

Mononucleosis

School Name
School Nurse Name
Phone Number
Date

Dear Parent or Guardian,

This letter is to inform you that an individual at school has been diagnosed with mononucleosis. For confidentiality purposes, no further information can be provided regarding the case but you are receiving this letter to learn more about mononucleosis, signs and symptoms, and other important information regarding the infection commonly known as “mono.”

What is mono? Mono is most often caused by the Epstein-Barr Virus (EBV), which is in the herpesvirus family. The majority of people will become infected with EBV at some point in their lives and similar to other viruses in this family, EBV will always be present in the body once a person is infected. The virus will primarily be in an inactive state, but at times, can be shed in bodily fluids like saliva. According to the CDC, at least one out of every four teens and young adults who get infected with EBV will develop infectious mononucleosis.

What are the symptoms? Symptoms of infectious mononucleosis can vary and younger children can often experience no symptoms at all. Commonly, older children and adults experience symptoms like fever, extreme fatigue, swollen lymph glands in the groin, armpits, and neck, sore throat, headache and body aches. Additional symptoms can include sensitivity to light, swollen eyelids, decreased appetite, and swollen spleen or liver. Symptoms are generally mild and last anywhere from one to several weeks.

How is it treated? There is no specific treatment or cure for mono. If you suspect your child may have mono, contact their pediatrician for an evaluation and to discuss a treatment plan. Most children with mono require only home-care measures to ease symptoms and provide comfort. Rest and hydration are critical to recovery and, if indicated by the healthcare provider, OTC medication can be used for fever and pain. In some cases, corticosteroids are prescribed for swelling in the throat or tonsils.

What are the risks? Most cases of infectious mononucleosis are mild and resolve on their own in 1–4 weeks. EBV infection can cause more serious complications, particularly in people with weakened immune systems.

How does it spread? Mononucleosis is spread through direct contact with an infected person’s saliva. This could be through sharing contaminated objects (toys, cups, etc) or through kissing, sneezing, or coughing. It can take up to two months to develop symptoms after exposure and preventing spread is difficult because people infected with EBV can spread the virus for the rest of their lives.

How long should children with mono stay away from school? Children with mono can return to school once they feel well enough to do so and meet all other exclusion criteria (including fever). Accommodations may be necessary if a student requires extended absences. Contact sports should be avoided and clearance from a licensed healthcare provider is required to return to PE/athletics.

What should you do now? Notify your child’s pediatrician and school nurse if, at any time, you suspect your child may have mono. To help prevent spread, encourage good hand washing habits, disinfect surfaces, discourage sharing of food and beverages, and teach appropriate sneeze and cough hygiene to your child.

Thank you for your careful attention to the information in this notice and for your diligence in helping to keep our school community as safe and healthy as possible. Please don’t hesitate to reach out to the school nurse with any additional questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

School Nurse Name