

Congenital CMV Screening

What is Cytomegalovirus?

Cytomegalovirus (sigh-toe-MEG-a-low VI-russ) or CMV is a common virus (germ). When healthy children and adults get infected with CMV, it usually causes only mild symptoms like fever or fatigue. However, pregnant women with CMV can pass it along to their baby during pregnancy. When this happens the baby is born with congenital (pronounced kun-JEN-uh-tul) CMV which can cause serious and long-term problems for some newborn babies.

What does congenital CMV do?

Most babies with congenital (present at birth) CMV will stay completely healthy. The most common problem caused by congenital CMV is hearing loss, but it can also cause problems with the brain, blood, liver or eyes.

It is very important to know if your baby has congenital CMV so that he or she can get the best possible care. In some cases there may be treatment available to help your baby. Doing this test within 3 weeks of birth is the only way we can know if your baby has congenital CMV.

Why is my baby being tested for congenital CMV?

One of the earliest signs of congenital CMV is hearing loss, for this reason we are testing all babies who:

- ▶ Fail their 2nd stage hearing screen

- ▶ Will not be screened for hearing loss until after 1 week of life
 - Infants admitted to the NICU
 - Infants less than 34 weeks gestation in the Intermediate Nursery

How is the test done?

The test is done using a swab to gently collect saliva (spit) from your baby's mouth.



What happens next?

The swab is sent to the lab for testing. The results are ready within a week or less. If your baby has a negative CMV test, there is nothing more to do. If your baby has a **positive** CMV test, you will be contacted to arrange for your baby to be seen soon by a paediatrician (baby doctor) to decide whether treatment is needed and to schedule additional hearing tests.

Can I breastfeed my baby if he/she has CMV?

Yes, breast milk is very helpful for your baby's growth and development and breastfeeding does not affect congenital CMV.

For more information:

See <http://www.cdc.gov/cmvcongenitalinfection.html> or contact your doctor.