

Facts about Mononucleosis ('Mono')

Mononucleosis is caused by the Epstein-Barr virus. It is catching. After someone catches the virus, it usually takes 4-6 weeks for the signs to appear. There is a blood test that helps the doctor tell if someone has mononucleosis.

Children with mononucleosis may have these symptoms:

- swollen glands
- fever that may come and go
- sore throat
- very tired — sleeping more than usual
- not interested in eating or playing
- body aches
- a rash on chest, back, hands and feet
- a sore stomach
- a yellowing of the skin and eyes

How is Mononucleosis Spread?

The virus that causes mononucleosis is found in the saliva of an infected person's mouth. It spreads from person to person through droplets or by contact. When someone with mononucleosis kisses, coughs, sneezes or spits, the virus can spread to other people. People with mononucleosis may have saliva on their hands. Then, if they touch someone or something the virus can spread.

Most people do not get sick after they come into contact with the virus, but they develop antibodies to the disease. 90% of people have antibodies to the mononucleosis virus by their late teen years. There is no need to keep healthy people away from someone with mononucleosis. Don't touch the tissues, washcloths or towels that belong to someone with mononucleosis.



What to Do at Home

- If another child has mononucleosis, watch your child for signs of the disease.
- **Talk to your doctor** if your child has any of the signs of mononucleosis.
- To reduce the spread of infection:
 - Wash hands well and often.
 - Give children their own toothbrushes, cups and eating utensils, facecloths and towels.
 - Teach children to cover their mouths with a tissue or a sleeve (not a hand), when they sneeze or cough.



Children with mononucleosis may not feel well enough to go to school or the child care centre for some time, but may return when they feel well enough to take part in activities.

Acetaminophen (Tylenol™, Tempra™) or ibuprofen (Advil™, Motrin™) may help reduce a fever and provide some comfort. Always follow the directions on the package about how much and how often to take acetaminophen or ibuprofen.

Never give products containing ASA (acetylsalicylic acid, such as Aspirin™) to anyone under the age of 20 years. Use of ASA products by children can lead to Reye's syndrome, a serious condition affecting the brain and liver.