

Congenital Cytomegalovirus (cCMV)

What is congenital cytomegalovirus (cCMV)?

Congenital cytomegalovirus (cCMV) is a condition where an infection called cytomegalovirus (a type of human herpes virus) is present in a baby at birth. Cytomegalovirus (CMV) is a common virus that usually has no symptoms, or mild flu-like symptoms in children and adults. CMV is most problematic for people with weak immune systems and when the infection is **congenital**, or passed from a parent to a baby during pregnancy so that the baby is born with the virus.

- cCMV is the most common cause of congenital hearing loss that is not genetic (passed through genes or DNA).
- You can learn more about cCMV at: www.NationalCMV.org.

What are some signs and symptoms of cCMV?

Signs of cCMV can change over time. Some children can be asymptomatic (have no symptoms) or have no major health problems at birth. Some common signs of cCMV include:

- Premature birth (born earlier than expected)
- Small birth weight
- Microcephaly (small head size)
- Seizures
- Enlarged liver and spleen

Babies with cCMV are also at risk for hearing loss, vision loss, and other neurological issues (problems with their brain and nervous system).

How is cCMV diagnosed?

- cCMV is diagnosed within the first 2 weeks of a baby's life through a urine (pee) or saliva (spit) sample.
- For babies who are showing symptoms, a medical provider may order imaging tests like an MRI, blood tests, or urine or saliva samples.
- An **audiologist** (a doctor specializing in diagnosing and treating hearing loss) will complete a hearing test to understand how you are hearing at different pitches and volume.

How is cCMV treated?

- cCMV can affect people in different ways. Some prescription medications can help with cCMV symptoms.
- Depending on how much hearing loss someone has, hearing aids or cochlear implants can help you learn to talk and understand others better.
- Hearing loss can be **progressive** (get worse over time) in cCMV, so we recommend following up regularly with an audiologist.
- A speech and language evaluation can help you understand how your child's hearing loss is affecting their ability to learn to talk. This speech and language evaluation, performed by a speech therapist, will give us information on **receptive language** (how a child understands language) and **expressive language** (how a child uses words to express themselves).

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