



DOCTOR DISCUSSION GUIDE

Managing Mononucleosis

Infectious mononucleosis (mono) is a potentially serious disease that you'll want to get treatment for right away. Asking the right questions during your conversation will help you know what to expect and how to better navigate your condition. Familiarize yourself with these common terms before your appointment to help facilitate your discussion.

Vocabulary to Know

Your doctor might mention these common terms. Here's what they mean.

Mononucleosis	Mononucleosis means that the blood contains an unusually high number of cells called monocytes.
Monocyte	Large white blood cells that your immune system uses to destroy certain types of viruses and bacteria. High levels of monocytes, such as those seen in mono, are an indicator that the immune system is fighting against a foreign invader—in this case, one of two possible viruses.
Epstein-Barr Virus (EBV)	One of the viruses that can cause mono. It's a member of the herpesvirus family and one of the most common viruses in humans. It's also linked to numerous autoimmune diseases. Like all herpesviruses, once EBV is in your system, it's there forever but lies dormant most of the time. EBV can be spread by any exchange of bodily fluids, especially saliva.
Cytomegalovirus (CMV)	Another virus that can cause mono. It has a lot in common with EBV, including being spread via bodily fluids and remaining in the body forever. Most people are infected with CMV during childhood or adolescence.
Splenomegaly	An abnormal enlargement of the spleen that's a possible complication of mono. Splenomegaly doesn't usually cause symptoms, but it can sometimes cause pain in the left upper abdomen that may spread to the left shoulder, as well as other symptoms. If left untreated, an enlarged spleen may become infected or rupture.
Petechia	A pinpoint spot caused by bleeding into the skin. It can be red or purple and many of them together may look like a rash. In mono, petechiae are common in the back of the throat.



Questions to Ask

These questions will help you start a conversation with your doctor about how to best manage mononucleosis.

About Symptoms

- How long will my symptoms last after starting treatment?
- Will I get worse?
- Are my symptoms typical of mono?

About Causes & Risk Factors

- Why did I specifically get sick if the viruses that cause mono are common?
- How can I avoid getting other people sick?

About Diagnosis

- When should I expect results?
- How reliable are the tests?
- How certain is the diagnosis?

About Treatment

- What can help me manage my symptoms?
- Will drugs help?
- Are there any complementary treatments that can help me recover?

About Living With Mononucleosis

- How long should I expect to be sick?
- Should I take time off from school/work?
- What lifestyle changes do I need to make in order to recover?
- How active can I be?
