CDC grant funds additional research for congenital cytomegalovirus

Baylor College of Medicine
HOUSTON -- (October 6, 2010) -- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [1] has granted researchers at Baylor College of Medicine [2] a two-year, $750,000 grant to study the long-term effects of congenital cytomegalovirus, or CMV, a virus that causes disease in infants who are infected before birth.
"CMV is the most common infection present at birth, but few people have heard of it," said Dr. Gail Demmler Harrison, professor of pediatrics-infectious disease at BCM and Texas Children's Hospital [3]. "It affects about 1 percent of all newborns in the United States."

Of those newborns affected, about 15 percent have silent CMV, where it is not immediately known that they have the infection. These newborns have a chance of slowly losing their hearing or vision, said Demmler Harrison, who will be leading the study at BCM. Those who have CMV symptoms at birth account for about 10 percent and are likely to have more severe outcomes with hearing, vision and mental disability.

In this study, Demmler Harrison and colleagues will analyze 30 years of data collected on newborns who were diagnosed with CMV through a newborn screening program conducted over 10 years. Researchers hope to determine the long-term effects of the disease and study whether it is associated with behavioral problems such as autism and ADHD and learning disabilities.

"This is an important virus that all women of child-bearing age should be aware of. It is transmitted to women from infants and toddlers through infected body fluids, so pregnant women should be sure they wash their hands frequently, not share food or drinks with infants and avoid getting children's urine and saliva on hands or in the eyes, nose or mouth," said Demmler Harrison.

To learn more about CMV, visit www.cdc.gov/cmv [4].

SOURCE [5]

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http://www.mdtmag.com/news/2010/10/cdc-grant-funds-additional-research-congenital-cytomegalovirus?qt-recent_content=0

Links:
[1] http://www.cdc.gov
[2] http://www.bcm.edu/
[3] http://www.texaschildrens.org
[4] http://www.cdc.gov/cmv

[5] http://www.bcm.edu/news/item.cfm?newsID=2859&r=1