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INFECTIOUS MONONUCLEOSIS

What is mononucleosis?

Mononucleosis (mono) is a sickness caused by the Epstein-Barr virus. The virus is spread through saliva from coughing, sneezing, and kissing.

Your child will probably have:

- a very bad sore throat with positive blood test for mono
- swollen lymph nodes in the neck, armpits, and groin
- fever for 7 to 14 days
- enlarged spleen (in 50% of children).

Most children have symptoms for a week. Those with very bad symptoms usually feel completely well in 2 to 4 weeks.

How can I take care of my child?

- **Give fever and pain medicines.** No specific medicine will cure mono. Give acetaminophen or ibuprofen for the pain of swollen lymph nodes and fever.
- **Drink fluids.** Make sure your child drinks plenty of fluids. Cold drinks, and milk shakes are especially good. Your child is getting enough to drink if he pees (urinates) at least 3 times a day. The urine should not be darker than normal.
- **Treat the sore throat.** Give soft foods. Children over age 1 can sip warm chicken broth. Children over age 4 can suck on hard candy.
- **Let your child rest.** Your child can select how much rest he or she needs.
- **Be careful not to injure your child's enlarged spleen.** All children with mono should avoid contact sports for at least 4 weeks. Your child should avoid heavy lifting and getting constipated.
- **Don't spread mono.** Use separate drinking glasses and utensils and avoid kissing.

Call you're the office right away if:

- Breathing becomes difficult or noisy.
- Abdominal pain occurs (especially high on your child's left side).
- Signs of dehydration occur.
- Your child starts acting very sick.

Call you're the office in 24 hours if:

- Your child isn't drinking enough fluids.
- Sinus or ear pain occurs.
- Your child isn't back to school by 2 weeks.
- Any symptoms remain after 4 weeks.
- You have other questions or concerns.