Tips for Pediatricians Supporting Families

Pediatricians and other pediatric health care providers must provide critical support to expectant or new parents who are worried, or already know, that their infant or unborn child is infected with Zika virus. The brief video “Zika: Ten Tips for Pediatricians Supporting Families” found at www.aap.org/zika provides 10 key considerations that can help you do just that.

1 Families may be very concerned. Parents are likely to have many questions, concerns, worries, and a range of strong feelings, including sadness, anger, and guilt. Parents who are struggling with these emotions may

4 We are learning more about this virus all the time. New findings are coming out continuously regarding Zika virus, how it is transmitted, and its effects. While there is still much we don't yet know about Zika virus,

Resources continued

SAMSHA, Behavioral Health Resources on Zika

<http://www.samhsa.gov/dtac/zika>

ASPR, Promoting Stress Management for Pregnant Women during the Zika Virus Disease Outbreak

<http://www.phe.gov/Preparedness/planning/abc/Pages/zika-stress.aspx>

Family Voices

www.familyvoices.org

March of Dimes

<http://www.marchofdimes.org/complications/zika-virus-and-pregnancy.aspx>

Center for Parent Information and Resources

<http://www.parentcenterhub.org/find-your-center/>

National Center for Family and Professional Partnerships

<http://www.fv-ncfpp.org/activities/zika-resources/>

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