

CYTOMEGALOVIRUS (CMV)

This fact sheet provides general information on cytomegalovirus (CMV).

WHAT IS CYTOMEGALOVIRUS?

CMV, or cytomegalovirus, is a common form of the herpes virus that affects individuals of all ages. Most infected individuals are unaware that they have CMV and are asymptomatic. Approximately a third of all infants will have been infected with CMV by the age of five. Once an individual is infected, the virus remains in the body for their entire lifetime. CMV rarely causes health complications in healthy adults. However, individuals with weakened immune systems are at higher risk of adverse health effects including digestive and nervous system problems, pneumonia, and vision loss. Pregnant women who have CMV, especially if they were infected during the pregnancy, may pass the virus to the unborn baby, causing congenital CMV. Congenital CMV has many serious health effects. Often, a child infected with congenital CMV will have more than one health effect. CMV is one of the leading causes of disability in children. Potential health effects include:

- Hearing loss
- Vision loss
- Cerebral palsy
- Intellectual disability
- Lack of coordination
- Seizures

MAJOR SOURCES OF TRANSMISSION

CMV is transmitted through bodily fluids and mucous membranes. Transmission is of special concern for women of childbearing age or those who work with young children. The virus is spread through contact with saliva, urine, blood, tears, breastmilk, and other bodily fluids. It is not spread by casual contact.

PREVENTION OF CMV

Cases of CMV may be prevented by minimizing contact with mucous and bodily fluids. The following practices will help minimize contact with mucous membranes and will help prevent CMV:

- Avoid contact with bodily fluids. For example:
 - Instead of kissing a child directly on the lips, place a kiss on their forehead or cheek.

- Do not share glassware or eating utensils with others.
- Avoid sharing food or drinks with a child.
- Do not place a pacifier in your mouth.
- Avoid touching your face after handling contaminated items (such as diapers or used tissues) until after your hands have been washed.
- Do not engage in sexual intimacy outside of marriage.
- Wash hands for 15–20 seconds with soap and water after coming in contact with any contaminated surfaces or bodily fluids, such as:
 - Changing diapers
 - Feeding children
 - Wiping noses or mouths
 - Handling children's toys
- Clean toys, countertops, and other surfaces
 - Surfaces that are touched or played with by children that may come into contact with bodily fluids should be cleaned on a regular basis.
 - Surfaces should be cleaned using disinfectants approved for meetinghouses. Bleach is not an approved disinfectant in Church meetinghouses.

INTERVENTIONS AND TREATMENT

Currently, there is no cure for CMV. Several states require that public education programs addressing the risks and prevention of CMV be made available to pregnant women, women who may become pregnant, and childcare facilities, hospitals, and religious organizations "offering children's programs as part of worship services." An updated list of states that provide these services can be found at www.nationalcmv.org.

In addition to being well-informed of the risks of CMV, the following steps should be taken to protect your child's health:

- Regularly screen your child's vision and hearing
- Consult with a physician about possible antiviral or Early Intervention (EI) Programs for Infants and Toddlers treatment.

RESOURCES

- Cytomegalovirus (CMV) and Congenital CMV Infection ([cdc.gov/cmvi/](https://www.cdc.gov/cmvi/))
- Cytomegalovirus (CMV) Infection ([mayoclinic.org](https://www.mayoclinic.org))
- Cytomegalovirus (CMV) ([webmd.com](https://www.webmd.com))
- Cytomegalovirus (CMV) Public Health Initiative (health.utah.gov/)
- National CMV Foundation ([nationalcmv.org](https://www.nationalcmv.org))

For more information about this topic, call the Risk Management Division:

- 1-801-240-4049
- 1-800-453-3860, ext. 2-4049 (toll free in the United States and Canada)

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