

# Cytomegalovirus (CMV) and Congenital CMV

## FACT SHEET FOR CHILD CARE PROVIDERS

### What is CMV and Congenital CMV?

CMV is a common virus. Anyone, at any age, can get CMV. Over half of adults in the U.S. have been infected with the virus by age 40. Most healthy people don't know that they have CMV because it doesn't usually cause any symptoms or harmful effects.

However, if you are pregnant and have CMV, the virus can pass through the placenta to your growing fetus. When a baby is born with CMV, it is known as congenital CMV. Congenital CMV can be serious and may harm the brain, eyes, or inner ears of some babies infected before birth. Taking steps to reduce your risk of getting CMV is especially important if you are pregnant or thinking about becoming pregnant.



### Tips to reduce your risk of getting CMV

- Wash your hands often, especially after wiping a child's nose or mouth and changing diapers.
- Try to avoid contact with saliva when kissing a young child. For example, kiss on the forehead rather than the lips.
- Avoid putting things in your mouth that have just been in a child's mouth such as cups, eating utensils, toothbrushes, or pacifiers. Also, avoid sharing food or drink with a young child.
- Properly disinfect toys, changing tables, and other surfaces that may have a child's urine or saliva on them.

### How is CMV transmitted?

CMV is passed from one person to another through contact with bodily fluids such as urine and saliva. Up to 70% of healthy children aged 1 to 3 years in child care settings will shed, or release, CMV in their saliva and urine. Children can pass the virus to others for many months after infection, even if they don't seem sick.

CMV may be spread through close contact, such as diaper changing, kissing, feeding, and other activities where a healthy person comes into contact with the urine or saliva of someone with CMV.

### Should children with CMV stay home from child care?

Children with congenital CMV or who get CMV after birth should not be expected to stay home. Children who are known to have CMV do not transmit CMV more often than any other child.



## How are babies tested for congenital CMV?

Congenital CMV is most often found in babies less than 21 days old by testing a sample of their blood or urine.

In February 2023, Minnesota became the first state in the nation to screen all newborns for congenital CMV as part of the newborn screening program, so you might know of children in your care who have congenital CMV.

## How can I best support parents of children with congenital CMV?

Finding out that a child has congenital CMV may cause anxiety or stress for some parents. One of the best ways to show support is to educate yourself about congenital CMV.

Also, remember that CMV is a common childhood virus and that children known to have CMV or congenital CMV should not be treated differently from other children in your care.

## Where can I find more information about CMV or congenital CMV?

- Talk to a health care provider.
- Call MDH at 651-201-3650, email [health.cyshn@state.mn.us](mailto:health.cyshn@state.mn.us), or visit MDH online:



[www.health.mn.gov/CMV](http://www.health.mn.gov/CMV)

### Did you know?

- People who care for babies and young children may have a higher chance of getting CMV because CMV infection is common among children.
- Congenital CMV is the most common infectious cause of birth defects in the U.S.
- Congenital CMV is the leading cause of non-genetic hearing loss in children.
- About 1 in 200 babies in Minnesota is born with congenital CMV.
- About 1 in 5 babies with congenital CMV will be born with or develop long-term health concerns, such as hearing loss, vision impairment, seizures, or developmental disabilities.