

Five Fast Facts About CMV

That Expecting Families Should Know

Most people have never heard of cytomegalovirus (CMV). That's because it's usually pretty harmless for healthy children and adults. However, when the virus is passed to a baby during pregnancy, congenital CMV (cCMV) can cause hearing loss and other serious birth defects. Here's what you need to know:

#1: It takes close contact to catch CMV.

CMV spreads from person to person through fluids like mucus, saliva, tears, and urine. It's especially easy to catch from healthy toddlers and young children. They pass the virus to friends and family at school, during playdates, and at home.

#2: Many families are affected by CMV.

cCMV is a leading cause of birth defects in the U.S. However, only a third of CMV infections during pregnancy pass on to the baby. Although 1 in every 200 babies is born with cCMV, having the virus doesn't always harm an infant.

#3: Good hygiene helps prevent CMV.



Don't put a child's pacifier or toothbrush in your mouth.



Kiss children on the forehead or cheek instead of their lips.



Don't share food or drinks, utensils, or straws with kids.



Wash your hands after changing a baby's diaper.



Use soap and water to keep toys and surfaces clean.

#4: Early detection makes a big difference.

When cCMV is caught early—**during the first 3 weeks of a newborn's life**—most infants do well. The test is usually simple and painless, and only requires a urine or saliva sample. Ask your doctor to test for CMV if your baby has or experiences one or more of the following:

- › Failed hearing screening
- › An unexplained premature birth
- › A small head and/or body for their age
- › A red pinpoint rash or jaundice
- › Seizures

#5: Every baby with cCMV is unique.

There are many beneficial therapies for cCMV and its effects. Early treatment can help, so start working with your doctor right away. They'll watch your infant's growth and hearing closely. They can also explain the latest treatment options.



dhs.wi.gov/cyshcn/birthdefects/congenital-cytomegalovirus.htm



Ask your doctor about congenital CMV today.



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