



What is Cytomegalovirus (CMV)?

Cytomegalovirus (CMV) is the most common congenital infection found in developed countries. Pregnant women who contract CMV can pass the virus onto their unborn baby, which can result in multiple disabilities including: hearing loss, vision loss, poor brain growth, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, and, in rare cases, fetal death.

Why Should You Care?

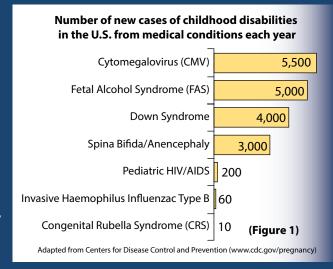
CMV infects about 30,000 babies each year in the U.S. In Utah, this translates to one baby born with CMV every day. Of the babies born with congenital CMV, 1 of every 5 will have permanent disabilities due to the virus. Congenital CMV causes more long-term problems and childhood deaths than Down Syndrome, Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, and neural tube defects (see Figure 1, other side).

With your help, we can reduce the number of babies born with CMV. For more information go to: **cmv.usu.edu**

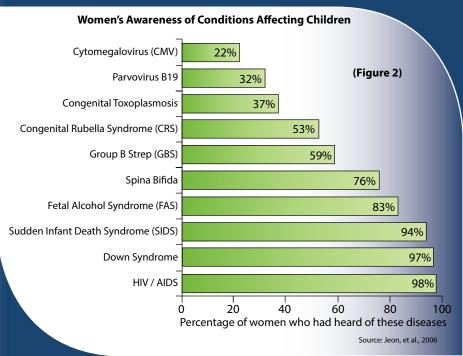


How can people reduce their chances of contracting CMV:

Most people who contract CMV have no symptoms and healthy adults face little risk of getting seriously ill. However, women who are pregnant or planning on becoming pregnant and are in close contact with young children (e.g., childcare settings, healthcare settings, and have other children) are at greater risk for passing CMV on to their unborn baby. The best way to protect an unborn baby from congenital CMV is to avoid contact with saliva and urine, especially from young children. Here are a few simple ways:



- When you kiss a young child, avoid contact with saliva (e.g., kiss forehead or cheek).
- Do not put things in your mouth that have been in a child's mouth (e.g., food, cups, utensils, pacifiers).
- Wash your hands after touching a child's saliva or urine (e.g., wiping a child's nose or mouth, changing diapers).
- Disinfect toys, countertops, and other surfaces that come in contact with a child's saliva or urine.



Is there a cure?

Currently there is no vaccine available to prevent CMV. People who are infected with CMV and have no symptoms do not require any treatment. For those with symptoms, there is no medication approved to treat CMV. Pediatricians and other healthcare professionals should make sure that babies with congenital CMV are monitored closely for hearing and vision loss. Referrals to early intervention for disabilities linked to CMV are key to improving the lives of babies born with CMV.

What you can do to help?

Help spread the word about CMV. Though the effects of CMV have been known for more than 40 years, many people are still unaware of the virus and its negative impact on unborn babies (see Figure 2). Please help raise awareness. If you know women who are pregnant or may become pregnant, talk to them about CMV and direct them to their healthcare provider to assess their risk of CMV. If you or anyone you know is a healthcare provider, a childcare provider, or works with children in any capacity tell them about the Cytomegalovirus Public Health & Policy Conference, scheduled for September 26-27, 2014. The conference is geared to raise awareness of CMV, its effects, prevention efforts, early identification, and family support.

