

**You are being provided with this fact sheet:**

**because you or your child may have been exposed to infectious mononucleosis.** If you believe your child has developed infectious mononucleosis, contact your health care provider. Notify your child care provider or preschool if a diagnosis of infectious mononucleosis is made.

**for informational purposes only.**

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**What is infectious mononucleosis?**

Infectious mononucleosis, sometimes called “mono,” is a viral illness caused by the Epstein-Barr virus (EBV). Most people become infected with this virus at some time in their lives.

**What are the symptoms of infectious mononucleosis?**

Symptoms of illness appear 4 to 7 weeks after an individual is exposed to the virus. Young children often show mild or no symptoms of illness. Older children and adults who have mononucleosis may have fever\*, sore throat, swollen tonsils, fatigue, headache, rash and swollen glands. These symptoms may last from one to several weeks.

**How is infectious mononucleosis spread?**

Infectious mononucleosis is most commonly spread from person to person through contact with the saliva of an infected person. This may occur with kissing on the mouth or sharing items like food utensils, drinking cups, or mouthed toys with an infected individual.

**Who may become ill with infectious mononucleosis?**

Most adults have been exposed to the Epstein-Barr virus by the age of 18 and are therefore immune. Once a person has been infected, the virus stays dormant in the cells of the throat and in the blood for the rest of the person’s life. Periodically, the virus can reactivate and be found in the saliva of persons who have no symptoms. Many healthy people can carry and spread the virus intermittently for life.

**How is infectious mononucleosis diagnosed?**

Infectious mononucleosis is diagnosed by a health care professional based on symptoms. Laboratory testing is not typically needed.

**How is infectious mononucleosis treated?**

No specific treatment is available for infectious mononucleosis. Most people with infectious mononucleosis require only general comfort measures to help ease the symptoms, including getting plenty of rest and eating a healthy diet. *Never give aspirin to a child*, as this has been associated with Reye Syndrome.

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**How can the spread of infectious mononucleosis be reduced?**

- Use good handwashing technique to reduce spread of infectious mononucleosis.
- Avoid sharing personal articles that may be contaminated with saliva, such as drinking cups and eating utensils.
- Make sure that dishes are sanitized by heat or with a chemical sanitizer.
- Use a sanitizing solution on toys and surfaces on a regular basis. Remove mouthed toys from play areas until they can be sanitized.
- Notify your child care provider or the preschool of the diagnosis.

**Exclude from group setting?**

A person with infectious mononucleosis can remain in the child care environment provided that he or she is able to participate in the usual activities and is fever free without the use of a fever-reducing medicine.

\* Fever is defined as a temperature above 101°F (38.3°C) by any method or above 100.4°F (38.0°C) for infants younger than 2 months old.

**References:**

*American Academy of Pediatrics*

- Managing Infectious Diseases in Child Care and Schools, 4<sup>th</sup> ed

*American Academy of Pediatrics*

- Red Book: 2018-2021 Report of the Committee on Infectious Diseases, 31<sup>st</sup> ed.

*Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (Web site)*

- Epstein-Barr Virus and Infectious Mononucleosis. Accessed December 2020.

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