

Cytomegalovirus

Human herpes virus 5 (HHV-5), CMV

Cytomegalovirus is a risk group 2 virus. It is considered a **reproductive pathogen** as congenital infections occur when women acquire primary CMV infection during pregnancy. Newborns with symptomatic disease may have a variety of congenital defects. Infants with these conditions may die of complications within the first month of life or survive with neurological complications.

How can I be exposed to CMV?

- Exposure occurs via direct contact with infectious tissues, secretions or excretions (saliva, urine, breastmilk, cervical secretions, semen, etc.)
- Vertical transmission can occur via the placenta, at the time of delivery (contact with virus in the birth canal), or through breastmilk.
- Laboratory personnel may be exposed via inhalation of concentrated aerosolized materials, droplet exposure of mucous membranes (eyes, nose, mouth), ingestion, and parenteral inoculation

How can I protect myself from exposure?

- Avoid inhalation and droplet exposure to mucous membranes by wearing eye/face protection and using primary containment devices.
- Avoid parenteral inoculation by strictly limiting the use of sharps and using sharps engineering controls whenever possible.
- Additional precautions are recommended for working with animals or large-scale activities.
- Avoid exposure to broken skin by wearing lab coat, gloves and waterproof bandages or avoiding agent until healed.

What should I do if I think I've been exposed to CMV?

Wash the affected area immediately for 15 minutes with soap and water and seek medical attention.

What symptoms should I look for after a potential exposure?

Symptoms in immunocompromised organ transplant recipients include fever, muscle pain,

malaise, joint pain, leucopenia (low WBC count), low platelet count, and hepatitis.

How long does it take for symptoms to develop?

1-4 months post organ transplantation or blood transfusion. 4-12 weeks for perinatal CMV infections.

Is there a treatment or vaccine?

There is no vaccine. Since CMV infection resolves spontaneously in healthy patients, antiviral treatment is not usually recommended.

Can I transmit it to other people?

Yes, transmission occurs through direct contact with body fluids from persons excreting the virus. Transmission may also occur during childbirth and breastfeeding.

Can I transmit it to my pets?

No, each CMV strain causes disease in its own natural host species.

Can it survive on surfaces?

CMV can survive on dry inanimate surfaces for a few hours, up to 7 days. As an enveloped virus, it is susceptible to many common disinfectants, heat, low pH, UV light, and freezing/thawing cycles.

See *Pathogen Safety Data Sheet* for More Information

