

## DESCRIPTION

An infectious viral disease that affects the lungs, liver, spleen and lymphatic system. It usually affects children and young adults (from 12 to 40 years of age).

## SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

Symptoms of mono are often mistaken for strep throat or flu. Sometimes symptoms are so mild a person may not even realize they are sick, while others may have very severe symptoms.

- Fever
- Sore throat
- Appetite loss
- Fatigue
- Enlarged spleen
- Enlarged liver
- Headache
- General aching.
- Swollen lymph glands, usually in the neck, underarms, or groin.
- Jaundice with yellow skin and eyes (sometimes).

## CAUSES

A contagious virus (Epstein-Barr virus). It is passed from person to person by close contact, such as kissing, coughing, or sharing food or toothbrushes. Some factors such as recent illness and stress may increase your chances of contracting mono.

## EXPECTED OUTCOMES

It usually clears up on its own in 10 days to 6 months. Fatigue usually lasts for 3 to 6 weeks after other symptoms get better. A few patients have a chronic form in which symptoms last for months or years. Possible complications include; anemia, ruptured spleen (resulting in emergency surgery), and in rare cases, involvement of the heart, lungs or central nervous system.

## GENERAL MEASURES

- Extra rest and healthy diet are important.
- Drink plenty of fluids
- To relieve sore throat, gargle with salt water, suck on throat lozenges and popsicles
- Don't strain hard for bowel movements. This may injure an enlarged spleen.

## MEDICATIONS

- For minor pain, you may use nonprescription pain relievers, such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen.
- Your physician may also choose to prescribe medication for pain control.
- If symptoms are severe, you may be prescribed a short course of steroids to reduce inflammation.
- Antibiotics are not effective against mono.

## ACTIVITY

- Rest in bed while you have fever. Resume activity gradually. Rest when you are tired.
- Don't join in contact sports until at least 1 month after complete recovery.

## NOTIFY OUR OFFICE IF

The following occur during treatment:

- Fever over 102°F (38.9°C).
- Constipation, which may cause straining.
- Severe pain in the upper left abdomen (rupture of the spleen is a medical emergency!).
- Yellowing of the skin.
- Difficulty swallowing or breathing from severe sore throat.