



Fact Sheet: CMV (Cytomegalovirus)

What is Cytomegalovirus (CMV)?

CMV is a virus that only infects humans and can be found worldwide. It can remain inactive in the body for long periods of time and may become active during times of illness.

How is it treated?

Currently, no treatment exists for CMV infection in the healthy person. An antiviral drug, Ganciclovir, may be given to those with vision problems or who have life-threatening illnesses.

What are the symptoms?

- Prolonged fever
- Sore throat
- Fatigue
- Vision problems
- Jaundice (yellowing of the skin)
- General feeling of not being well
- Sometimes no symptoms

Who is at risk?

- Daycare workers
- Children in daycare centers
- Men who have many male sex partners

How is it spread?

CMV may be shed in body fluids (urine, saliva, blood, tears, semen, and breast milk) of an infected person. CMV is spread to other people by close intimate contact with infected bodily fluids; usually when infected body fluids come in contact with a person's hands and then the person puts their hands to the nose or mouth of a non-infected person. CMV is also spread through sexual contact, blood transfusion, transplanted organs, and mother to infant (during pregnancy or birth or in breast milk).

How is it prevented?

The best protection against CMV is frequent hand washing with soap and water. Persons who take care of children should always wash their hands after changing diapers. Pregnant or very sick people should avoid exposure to those infected with CMV.

This fact sheet is for information only and is not meant to be used for self-diagnosis or as a substitute for consultation with a health care provider. For more information, call your health care provider or 257-3612.

Visit our website at: www.gchd.us or the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention at: www.cdc.gov

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