

## **Prevention of CMV (cytomegalovirus) Infection in Pregnancy**

Cytomegalovirus (CMV) is a common virus that can be passed from person-to-person without their knowledge, usually via close contact. The most common sources of CMV infection are young children, as they are more likely to shed high levels of virus in their saliva, urine or nasal secretions for long periods.

Women who catch CMV infection while pregnant may pass the virus to their unborn child. If infected, some of these children may have health problems such as hearing loss, developmental delay and learning problems. The most serious cases may end in stillbirth, infant death, or the severe condition of cytomegalic inclusion disease (CID).

Pregnant women can reduce their risk of being infected with CMV if given the following advice:

- Do not share food drinks, or utensils used by children (under the age of 3 years)
- Do not put a child's dummy / soother in your mouth
- Avoid contact with saliva when kissing a child ("kiss on the forehead not on the lips")
- Thoroughly wash your hands with soap and water for 15-20 seconds especially after changing nappies or feeding a young child or wiping a young child's nose or saliva
- Clean toys, countertops and other surfaces that come into contact with children's urine or saliva