

infectious mononucleosis

Infectious Mononucleosis (infectious mono or mono) is a disease caused by a virus. This condition is sometimes called glandular fever and produces symptoms of fatigue, sore throat and swollen glands.

THE SPREAD OF INFECTIOUS MONONUCLEOSIS

Infectious mononucleosis is world-wide in distribution. It is most frequently diagnosed in young adults between the ages of 15 and 30 years and in young children, but may occur at any age.

Spread of the disease takes place by exchange of saliva from one individual to another, by mouthing contaminated objects, or by kissing (hence its nickname, the Kissing Disease).

SYMPTOMS

Symptoms are generally mild in children up to the age of 15 years. In young adults the symptoms are varying degrees of:

- Fatigue and feeling unwell
- Abdominal pain
- Sore throat
- Headache
- Chills and fever
- Painful enlarged glands, especially in the neck
- Swelling of the eyelids
- Occasional rash

INCUBATION PERIOD

Following contact with someone who has infectious mono, it may be two to six weeks before symptoms appear.

CONTAGIOUS PERIOD

The period during which the infection can be spread from one person to another may be up to six months following the appearance of the symptoms.

DIAGNOSIS

Anyone with symptoms suggesting infectious mono should see a doctor. Specific blood test are available and may be helpful in making the diagnosis.

Hospitalization is not usually required for either diagnosis or treatment but may be required if a complication occurs. As the disease is not spread easily, isolation of the patient or family is unnecessary during the course of the illness.

TREATMENT

Articles soiled with discharge from the nose and throat should be discarded or thoroughly cleaned. The patient usually does not require any specific treatment but should:

- Get plenty of sleep and rest
- Eat a well-balanced and nutritious diet including plenty of fluids.
- Avoid any strenuous exercise, such as active sports, until fully recovered.

OUTCOME

Usually the disease will run its course in one to three weeks; in some instances it may linger on for two or more months. Periods of depression can occur which may require medical treatment. The feeling of fatigue or lack of energy can persist for many months.



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