

What is Congenital CMV?

- Congenital Cytomegalovirus (CMV) is the most common cause of birth defects and childhood disabilities in the US
- CMV causes symptoms similar to the common cold – but when a pregnant mother develops an active infection, she can pass the virus to her unborn baby
- This infection **can be prevented** during pregnancy through hygienic precautions and education of women and their care providers – but knowledge and awareness is lacking!



What you should know about CMV

- CMV causes more injury to newborns than Down's Syndrome, Neural Tube Defects, and Fetal Alcohol Syndrome combined
- Approximately 1 in 150 newborn infants is born with CMV
- 1 in every 5 babies born with CMV will suffer a permanent disability
- CMV is the leading cause of non-hereditary deafness in children
- CMV has the potential to cause intellectual disability, cerebral palsy, seizures, blindness, and brain damage
- If detected early, treatment can be started immediately and could prevent lifelong health issues and disabilities
- Fewer than 1 in 5 pregnant women are even aware of CMV!

You can help

- Support the “Vivian Act” that will **promote education and awareness of congenital CMV in Minnesota**. Awareness of what CMV is, how to prevent it, and how to treat the illness is the first step. Prevention and early intervention is critical.

HF2653

- Upon enactment, the Minnesota Department of Health will provide up-to-date and evidence-based information available to health care practitioners, expectant parents and parents of infants about congenital CMV.
- That information includes recommendations to test babies who fail the newborn hearing screens (since CMV sometimes causes hearing loss), as well as information on transmission of CMV from mother to child, birth defects caused by CMV, preventative measures, and resources available for families of children born with CMV.
- HF2653 does not dictate any “standard of care” for physicians or providers, nor does it mandate any kind of medical testing or screening on any woman or infant. Knowledge and education prevents maternal CMV infections during pregnancy (10.1016/j.ebiom.2015.08.003) and this in turn decreases congenital infection, reducing the overall cost of health care. In the 1990s, the annual cost for caring for children born with congenital CMV was estimated at \$1-\$2 billion for the U.S. alone. Because children with congenital CMV often require long-term care and extensive medical and surgical care, the average cost per child was estimated at over \$300,000. In Minnesota, this corresponds to a total aggregate cost of care of up to \$25,000,000/year.

