

Cytomegalovirus infection (CMV) is a viral infection that rarely causes obvious illness. The virus that causes CMV is part of the herpes virus family and, like other herpes viruses, may become dormant for a period of time and then be reactivated. CMV affects young children mainly, but it is estimated that by age 30 in the United States, half of all adults are, or have been, infected. The virus can pass from an infected, pregnant mother to her child through the shared blood supply (umbilical cord). Cytomegalovirus infection is caused by the human cytomegaloviruses (also known as “salivary gland viruses”). These are a subgroup of infective agents closely related to the herpes group of viruses. Like other herpes viruses, they may remain latent for years in people. The CMV virus is closely related to the herpes group of viruses. (For more information on Cytomegalovirus Infection and other herpes viruses, use “CMV” and “Herpes” as your search terms in the Rare Disease Database.)