Mononucleosis
Parent Resource Template

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DEFINITION

- Mononucleosis, commonly known as mono, is a disease caused by the Epstein-Barr virus (EBV).

SYMPTOMS

- May take 30-50 days to develop symptoms after exposure to a person with mono.
- Symptoms can last a few days to a few months.
- Young children may develop no symptoms or very mild symptoms.
- Though rare, in teenagers mono can be more serious.
- Fever.
- Sore throat.
- Extreme fatigue (can persist for weeks or months).
- Swollen lymph nodes in neck and armpits.
- Head and body aches.
- Enlarged liver and/or spleen.
- Rash may occur in those treated with antibiotics.

PREVENTION

- Mono is spread in saliva. The best way to prevent mono is by frequent handwashing, and by covering coughs and sneezes.
- A person known to have mono should not kiss others on the mouth, donate blood or share food, drinks or eating utensils.
TREATMENT

Much of the treatment for mono is aimed at making your child more comfortable until the infection goes away on its own. For example:

- Some healthcare providers may recommend giving your child acetaminophen or ibuprofen to reduce fever and ease pain.
- A sore throat can be eased by gargling with warm water and salt.
- Bed rest is important if the child feels fatigued.
- If the spleen is enlarged, avoid contact sports for one to two months.
- Because mono is caused by a virus, antibiotics should not be used as a treatment.

POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS

- Mono is usually not serious.
- Mono can cause secondary infections: strep throat, sinus infection, or tonsillitis.
- Rare, serious complications could be ruptured spleen or liver infection.

RETURN TO SCHOOL

- When student’s temperature is less than 100.4° F.
- Student is feeling well enough to participate in learning.

CALL YOUR HEALTHCARE PROVIDER

- If your child has significant symptoms such as: fever, sore throat, fatigue, and/or swollen lymph nodes.

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Information compiled from the American Academy of Pediatrics and Centers for Disease Control