



Mononucleosis “Mono”



WHAT IS MONO?

Infectious mononucleosis is an acute viral infection that primarily affects lymph tissue. It is characterized by fever, sore throat, and enlarged lymph nodes, and may include headache, fatigue, and/or puffy eyelids.

HOW IS MONO SPREAD?

- Infectious mononucleosis is spread through the saliva (oropharyngeal route). To prevent spread of the virus it is important that you take the following precautions:
- Don't kiss or share oral secretions.
- Don't share eating or drinking utensils/dishes.
- Wash eating and drinking utensils/dishes in hot soapy water.
- Tell others in close contact with you to wash their hands after being around you.

THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW

- If you have a fever, increase your liquid intake to 10 to 12 cups (2 ½ to 3 quarts) per day while fever is present.
- Take Tylenol or ibuprofen as directed by your practitioner.
- You should rest in bed when fever is present. After the fever goes away you may gradually increase your activity according to your ability and the advice of your practitioner.
- Discontinue all heavy lifting, contact sports, and strenuous activity for as long as your medical provider advises (usually 4-6 weeks) to prevent any chance of injury to your liver or spleen.
- Avoid alcohol consumption for 3 weeks to avoid liver inflammation.
- Report any pain in the left upper area of your abdomen, persistent nausea, vomiting, or change in skin color.
- You will usually recover in 2 to 4 weeks although occasionally it may take longer.
- Do not take ampicillin or amoxicillin during the course of your illness, as a drug related rash may occur.

SORE THROAT CARE AND PAIN CONTROL

- Gargle frequently with warm salt water.
- Keep your throat as moist as you can by increasing the humidity in your sleeping area, as you may breathe through your mouth and further irritate your throat. You may be advised to use lozenges or hard candy to help keep your throat moist.
- Take an analgesic (Motrin, for example) for pain relief.

CAN YOU GET MONO MORE THAN ONCE?

Once you have had mono, it is extremely unlikely that you will get it again unless you have a serious problem with your immune system. This is because having the disease normally makes you immune to getting it again, similar to the situation with the chickenpox, measles, and mumps viruses.

The basic blood test for mono can stay positive for a year or longer, even after you have fully recovered from mono. This means that if you develop a sore throat and/or other mono-like symptoms several months after you have recovered from your episode of mono, your blood test may still be positive, yet not mean that you have another case of mono or a relapse. Your health care provider can help you figure this out.

Diagnosis can be tricky because sometimes the blood test for mono does not become positive until you have been ill for as long as 2-3 weeks. If your health care provider suspects you have mono, but your test is negative, you may be asked to return for another test in a week or so.

The “Mono” virus can stay in your system for a few weeks to months, even after you have recovered. This is not a problem.

CONTACT HEALTH SERVICES IF YOU HAVE ANY ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS.

