

MONONUCLEOSIS (MONO) FACT SHEET

What is mononucleosis (mono)?

Mononucleosis, also known commonly as mono, is a viral illness. Mono is caused by Epstein-Barr virus (EBV), a member of the Herpesvirus family.

What are the symptoms of mononucleosis?

Symptoms of mono can include, sore throat, swollen glands (lymph nodes)—especially behind the neck, headache, fever, tiredness and sometimes a rash. Symptoms typically appear around 30-50 days (4-6 weeks) after exposure. The symptoms of mono can last up to several weeks. In some cases, regaining normal energy levels may take weeks to month.

Who can get mononucleosis?

This infection is often contracted in older children and young adults, often high school and college students. Not everyone who is infected will have symptoms; about half of those infected will have symptoms.

What is the treatment for mononucleosis infection?

Treatment may include bed rest, drinking plenty of water, restriction on lifting heavy objects or vigorous exercise, including contact sports.

- The general rule is for children to remain home until they are healthy enough to participate in routine activities.

How is mononucleosis spread?

Mono is spread from person to person through saliva. Spread can occur by kissing or sharing items contaminated with saliva for example, drinking cups, straws, bottles, lip balm or tooth brushes are a few of the items that may be covered with saliva. Persons can be infectious from weeks to years. The virus can be found in the throat and can be shed for months after infection. After initial infection the virus can stay dormant for long periods of time and sometimes reactivate later without symptoms.

How is mononucleosis infection prevented?

- Wash hands completely with soap and warm running water after any contact with saliva or items contaminated with saliva.
- Do not share drinking cups, bottles, straws, eating utensils, cigarettes, mouthed pens or pencils, tooth brushes, or lip balm. DO NOT allow sharing of water bottles during sports events.
- Avoid kissing or having contact with the saliva of an infected individual.

For more information please contact Contra Costa Public Health at 925-313-6740 and visit our website at <http://cchealth.org/cd/>