

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, but may become active during times of illness.

What are the symptoms?

Generally, there are no symptoms associated with CMV and many persons may not know that they are infected.

Symptoms may include:

- Fever
- Sore throat
- Fatigue
- Swollen glands

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 then spread to other people by close intimate contact with infected body fluids. CMV may also spread through sexual contact, blood transfusion, transplanted organs, and mother to infant (during pregnancy, birth, or in breast milk).

How is it treated?

Currently, no treatment exists for CMV infection in the healthy person. An antiviral drug, Ganciclovir, may be given to those who are immune compromised, as well as to infants born with congenital CMV infection with central nervous system involvement.

Who is at risk?

- Daycare workers
- Children in daycare centers
- Men who have many male sex partners
- Pregnant women
- Immunosuppressed persons

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 women or immunosuppressed persons should avoid exposure to people 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 call Washtenaw County Public Health at 734-544-6700.

