

Canada's Grade: FAIL

Congenital Cytomegalovirus (cCMV) is the number one infectious cause of infant disability in Canada. Despite its significant impact, Canada falls short in its efforts to screen every newborn for cCMV.

This assessment evaluates each province's approach to congenital CMV screening, assigning a pass or fail grade based on the implementation of universal screening at birth. The results highlight a national shortfall, with an overall grade of 'fail' due to the insufficient number of provinces adopting comprehensive screening measures.

Province <i>(In alphabetical order.)</i>	Grade	Descriptors
Alberta		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * In 2023, the provincial government made a commitment to adding cCMV to the universal newborn screening panel. In the meantime, there is an effort underway to develop a targeted screening protocol in the Calgary Zone.
British Columbia		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are currently no province-wide screening protocols. Targeted screening protocols are implemented province-wide, covering most regions, and also include infants from Yukon.
Manitoba		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In April 2024, the Provincial Government's budget for Manitoba included the addition of congenital CMV to the universal screening panel.
New Brunswick		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are currently no province-wide screening protocols. Physicians and audiologists in New Brunswick (NB) can send dried blood spot samples to the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario in Ottawa for testing, with the test costs covered by NB Medicare.
Newfoundland		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are currently no province-wide screening protocols.

Province	Grade	Descriptors
Nova Scotia		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are currently no province-wide screening protocols. • Physicians and audiologists in Nova Scotia can send dried blood spot samples to the Children’s Hospital of Eastern Ontario in Ottawa for testing.
Ontario		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All newborns, including some infants from Nunavut, have been screened for cCMV at birth since 2019.
Prince Edward Island		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are currently no province-wide screening protocols.
Québec		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are currently no province-wide screening protocols.
Saskatchewan		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since 2022, all newborns have been screened for cCMV at birth. • Over 21,000 infants have been screened to date.

Immediate action is imperative to safeguard the health and development of our youngest citizens. We urge policymakers to recognize the critical importance of universal congenital CMV screening and to take inspiration from provinces that have successfully implemented comprehensive programs. By doing so, we can ensure that every baby receives the best possible start in life, free from the preventable impacts of congenital CMV.

Universal screening is not just a medical necessity but a moral imperative, and it is time for Canada to prioritize the well-being of all newborns nationwide.

This assessment focuses on provinces only due to the lack of screening measures in the territories, where some tests are sent to provinces for analysis.