



Know the Facts

Health



Infectious Mononucleosis (mono)

Infectious mononucleosis is commonly known as the “kissing disease”. The Epstein Barr Virus (EBV) is **transmitted** through **saliva**, thus, through kissing, but you can also **be exposed through a cough or sneeze, or by sharing** a glass or food utensils with someone who has mono. Fortunately, mononucleosis isn't as contagious as some infections, such as the common cold.

Mono isn't usually a serious illness. Most people develop immunity without even recognizing that they have had the virus as the symptoms are similar to the typical upper respiratory virus. In some cases if the symptoms are more severe it can lead to complications which may limit your normal, daily activities for up to several weeks.

Symptoms

Typical symptoms of infectious mononucleosis usually appear four to six weeks after you get infected with EBV. Symptoms may develop slowly and may not all occur at the same time.

These symptoms include:

- Fever
- extreme fatigue
- sore throat
- head and body aches
- swollen lymph nodes in the neck and armpits
- swollen liver or spleen or both
- rash

Sources:
<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/mononucleosis/symptoms-causes/syc-20350328>
<https://www.webmd.com/a-to-z-guides/understanding-mononucleosis-causes#1>

Picture source: <https://www.freepik.com/free-photos-vectors/water> Water photo created by freepik - www.freepik.com

Prevention

There's no vaccine to prevent mono. The virus can stay in your saliva for months after you're infected, so even if you don't have symptoms or feel sick, you may be contagious.

How can I protect myself?

- Wash your hands often
- Try not to share such things as drinks or silverware, toothbrushes with other people

Relieve the symptoms:

- Drink fluids to stay hydrated
- Get plenty of rest
- Take over-the-counter medications for pain and fever

Based on the severity of the symptoms, a healthcare provider may recommend treatment of specific organ systems affected by infectious mononucleosis.

Because your spleen may become enlarged as a result of infectious mononucleosis, you should avoid contact sports until you fully recover. Participating in contact sports can be strenuous and may cause the spleen to rupture.



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