

## FACT SHEET

**MONONUCLEOSIS**

(Infectious mononucleosis/Epstein-Barr virus)

<b><i>What is Mononucleosis?</i></b>	Infectious mononucleosis, sometimes called “mono” or the “kissing disease,” is a mildly contagious disease caused by a virus that belongs to the herpes family, called Epstein-Barr virus.
<b><i>How is it spread?</i></b>	It is spread from person-to-person by contact with saliva of an infected person. Sharing of common drinking containers is a method of transmission. Kissing is also a method of spreading among adolescents.
<b><i>What is the incubation period?</i></b>	It takes about 4-6 weeks after contact for symptoms to appear.
<b><i>What are the early signs?</i></b>	The early signs of mononucleosis are fever, sore throat, enlarged lymph nodes in the neck, enlarged spleen, fatigue, and possibly a measles-like rash. The spectrum of this disease may be extremely variable, ranging from no symptoms to being very ill.
<b><i>What about contacts?</i></b>	Contacts should seek medical attention if they develop symptoms.
<b><i>How long is the person contagious?</i></b>	Mononucleosis is contagious during the active stage of the illness and perhaps longer (the virus may persist for some time).
<b><i>When is it OK to return to school?</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very young children who drool or mouth objects should be excluded for the time they feel ill.</li> <li>• Students may return to school with a physician’s authorization. The child should feel well enough to participate in school activities. The physician may recommend limitations on certain physical activities.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Other Important Information</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is important to encourage good handwashing and other hygiene measures that help decrease the spread of disease.</li> <li>• Students should be encouraged not to share pop cans, water bottles, glasses, utensils, etc.</li> </ul>

*This fact sheet is not intended to replace the advice of your physician. Parents should contact their healthcare provider if they have concerns regarding their child’s health. If you have general questions, you may contact a Kalamazoo County nurse at 373-5264 or 373-5267.*

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