

Congenital CMV: Tips for Pediatric Health Care Providers



Did you know congenital cytomegalovirus (cCMV) is the most common congenital virus in the United States? cCMV can cause serious health problems for newborn babies, including:



In the United States,

1 in 200 babies

are born with congenital CMV.



Hearing loss



Vision loss



Learning disabilities



Developmental delays



Microcephaly (smaller head size)

As a pediatric health care provider, you can help reduce rates of cCMV — and ensure infants with cCMV get the care they need.

Educate pregnant people about cCMV

Education is the key to prevention! You can educate pregnant people (like your patients' parents and caregivers) about cCMV by sharing these resources.

Fact sheet

This fact sheet includes basic facts about cCMV and simple ways that people can reduce their risk of getting CMV during pregnancy. Try using it to start the conversation about cCMV with pregnant parents and caregivers during patient appointments. You can also put a few copies in your waiting room or post it on your practice's webpage or social media accounts.



Social media graphics

Share these graphics on your practice's social media accounts to spread the word about cCMV. To keep the momentum going, encourage other health care providers to share with their networks.



Because CMV is transmitted through body fluids, including saliva and urine, **pregnant people who have young kids or work with small children** are more likely to get CMV and pass it on to their babies. It's especially important to educate these pregnant people about cCMV.

Test for CMV

Know how to spot the signs and test your patients for CMV.

Newborn babies

Some babies may show signs of cCMV at birth, including rash, jaundice, or low birth weight. Sometimes there are no external signs of cCMV.

To determine whether a baby was infected with CMV while in utero, you'll need to administer a PCR (polymerase chain reaction) test on a urine sample. It's important to run this test within the baby's first 3 weeks of life.

Pregnant people

Many adults with CMV have no symptoms, while others have symptoms like fever, body aches, or fatigue. If pregnant people report cold or flu-like symptoms, encourage them to ask their OB or primary care provider about the possibility of CMV testing. IgM and IgG antibody testing can determine if patients have CMV antibodies.



Provide follow-up care or referrals

As of 2023, there's no standard treatment recommendation for cCMV. For babies with moderate to severe symptoms, antiviral medications can improve long-term hearing and developmental outcomes. However, these medications can have serious side effects and aren't recommended for babies with mild symptoms.

All babies diagnosed with cCMV should receive follow-up care, including:



Monitoring for hearing loss, as recommended by the child's audiologist



An eye exam during the first year of life



Regular follow-up visits with a primary care doctor to monitor their developmental milestones and head size

For more information and clinical guidance on congenital CMV from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), visit cdc.gov/cmV/clinical/index.html.



This project is supported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award totaling \$350,000 with 100 percent funded by CDC/HHS. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by American Academy of Pediatrics, CDC/HHS, or the U.S. Government.

