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The heartwrenching video that shows why we must beat childhood diseases



You go through pregnancy imagining life with your bouncing, healthy, happy baby. Then he or she is born, and your hopes and dreams for the future are dashed. Maybe not right away; maybe in a day or a week or a month or a year. That's the heartbreaking reality facing families of the one in 20 children born with a genetic disease or birth defect.

And an emotive new video is shining a light on childhood disease as part of a [campaign](#) that aims to tackle illnesses head on. It shows a mum deliver a baby who is swiftly taken away for urgent medical treatment. Through the angst that follows, she's supported by a nurse who also has a sorrowful tale to tell. Take a look – it's a real tearjerker.



The video has been created by the [Children's Medical Research Institute](#), with help from Westmead Private Hospital in Sydney.

You've probably heard of the annual Jeans for Genes day, which raises money for CMRI. But you may know less about the institute's vital work, which is helping children across the world. Researchers at CMRI have dedicated their lives to improving treatment and prevention of childhood diseases such as cancer, which is the leading cause of death of children under 14. It also conducts groundbreaking research in areas such as neurobiology, embryology and gene therapy.

Its work in microsurgery, immunisations and care of premature babies have been vital to Australian medical science since its inception in 1993. It also operates [CellBank Australia](#), the only national repository of cell cultures.

Among CMRI's accomplishments over the past 20 years are finding that a single genetic defect can cause cleft lip and palate; mapping the early embryo to help understand many developmental problems; identifying components that will be important in treating 85 per cent of cancers; creating a blood test that will help doctors diagnose and plan treatments for some aggressive brain tumours; helping to develop a cure for genetic liver disease that is about to start clinical trials; and developing a new class of drugs to treat epilepsy.

But it has a long wish list of goals for the next 20 years, including finding new treatments for epilepsy, kidney disease, infectious diseases and every type of cancer. It also wants to develop gene therapy cures for rare genetic childhood diseases and improve understanding of predisposition to disease.

So how can you help? Firstly, by sharing this video with your family and friends. Secondly, by sending a [message of support](#) to researchers. Thirdly by [donating](#) to CMRI. You can also join [Jeans for Genes](#) day on Friday, August 27. The campaign, in its 21st year, has so far raised more than \$60 million.