



CMV is the most common infection passed from mothers to babies during pregnancy.

Every year in Australia an estimated 2000 babies are born with CMV. Of these around 400 will experience long-term disabilities, including hearing loss.

Want more information?

Living Evidence for Australian Pregnancy and Postnatal Care
livingevidence.org.au/living-guidelines/leapp/

Congenital CMV Association of Australia
cmv.org.au

Cerebral Palsy Alliance
cerebralpalsy.org.au/cmv/

NHMRC
Staying Healthy – Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services (6th Edition)

Scan here for more information about CMV or to order more CMV pamphlets



An initiative of

Reduce the risk of CMV in pregnancy



What is CMV?
Cytomegalovirus (CMV) infection

What is CMV?

Cytomegalovirus (CMV) is a common virus spread through contact with bodily fluids.

Most healthy people infected with CMV will remain well. Some will have flu-like symptoms, like fever and tiredness.

If a pregnant woman is infected with CMV, there is a risk that her unborn baby will also become infected. This is called congenital CMV. Whilst most babies born with CMV will be healthy, congenital CMV can cause disabilities including hearing loss, cerebral palsy and learning problems. CMV can also cause stillbirth. The highest risk to the developing baby is CMV infection in the first trimester.

Young children can pass the virus on to their carers through their urine, saliva and nasal mucus.

People who care for or work with young children are at an increased risk of infection.

All pregnant women and those planning a pregnancy can follow simple steps to reduce their risk of CMV.

How to reduce your risk of CMV in pregnancy

Wash with care



Wash hands carefully or use alcohol-based hand sanitiser, especially after changing nappies and wiping noses

Kiss with care



Avoid kissing young children on the lips, try a kiss on the forehead instead

Don't share



Don't share food, drinks or cutlery with young children and avoid putting a child's dummy or toothbrush in your mouth

These steps will also reduce the risk of other illnesses, like colds/flu and diarrhoea. Good hygiene practices keep families and kids healthy and strong.

The first trimester of pregnancy (first 14 weeks) is the most important time to use these strategies.

Can you test for CMV?

CMV screening early in pregnancy is recommended for women who care for or work with young children.

If a woman has symptoms of CMV or has abnormal ultrasound results, testing is also recommended.

Testing is recommended for babies born to mothers with CMV during pregnancy or babies who do not pass their newborn hearing test.

Babies born with CMV should have their hearing and vision checked regularly. The effects of CMV can develop over time.

Can CMV be treated?

Pregnant women with suspected or confirmed CMV should be referred to a doctor with expertise in CMV infection in pregnancy to discuss treatment options.

Early antiviral treatment may help babies who have CMV and are sick at birth. Treatment should be discussed with a doctor.