Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh Teaching Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Congenital CMV and Hearing Loss - Parent Information

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Congenital CMV and Hearing Loss

Patient Information

Community Children's Audiology

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Congenital CMV and Hearing Loss

Cytomegalovirus, or CMV, is a common virus that can infect people of all ages. Most healthy children and adults infected with CMV don't feel ill and don't know that they have been infected; others may have mild flu-like symptoms.

However, when CMV infection occurs during a woman's pregnancy, the developing baby can become infected. CMV infection before birth is known as 'Congenital CMV'. When this happens, the virus can potentially damage the inner ears. If the inner ears become damaged, the baby may be born with a hearing loss or may develop a hearing loss after birth or during early childhood.

Congenital CMV is one cause of hearing loss. Congenital CMV may be treatable if it is diagnosed early, and treatment may prevent further progression of hearing loss. Therefore, it is important for us to test for CMV if your baby is suspected of having a hearing loss. Finding out early means you and your baby will get the right advice and support from the very beginning.

Testing for CMV

Congenital CMV testing is simple and painless; it is completed by using a saliva sample. We do this by taking a swab of the inside of your baby's cheek. Tests can confirm congenital CMV infection in a baby if they are done before the baby is three weeks of age.

A hearing loss can have an impact on your child's speech, communication skills and on your child's education. Early detection of hearing loss and of congenital CMV means that your

child’s needs can be addressed early. This can reduce the impact that the hearing loss may have on your child.

What if my baby is found to have congenital CMV?

Audiology can refer your baby to the specialist centre in Manchester to discuss the results with you. Antiviral medication can be given that may prevent the hearing loss from getting worse.

Further contact details:

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