

# Congenital cytomegalovirus (CMV)



## What is cytomegalovirus (CMV)?

CMV is a virus that can affect adults and children. Many times there are no symptoms. Other times, people have mild cold-like symptoms.

CMV can pass from a mother to their unborn baby. It can also pass to the baby during vaginal delivery or through breast milk. This happens when a woman:

- Gets CMV for the first time during pregnancy.
- Has had CMV in the past and the virus becomes active again (reactivates).

CMV present at birth, or congenital CMV, is the most common congenital infection in the United States. It affects 1 out of 200 (0.5%) newborns.

## What are the possible symptoms?

Babies born with CMV may have:

- Premature birth
- Low birth weight
- Yellow skin and eyes (jaundice)
- Small head size
- Seizures
- Rash
- Liver, spleen and lung problems

Some babies born with CMV do not have symptoms but could have problems over time. These may include:

- Hearing loss
- Vision problems
- Intellectual disability
- Lack of coordination
- Muscle weakness

## What tests could my baby have?

Your baby may have a simple, painless urine test to see if CMV is present.

- This can be done at any lab at Children's.
- The audiologist will call your Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT) doctor to get an order for the CMV test. They can also help you find the lab that is closest to you.
- Most often, a nurse will call you with the results 3 to 5 days after the test.

It is also possible to see if CMV was present in the dried blood spot (DBS) sample from your baby's newborn screening. If needed, the ENT doctor will ask for your consent (permission) to get your baby's DBS results.

## What is the treatment?

Talk with your baby's doctor if CMV is present. Sometimes antiviral therapy is used for CMV with symptoms, but there is no clear treatment for congenital CMV with no symptoms.

**This teaching sheet contains general information only. Talk with your child's doctor or a member of your child's healthcare team about specific care of your child.**

**In case of an urgent concern or emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department right away.**