



# ITHACA COLLEGE

Hammond Health Center

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## Student Health Information **Infectious Mononucleosis**

Mono, or Infectious Mononucleosis, is an illness caused by the Epstein-Barr Virus. It varies in severity from a mild illness with barely noticeable symptoms to a more serious one, which rarely requires hospital admission. It spreads mainly through intimate contact and exchange of saliva (kissing, sharing a glass, bottle, or eating utensils). It is not highly contagious so it is rare to infect roommates. Most people get mono by the time they are adults but often the case is so mild that they may mistake symptoms for another mild illness.

### Symptoms

- Sore Throat
- Fever
- Fatigue
- Swollen neck glands
- Mild jaundice (yellow discoloration of skin)
- Tender, enlarged spleen

### Diagnosis

- A blood test called “Monospot” is done. It may not be positive during the early stages of infection and may need to be repeated.
- A complete blood count and Epstein-Barr titers may also be drawn.

### Treatment

- Adequate fluid intake and rest are extremely important
- Non-prescription medications (ie. Motrin or Tylenol) are used to alleviate symptoms
- Steroids (ie. Prednisone) may be prescribed to help with throat swelling
- Alcohol consumption should be avoided for 3-4 weeks after becoming sick
- Strenuous exercise should be avoided for 3-4 weeks due to rare risk of spleen rupture
- Since this is a viral infection, no antibiotics are needed unless there is a co-existing bacterial infection like Strep Throat

### Complications

Most people are better after one month but some people still feel tired and need more sleep for up to six months. You should contact the Health Center if you develop abdominal pain, increasing difficulty swallowing or breathing, constipation (as straining could lead to spleen rupture), or any new symptoms.

Updated April 2012, Source - American Academy of Family Practice Resources