



## Infectious Mononucleosis

### **What causes it?**

Mononucleosis is a viral infection caused by the Epstein-Barr virus (EBV). It can also be caused by cytomegalovirus (CMV) or toxoplasmosis.

### **What are the symptoms?**

Symptoms may include fever, sore throat, malaise (feeling ill), enlarged lymph glands, and occasionally enlargement of the spleen and liver. In small children, the disease is generally mild and usually goes unnoticed. Therefore it is diagnosed more often in older children and young adults. This viral illness lasts from one to several weeks and has a very good recovery.

### **How is it diagnosed?**

There are blood tests the medical provider can use to confirm the diagnosis.

### **How is it transmitted?**

Although much less contagious than colds and flu, it may be spread by discharge from the nose and saliva from the mouth and throat. It may take four to six weeks for the disease to appear after a person comes in contact with the virus. Once someone has the disease, the virus remains dormant in the body for the rest of their lives. Recurrent symptoms are rare.

### **How is it treated?**

There is no specific treatment. There are no known preventive measures. Cleaning articles soiled with nose and throat mucous will reduce the risk of viral spread. There is no immunization available.

### **School/Child Care Attendance:**

No isolation or quarantine is advised. This virus poses a very low risk to contacts in the child care or school classroom. Exposure has very likely already occurred by the time a diagnosis is made. Infected children should stay at home as long as they feel ill and unable to participate in classroom activities.

### **Precaution:**

Because people with mononucleosis may develop an enlarged spleen and enlarged spleens may rupture when hit, persons with infectious mononucleosis should avoid contact sports. Rest with any fever is important. Once the fever has resolved, gradual return to exercise is advised.

For more information contact the Guilford County Department of Health and Human Services at (336) 641-7777 or [www.myguilford.com](http://www.myguilford.com)