

Cytomegalovirus (CMV)

The most common infectious cause of birth defects

Cytomegalovirus (CMV) is a **common virus**.

Anyone at any age can get CMV, and most healthy people don't show any signs or symptoms.

If a person has CMV when pregnant, the baby can become infected. CMV infection before birth is known as “**Congenital CMV**” (cCMV).

Each year, nearly 300 babies in Wisconsin are born with cCMV. About **1 of every 5 children** born with a cCMV infection will develop permanent problems.



cCMV is the leading cause of birth defects and non-genetic childhood hearing loss.

Reduce your risk of getting CMV

- Wash your hands after contact with a child's bodily fluids.
- Do not share food or drinks, utensils, or straws with children.
- Kiss children on the forehead or cheek instead of their lips.
- Use soap and water to keep toys and surfaces clean.

CMV is spread through **saliva, mucus, urine, and other bodily fluids**. It is common for young children to get CMV from other children. They can transmit the virus to parents and caregivers, even when they don't seem sick.

Learn more about congenital CMV at dhs.wi.gov/ccmv

