

TORCH Syndrome

What is TORCH syndrome?

TORCH stands for a group of infections that affect babies during pregnancy or birth:

- Toxoplasmosis
- Other agents
- Rubella (also known as German measles)
- Cytomegalovirus
- Herpes simplex

These infections can cause **congenital** (present at birth) diseases for a baby, such as fever, problems with feeding, bleeding or spots under the skin, enlargement of the liver and spleen, jaundice (yellow skin or eyes), hearing loss, and vision loss. Other infections that can cause hearing loss in newborns include syphilis, varicella-zoster virus, parvovirus B19, HIV, and Zika virus.

How is TORCH syndrome diagnosed?

- Toxoplasmosis is diagnosed through a blood or amniotic fluid (fluid that surrounds a baby during pregnancy) sample.
- Rubella is diagnosed with a throat or nose swab, or through a blood sample.
- Cytomegalovirus is diagnosed through a blood sample, viral culture (a lab test to find viruses that can cause infection), or urine test.
- Herpes simplex is diagnosed with a viral culture of lesions (sores).

How are TORCH syndrome infections treated?

- Your treatment options will depend on the specific type of TORCH infection you have. Talk with your doctor for advice on your treatment options.
- Depending on how much hearing loss you have, hearing aids or cochlear implants can help you talk with and understand others better. A 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).

Where can I learn more about TORCH syndrome?

National Organization on Rare Disorders (NORD)

- TORCH Syndrome: rarediseases.org/rare-diseases/torch-syndrome



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Author: University of Michigan Cochlear Implant Program
Edited by: Brittany Batell, MPH MSW

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