

Protect Yourself and Your Baby from CMV



Cytomegalovirus, or CMV, is a common virus that affects people of all ages. When pregnant people pass CMV on to their babies, it can cause serious health problems. If you're pregnant or planning to become pregnant, find out how you can protect yourself and your baby from CMV.



Every **30 minutes** a baby with CMV is born in the United States.

How does CMV affect babies?

When babies are born with CMV, it's called **congenital CMV**. Some babies may show signs of congenital CMV when they're born, like a rash, jaundice (yellow skin or eyes), or low birth weight. But sometimes babies who have congenital CMV don't show any signs. Congenital CMV can cause **serious health problems**, including:



Hearing loss



Vision loss



Learning disabilities



Developmental delays (changes in the way babies grow and develop)



Microcephaly (smaller head size)

How does CMV affect children and adults?

Although it's a serious health risk for newborn babies, CMV is usually no big deal for people who get it later in life. In fact, most children and adults who get CMV don't have any symptoms. Others may have **symptoms like fever, body aches, or feeling tired** — similar to a cold or the flu.

If you notice these symptoms during pregnancy, **ask your doctor about CMV testing**. Your doctor can do a blood test to find out if you have CMV. If you do have the virus, your doctor may recommend additional testing for your baby.



How does CMV spread?

CMV spreads from person to person through body fluids, including urine (pee), saliva (spit), tears, breast milk, and semen or vaginal fluids.



Anyone can get CMV, but **you're more likely to get it if you're a parent of young children or work with young children**. That's because parents and people who work with kids are more likely to come into contact with urine or saliva from children who have the virus.

How can I lower my risk of CMV?

Take these simple steps to reduce your risk of CMV while you're pregnant:



Always wash your hands after changing diapers, feeding a child, wiping a child's nose or mouth, or handling toys or pacifiers



Avoid sharing food and drinks, utensils, or toothbrushes



Clean toys and countertops often



If you kiss a young child, kiss their cheek or forehead — that way, you'll be less likely to get saliva on your lips



Don't put items that children have touched in your mouth

Talk to your doctor about CMV

If you're pregnant or planning to become pregnant, ask your doctor about CMV. Your doctor may have more specific guidance for you based on your situation and health care needs. Here are a few questions you may want to ask:

- What can I do to lower my risk of getting CMV while I'm pregnant?
- If I have cold or flu-like symptoms while I'm pregnant, would you recommend I get tested for CMV? If so, can I get a CMV test at your office?
- What CMV testing do you recommend for newborn babies?
- If my baby is diagnosed with CMV, what follow-up care or testing would you recommend?



To learn more about CMV, visit [NationalCMV.org](https://www.nationalcmv.org).



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