

CMV Awareness Month Sample Article

Cytomegalovirus (CMV) Awareness Month: Raising Awareness of Congenital CMV, the Most Common Infectious Cause of Birth Defects

[City, State] — Each June, health organizations across the country recognize **Cytomegalovirus (CMV) Awareness Month** to raise awareness about the most common infectious cause of birth defects and developmental disabilities in the United States.

Cytomegalovirus, or CMV, is a common virus that infects people of all ages. Most healthy children and adults who become infected with CMV have mild symptoms or no symptoms at all. However, when CMV infection occurs during pregnancy, the virus may pass to the developing baby. When a baby is born with CMV, the infection is called congenital CMV.

Congenital CMV affects approximately **1 in every 200 babies born in the United States each year**. While many babies with congenital CMV appear healthy at birth, some may develop health concerns such as vision impairment, developmental delays, or other long-term disabilities. Congenital CMV is also the leading non-genetic cause of childhood hearing loss.

Because CMV spreads through contact with bodily fluids such as saliva or urine, pregnant people who often spend time around young children have increased opportunities for exposure. Simple behavioral practices can help reduce the risk of CMV infection during pregnancy.

Steps that may help reduce the risk of CMV infection during pregnancy include:

- Wash hands often with soap and water, especially after changing diapers, feeding a young child, wiping a child's nose or drool, or handling toys.
- Avoid sharing food, drinks, utensils, or toothbrushes with young children.
- Avoid putting a child's pacifier in your mouth.
- Kiss children on the forehead or head instead of the lips.
- Clean toys, countertops, and other surfaces that come into contact with children's saliva or urine.

The importance of early detection and awareness

Increasing awareness of congenital CMV is an important step in helping families and healthcare providers recognize potential concerns early. Early identification and connection to supportive services can help children and families access resources that support healthy development.

CMV Awareness Month encourages families, healthcare providers, and communities to learn more about congenital CMV, prevention strategies, and available resources.

To learn more about congenital CMV, visit the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) CMV information page at:

www.aap.org/en/patient-care/congenital-cytomegalovirus-ccmv. You can also explore resources from the **National Birth Defects Prevention Network (NBDPN)** at:

www.nbdpn.org

The NBDPN is a volunteer-based organization that addresses the issues of birth defects surveillance, research, and prevention under one umbrella by maintaining a national network of state and population-based birth defects programs. CMV Awareness Month materials and activities are an output of the National Birth Defects Prevention Network (NBDPN). The contents of the awareness month materials and related promotional messaging are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by state public health agencies or other NBDPN members and partners.

Additional information and awareness materials are available from the **National CMV Foundation** at:

[/www.nationalcmv.org](http://www.nationalcmv.org)