



Glandular fever

PATIENT INFORMATION LEAFLET

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This leaflet aims to help you understand what glandular fever is, the symptoms and what treatment is required to treat this condition.

What is glandular fever?

This is an infection caused by a virus called the Epstein - Barr virus or EBV.

How do you get it?

It is passed through the saliva and requires close contact with someone who has the virus. Usually this means mouth to mouth contact and glandular fever is often known as the “kissing disease” in teenagers. The virus can also be passed on by exposure to coughs and sneezes, and sharing eating and drinking utensils, such as cups, glasses or unwashed forks and spoons.

The incubation period (time between being infected and becoming ill) is usually about 5 weeks. Your child will be contagious for at least two months after initial infection with EBV.

How common is it?

The EBV infection is very common, although the majority of those with the virus will never become ill.

Most EBV infections take place during early childhood and usually produce few or no symptoms.

However, if an EBV infection occurs during the teenage years there is a risk that it will lead to the development of glandular fever. This is why the majority of glandular fever cases occur in people aged 15-25.

What are the symptoms?

The symptoms vary depending on the age of the person infected. The most common symptoms are:

- a high temperature (fever)
- a sore throat – this is usually more painful than any you may have had before
- swollen glands in your neck and possibly in other parts of your body, such as under your armpits
- fatigue (extreme tiredness)

How is it diagnosed?

A blood test can be taken to confirm the diagnosis.

How is it treated?

There is no cure for glandular fever. Antibiotics have no effect on glandular fever and may cause skin rashes.

Encourage your child to rest at home and drink plenty of fluids. If they are suffering from a sore throat pain killers can be given such as paracetamol and ibuprofen. These can be obtained from pharmacies and supermarkets. Follow the instructions on the bottle. Your child should gradually increase their activities as energy levels return.

For the first month after your symptoms begin, avoid contact sports or activities that put you at risk of falling. This is because you may have a swollen spleen that it is more vulnerable to damage.

How can it be prevented?

Once the diagnosis of glandular fever has been made, care should be taken not to spread the infection through the saliva. Children should stay away from school or nursery until their temperature has returned to normal and they are feeling better.

How long does it last?

The illness usually lasts a few weeks although the glands may remain enlarged for some months. It is not unusual to feel lacking energy for several weeks or months afterwards. However if your child is not improving or becomes worse see your GP.

Useful Contact Numbers:

- Contact your GP for advice.
- Children's Unit 0161 922 5252 (24 hrs)
- Children's Community Team 0161 922 5251 (08.00-20.00 mon-sun)
- Go to Doc (GP service) 0161 785 0805 (out of hours)
- NHS Direct 111 (24hr helpline)

Useful Websites/information:

- Department of Health (www.dh.gov.uk)
- NHS Choices (www.nhs.uk/conditions)
- NHS institute for innovation and improvement (www.institute.nhs.uk)
- NHS Improvement (www.improvement.nhs.uk)

In compiling this information leaflet, a number of recognised professional bodies including the Department of Health, NHS Improvement, NHS Choices, have been used.

If you have any questions you want to ask, you can use this space to remind yourself:

If you have a visual impairment this leaflet can be made available in bigger print or on audiotape. If you require either of these options please contact the Patient Information Centre on 0161 922 5332

আপনি যদি এই তথ্য পড়তে বা বুঝতে না পারেন, তাহলে অনুগ্রহ করে এথনিক হেলথ টিমের সাথে টেলিফোনে যোগাযোগ করুন 0161 331 5149/5150 এই নাম্বারে, তখন তারা আপনাকে সাহায্য করতে পারবে।

જો આપ આ માહિતી વાંચી કે સમજી શકો છો નહીં, અથવા કોઈપણ પ્રકારે
0161 331 5149/5150 નંબર પર સંપર્ક કરીને તેનો આપને જરૂર મદદ કરી શકીએ.

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0161 331 5149/5150 پر رابطہ کریں تو وہ آپ کی مدد کر سکیں گے۔

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