

Iowa Chapter

OF THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICS

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Protect Your Baby's Eyes, Ears, and Brain Development: What Parents-to-be Need to Know About Cytomegalovirus (CMV)

A pregnant woman infected with CMV can pass it to her baby at any time during pregnancy. It is a common virus that young children can bring home from daycare. Most children with CMV show no signs or symptoms; others may have mild flu-like symptoms such as fever, sore throat or fatigue.

When CMV occurs during pregnancy, the baby can become infected before birth (congenital CMV), and this may cause damage to the brain, eyes and/or inner ears. Children born with congenital CMV may develop permanent medical conditions and disabilities such as

- deafness
- blindness
- cerebral palsy
- other mental and physical disabilities
- seizures
- in some cases, even death.

Incidence

- According to the National CMV Foundation, one in 200 children in the United States is born with congenital CMV.
- Congenital CMV is the most common cause of non-hereditary hearing loss in children.



One in five U.S.-born children with congenital CMV will develop permanent problems such as hearing loss or developmental disabilities

Transmission

The virus is generally passed from infected people to others through direct contact with:

- urine
- saliva
- blood
- tears
- mucus
- other bodily fluids

Diagnosis

1. If your baby does not pass their first newborn hearing test, they should be tested for congenital CMV infection.*
2. cCMV testing is a painless test by urine or saliva.
3. Your baby should be scheduled for a diagnostic assessment immediately if they do not pass the outpatient hearing screen. It is also recommended to complete again at 9 months of age if diagnosed with cCMV.

*Testing for cCMV for a failed newborn hearing screening is mandatory in Iowa.

Risk Reduction Measures for Families

- Always wash your hands with soap and water after changing diapers, feeding a young child, wiping a young child's nose/mouth and handling toys.
- Don't share food, drinks, eating utensils or toothbrushes. Try to avoid contact with saliva when kissing or snuggling.
- Make sure to clean toys, counter tops and other surfaces that may have come in contact with children's saliva or urine.



Learn more and find resources here:

- **CDC Website:** Babies Born with CMV: www.cdc.gov/cmV
- **National CMV Foundation:** www.nationalcmv.org