

## Keys to CMV prevention

1. Assume all toddlers are infected with CMV.
2. Use soap and water or a disinfectant to clean hard surfaces that have been contaminated by secretions. **Diaper wipes do not kill CMV!**
3. Wash hands often with soap and water for 15-20 seconds, especially after wiping runny noses, changing diapers, picking up toys, etc. If soap and water are not available, use alcohol based hand gel.
4. Avoid saliva! Kiss young children on the cheek or head, not the lips. Do not share food, drinks, or eating utensils with them. Don't share toothbrushes. Don't put their pacifier in your mouth.
5. Be aware of the availability of counseling and testing for antibodies to CMV to determine immune status.
6. Pregnant caregivers need to be extra diligent about sanitizing surfaces and washing their hands with soap and water after direct contact with a toddler's bodily fluids.

**The efficacy of  
hygienic  
precautions has  
been shown to be  
greater than 75%**

**WARNING:** According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, women should avoid toddler saliva and other bodily fluids during pregnancy because of the risk of birth defects. Kissing toddlers on the mouth and sharing food and utensils with them increases your chances of contracting cytomegalovirus (CMV) and may cause health problems to the fetus when acquired during pregnancy.

If you are pregnant, or planning to become pregnant, talk to your doctor about CMV.

For more information, visit [IdahoCMV.com](http://IdahoCMV.com), [nationalcmv.org](http://nationalcmv.org), or the Utah Department of Health.

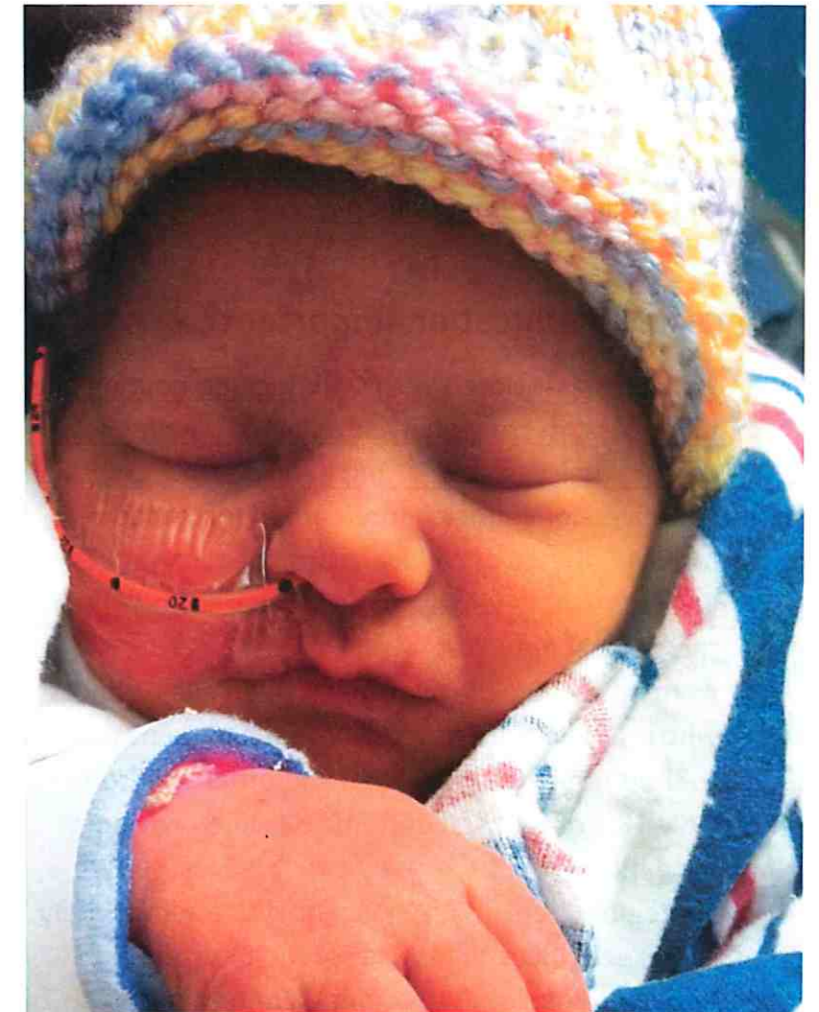
This material was brought to you by:



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## What Childcare Providers Need to Know About Cytomegalovirus (CMV)

Helping to prevent the leading viral cause of birth defects



## What is CMV?

- CMV is the #1 viral cause of birth defects.
- CMV is an occupational risk for women of childbearing age who work in childcare settings.
- CMV is a common virus that infects most people by middle age.
- Most people with CMV show no signs or symptoms, but it can cause serious health problems for unborn babies.
- CMV disables an estimated 4000 babies per year in the U.S.
- CMV is dangerous because it can cross the placental barrier in pregnancy.

## Why is CMV education important?

- Problems associated with CMV include hearing and vision loss, microcephaly, intellectual challenges, cerebral palsy, seizures, and even death.
- Caregivers of young children are at increased risk for CMV. 8-20% of childcare providers contract CMV infection every year, as compared to 1-4% of the general population.
- As many as 70% of children between ages 1 and 3 who go to daycare have CMV that can be passed on to their families, caretakers, and other children.
- Only 18% of licensed in-home daycare providers have heard of CMV.
- Some providers do not know how to appropriately sanitize surfaces to reduce spread of disease.
- It is a worker's right to understand occupational hazards.
- CMV can be prevented.

## What do we need to know about CMV?

We all know that handwashing reduces the spread of germs. What we don't understand is that certain germs can cause serious, irreversible birth defects.

- ✓ CMV is extremely common and is typically harmless unless contracted by a pregnant woman or a person with immune deficiencies.
- ✓ CMV is more common than fetal alcohol syndrome and Zika virus.
- ✓ CMV is often found in the bodily fluids of otherwise healthy toddlers. Due to immature hygienic abilities, toddlers easily spread the infection to other toddlers and to their adult caregivers who may be unaware of how to properly handle bodily fluids including saliva, urine, blood and nasal secretions.
- ✓ CMV is most infectious and problematic during an initial infection. Like chicken pox, the initial infection is typically the most dangerous, after which, a person makes CMV antibodies which provide protection against most further infections with CMV.
- ✓ Concerned individuals may request a CMV blood test from their physicians to determine whether they have CMV antibodies.
- ✓ Women can lessen their risk of getting CMV by reducing contact with saliva and urine from babies and young children.

As a childcare worker, I washed my hands so often that my hands were cracking. I washed after every diaper change and before handling food. However, while caring for children there, I remember being pregnant and eating lunch on the playground without washing my hands first. I doubled up on tissues when I wiped the children's noses, thinking that was enough protection since there was no sink nearby. I was wrong.

-Jessica, mother of a child severely affected by CMV



Rebekah, mother of a child severely affected by CMV

## If CMV is so bad, why have only 9% of women heard of it?

In spite of research and evidence documenting the danger of CMV, it is not in doctors' standard of care to provide CMV prevention education in the U.S. There is also no national protocol to handle the problem of CMV in childcare or a national CMV awareness campaign for educating women of childbearing age.

In some states, including Idaho, legislation has passed to ensure that childcare providers receive CMV education.

Interestingly, many countries outside the U.S. are very aware of CMV and proactive about preventing it. In Germany, for example, daycare workers must have their CMV status checked via blood test in early pregnancy. If the worker does not have CMV antibodies, she is excluded from work with children under the age of 3 as a precaution to protect her offspring.