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Cytomegalovirus (CMV)

What you need to know:

Cytomegalovirus (CMV) is a common virus that is transmitted by sexual contact or other close contact with an infected person's saliva, urine, or other body fluids. Being infected with CMV causes few or no problems in people with a healthy immune system. The most common symptoms of infection are low-grade fever, body aches, enlarged lymph nodes, sore throat, and fatigue. The virus can cause serious problems for infants of mothers who are infected for the first time with CMV during pregnancy. The risk of becoming infected is higher for those who care for small children. There is no way to prevent CMV infection. Pregnant women with CMV are not usually treated for the infection, but your doctor may order testing to see if you have been previously exposed to the virus and already have immunity. There is a low risk of passing CMV infection to a newborn from a mother while breastfeeding with recent CMV infection. However, the benefits of breastfeeding outweigh the minimal risk of passing CMV through breastmilk.

Parvovirus

What you need to know:

Parvovirus B19, also known as Fifth's Disease, is a mild, common childhood illness. It causes a "slapped cheek" or deeply red rash on the face, arms, trunk, and legs and less commonly, fever, headache, sore throat and joint pain in children. In adults, the virus may lead to mild flu-like symptoms as well as joint pain and swelling. The illness generally resolves without treatment. Approximately 40-60% of adults have had exposure to the virus in childhood and are therefore immune. Previous exposure to the virus will NOT affect the current pregnancy. Women with young children and those who work in child care or schools and who have never been exposed, thus are NOT immune, are at the highest risk for exposure to the virus.

If you are exposed to parvovirus during pregnancy and you have not been tested previously, a blood test for parvovirus is recommended. A positive test soon after exposure means that you had the infection in the past and are now immune, so the fetus is protected from infection. If blood testing is initially negative, it may be repeated three to four weeks later to confirm that you have not developed the infection. Rarely parvovirus can lead to miscarriage, fetal anemia, or fetal heart problems.

What you can do:

If you are pregnant and unsure of your immune status, you can help protect yourself from infection by frequent hand washing, specifically after diaper changing or touching saliva, and not sharing drinking glasses or utensils with anyone who may have been exposed. **Again, if you are concerned about possible exposure to either Parvovirus or CMV infections then please contact us at one of our office numbers listed above.**