About Congenital Cytomegalovirus (CMV) Testing

Early Hearing Detection & Intervention (EHDI) Program

Connecticut
Department of Public Health
860-509-8074
www.ct.gov/dph/ehdi

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Beginning January 1, 2016, state law requires hospitals to screen babies who do not pass newborn hearing screening for Cytomegalovirus (CMV).

What is Cytomegalovirus? Cytomegalovirus (pronounced: sy-toe-MEG-a-low-vy-rus), or CMV, is a common virus that infects people of all ages. Most people who are infected with CMV have no signs or symptoms of the virus, but some may develop mild flu-like symptoms. When CMV occurs during a woman's pregnancy, it is possible for the unborn baby to become infected, which is then called "congenital CMV." Congenital CMV can potentially damage the brain, eyes, and/or inner ears of the unborn baby. Health problems or disabilities due to congenital CMV infection may appear immediately, or any time after birth, or they may never appear.

How is congenital CMV diagnosed? Congenital CMV is diagnosed through a painless saliva or urine test taken before 21 days of age.

What happens if your baby is diagnosed with congenital CMV? Ask your doctor for referrals to see the appropriate specialists, including an infectious disease doctor, an audiologist, and an optometrist/ophthalmologist (eye doctor). While there is no drug licensed to treat congenital CMV infection, the Department of Pediatric Infectious Diseases at Connecticut Children's Medical Center or Yale-New Haven Children's Hospital can provide more information on medication options. Also, CMV can cause hearing and vision loss overtime, so your child will need to be monitored on a regular basis.

How is CMV transmitted? CMV is transmitted through the transfer of bodily fluids. CMV is present in urine, saliva (spit), breast milk, blood, semen, and vaginal fluids. For pregnant women, the two most common exposures to CMV are through sexual contact and through contact with the urine and saliva of young children with CMV infection, especially children in day care who are 1 to 2 1/2 years old.

Hearing Loss and Congenital CMV - Congenital CMV is considered the leading cause of sensorineural hearing loss in children at birth. About half the cases of hearing loss in children with congenital CMV occur well after the baby is born and would NOT be detected by newborn hearing screening; therefore, it is important that your child undergo regular hearing evaluations. Hearing evaluations should occur at least every six months to monitor hearing. At that point audiological treatment in the form of hearing aids may be deemed appropriate.

CMV Prevention - To reduce the spread of CMV:

- Wash hands often with soap and water, especially after feeding a child, changing diapers, wiping a child's nose, or handling children's toys.
- Avoid sharing food, drinks, or utensils (spoons and forks) with children.
- Do not put a child's pacifier or toothbrush in your mouth.
- Do not kiss young children on or close to the mouth.
- Clean toys, changing tables, and countertops properly and often.

References: http://www.cdc.gov/cmv/index.html

Your Baby Needs Another Hearing Test

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My baby did not pass his or her newborn hearing screening. What now?

The most **IMPORTANT** thing you can do is to schedule a diagnostic hearing evaluation with an audiologist **as soon as possible.**

What is a diagnostic hearing evaluation?

It is a safe and painless series of hearing tests conducted by a licensed audiologist using special equipment to perform a comprehensive evaluation of your baby's hearing ability. A diagnostic hearing evaluation is the only way to know for sure if your baby has a hearing loss.

Why is getting a diagnostic hearing evaluation so critical to my baby's future?

Hearing loss affects a baby's ability to develop communication, language, and social skills. The earlier a baby with hearing loss receives services, the more likely they are to reach their full potential.

Babies' brains actively try to make sense out of the sounds that reach their ears in the course of everyday events. This is the beginning of a baby's language development. Identifying a baby's hearing loss as early as possible is important so that steps can be taken to help that child learn to communicate in a way that is best for him or her.

Any delay in identifying hearing loss, or obtaining needed services, is time lost.

"I'm pretty sure my baby hears me, I'm going to wait to have him/her tested..."

DON'T WAIT! Testing should be done as soon as possible after birth, preferably before two months of age.

Hearing loss is easily missed in babies and young children. Most babies with hearing loss can hear some sounds but not enough to develop language or speech properly. You cannot tell by simply watching and interacting with your baby if he or she can hear all the sounds needed to learn language. The only way to be sure is to take him or her to an audiologist for diagnostic testing.

Can *any* audiologist conduct a diagnostic hearing evaluation?

No. Diagnostic testing should be performed by an audiologist who specializes in working with babies and has the training and equipment necessary to conduct complete diagnostic testing.

How do I schedule a diagnostic hearing evaluation for my baby?

Ask your birth hospital or your baby's doctor to assist you, or contact an audiology center yourself by using the list below.

The following is a list of audiology centers that can test your baby's hearing.

Connecticut Children's Medical Center
Hartford, Farmington, or Glastonbury
(860) 545-9642

ENT Medical & Surgical Group, New Haven
(203) 752-1726

Hearing, Balance & Speech Center, Hamden
(203) 287-9915

Lawrence & Memorial Hospital, Waterford Outpatient Rehabilitation Services, Waterford
(860) 271-4900

University of Connecticut, Speech & Hearing Clinic, Storrs
(860) 486-2629

Yale New Haven Hospital, Yale Hearing & Balance Center, New Haven
(203) 785-2467

An appointment has been scheduled for your baby at the center circled above on:

_____ / _____ / _____ _____ AM / PM

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If your baby is found to be deaf or hard of hearing, there are many ways to get help.

The **Connecticut Birth to Three System** supports families whose babies have hearing loss, including offering audiological services.

To request a free developmental evaluation and support services to meet your baby's needs:

Call **1-800-505-7000**
or go to **www.birth23.org**

If you do not have insurance or do not have enough insurance, call HUSKY: 1-877-CT-HUSKY (1-877-284-8759).

If you have limited income and your child has other health care needs, call Child Development Infoline: 1-800-505-7000.

Cytomegalovirus (CMV) Testing

Beginning January 1, 2016, state law requires all babies who do not pass newborn hearing screening also be screened for a virus called Cytomegalovirus (CMV). A sample of your baby's saliva or urine will be taken by the hospital and tested for CMV. The result will be sent to your baby's doctor. Ask your baby's doctor for the results at your first visit after leaving the hospital. **See the other side of this pamphlet for more information on CMV.**

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Call the state Department of Public Health if you are having trouble making an appointment for your baby's hearing test or have any questions about the program.

Connecticut Department of Public Health
Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Program
410 Capitol Avenue, MS # 11 MAT
P.O. Box 340308
Hartford, CT 06134-0308
Voice (860) 509-8074
Fax (860) 509-8132

Keeping Connecticut Healthy
DPH
Connecticut Department of Public Health

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