

## Infectious Mononucleosis

Infectious mononucleosis is caused by the Epstein-Barr (EB) virus. It can last about 4-6 weeks, occasionally longer. This disease may occur at any age, but is more common in adolescents and in young adults.

Symptoms may include: malaise and fatigue, sore throat (even Strep), headache, fever, muscle aches, rash, swollen lymph nodes (glands), and swollen spleen. Symptoms vary from mild to severe.

Diagnosis can be made with a blood test here at CHS. This test is more likely to be positive with each successive week of symptoms (90% positive in the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of illness). Recurrent disease is very rare.

1. Treatment of mono is symptomatic (i.e. treat the symptoms, not the virus). Take Ibuprofen (Motrin<sup>®</sup>, Advil<sup>®</sup>) or Naproxen (Aleve<sup>®</sup>) for pain and fever; salt water gargles or lozenges for throat pain; fluids and plenty of rest.
2. Return to see your medical provider if temperature is 102° or higher, or for nausea, vomiting, or swallowing or breathing difficulty. **Seek medical care immediately** if the above symptoms are severe or if you have severe abdominal pain, pain in your left shoulder blade, or fainting.
3. Some liver involvement is expected; therefore, you should check with your medical provider before taking any medications. Alcoholic beverages should be avoided completely and acetaminophen (Tylenol<sup>®</sup>) products taken only on the advice of your medical provider. Aspirin should be avoided in any illness with fever for those under 20.
4. Limit activity during the acute phase. Prioritize your days: class, schoolwork, rest and sleep. Vigorous physical activity, sleep deprivation and other stresses may aggravate or prolong the illness.
5. To prevent rupturing your spleen (*which can be fatal*): avoid contact sports, vigorous or strenuous activities, including weight lifting, for a minimum of four weeks. Discuss resumption of physical activity with your provider. Even straining with a bowel movement can vary rarely cause problems, so discuss constipation with your provider.
6. Most people do not know how they acquired mono. The virus is present in saliva and body fluids even before symptoms develop. It can be spread via saliva while kissing, sharing food or eating utensils (such as bottles, glasses, silverware). The usual incubation period is 30-60 days.  
Generally, you are contagious until after your throat symptoms subside. Many people have had mono in the past, often without symptoms, and are not susceptible to getting it again.
7. Follow-up the week of \_\_\_\_\_, as well as any time that you have questions concerning your condition.

