

Facts About Congenital CMV

Congenital CMV is the most common cause of birth defects and childhood disabilities in the U.S. It is the most common infection present at birth.

EVERY HOUR a child becomes permanently disabled because of congenital CMV

EACH YEAR in America: 40,000 children are born with congenital CMV infection; 8,000 children are permanently disabled; and approximately 400 children die.

CMV CAN CAUSE:

- Death
- Deafness
- Mental retardation
- Seizures
- Brain damage
- Cerebral palsy
- Blindness
- Growth problems

1 in every 150 children is born with congenital CMV

1 in 750 children is born with or will develop permanent disabilities caused by congenital CMV

More children are disabled each year from CMV than from Down syndrome, fetal alcohol syndrome or neural tube defects/spina bifida

CMV is the...

second leading cause of mental retardation,

leading cause of cerebral palsy in children

leading cause of non-hereditary deafness

In the U.S. about half of all expectant mothers have never been infected with CMV, which puts their unborn babies at risk!

About the Brendan B. McGinnis Congenital CMV Foundation

The Brendan B. McGinnis Congenital CMV Foundation is a non-profit 501(c)(3) established in 2007 by Tracy McGinnis, whose son Brendan is severely disabled and developmentally delayed due to congenital CMV. The primary goals of the Foundation are to raise public awareness about congenital CMV, to raise donations to support research for a vaccine for CMV, and to affect change in the medical community so that physicians will begin to test women for CMV prior to pregnancy. Ultimately, our mission is to save babies yet to be born from suffering the potentially devastating consequences of congenital CMV.

Please pass this information on to help us educate women about this common virus that is basically unknown to the general public, but is statistically at epidemic levels.

Please also remember our foundation when you are making your charitable contributions. We depend upon your financial assistance to help us reach our goals and ultimately save lives by eradicating this potentially life-altering virus.



**Brendan B. McGinnis
Congenital CMV Foundation**

To contact us, learn more about CMV,
or to donate to the Brendan B. McGinnis
Congenital CMV Foundation, go to:
www.cmvfoundation.org

Pregnant or planning a pregnancy?

**Why You Need To
Learn About The
Birth Defects Virus:
Cytomegalovirus (CMV)**



**Every hour a child becomes
permanently disabled**

**because of
congenital CMV!**



What is CMV?

CMV stands for cytomegalovirus. CMV is a common virus that approximately 50% to 80% of adults in America have by the time they are 40 years of age. It is often asymptomatic, meaning showing no symptoms. Most people contract the virus as children. When CMV is contracted as a child or an adult, it is essentially harmless. A person will subsequently build immunity to the virus once they have contracted it. However, there are circumstances when CMV infection can have disabling, even fatal, consequences, such as when the virus infects an unborn baby.



Congenital CMV

Congenital CMV is the most common congenital (meaning present at birth) infection in America. Congenital CMV is the term used when a newborn infant tests positive for the CMV virus at the time of birth, meaning that the virus was contracted when the baby was still in the womb. The virus enters the unborn baby's system, where it can have devastating, even fatal, effects on the developing baby. The brain of the unborn baby is particularly targeted by the virus, and infection results in a wide range of disabilities due to that brain damage. Other developmental disabilities, such as autism, may be due to CMV infection.

How is CMV Contracted?

CMV is spread through contact with human bodily fluids, such as urine and saliva. As with many other viruses, it only takes brief casual contact with a contaminated surface, object or person to acquire the infection. CMV can be spread by sharing a glass or eating utensil with a CMV-positive individual, or kissing a young child who is actively contagious with CMV. In fact, it is not uncommon for women to contract the virus for the first time from their pre-school aged children, who in turn have acquired the infection from other children at pre-school or in group daycare. The consequences of a primary (first time) infection in a woman can be tragic if she is pregnant at the time of acquiring the virus. Thus, women who have not been exposed to CMV and have young children (or work with young children) are at higher risk if they are considering future pregnancies, particularly if their young children attend group daycare.

How Can I Protect My Unborn Baby or Future Pregnancies?



Find out your CMV status prior to getting pregnant. If your blood test indicates that you have never had CMV, discuss the risks with your doctor. Every woman should take steps to prevent CMV infection during pregnancy, but women who are CMV-negative are at highest risk. Remember, this includes care in handling bodily fluids of your own children, as in kissing your children on the face, changing diapers or sharing utensils or cups with them. Refer to our website, www.cmvfoundation.org, or the CDC website, www.cdc.gov/cmv, for detailed recommendations on how to take extra hygienic precautions while pregnant.

Is There a Cure for CMV, or a Vaccine?

No, there is no cure and no vaccine, although a drug called ganciclovir is useful for some babies with congenital CMV. If your baby has congenital CMV infection, you should discuss the option of ganciclovir with your baby's doctor. Funding to support CMV vaccine researchers is limited. Our Foundation is dedicated to financially supporting CMV vaccine research. We know from our experience with congenital rubella (German Measles), a virus infection that used to cause birth defects in newborns a generation ago, that an effective vaccine can eradicate the disease from the population altogether. Through increased public awareness, combined with increased pressure on the medical community to educate and test women for CMV, it is our hope that funding for CMV vaccine research will be increased substantially. Until that time, we rely on public donations to support these goals.



Why Haven't I Heard of CMV Before Now?

In short, there is no answer. One of the primary missions of the *Brendan B. McGinnis Congenital CMV Foundation* is to educate women about CMV. Our foundation also aims to encourage the Ob-Gyn community to have CMV counseling and testing become a standard part of every woman's care *prior* to pregnancy.