

Grant County School Health Program

PART 4 OF 4

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Infectious Mononucleosis (mono, EBV mononucleosis)

Disease Fact Sheet Series

What is infectious mononucleosis?

Infectious mononucleosis is an acute viral disease most commonly caused by the Epstein-Barr virus (EBV). It is not a reportable disease in Wisconsin and the number of cases is unknown.

Who gets infectious mononucleosis?

While most people are exposed to the Epstein-Barr virus sometime in their lives, as few as 50% will develop the symptoms of infectious mononucleosis. In developed countries such as the United States, the age of first exposure may be delayed until older childhood and young adulthood when symptoms are more likely to result. For this reason, it is recognized more often in high school and college students.

How is infectious mononucleosis spread?

The virus is spread by person-to-person contact, via saliva (on hands, toys, or by kissing).

What are the symptoms of infectious mononucleosis?

Symptoms include fever, sore throat, swollen glands, and fatigue. At times, the liver and spleen are affected and become enlarged. It takes several weeks for most people to recover, however it may take some people months to regain their normal level of activity. The disease is rarely fatal.

How soon do symptoms appear?

Symptoms appear from 4 to 6 weeks after exposure.

When and for how long is a person able to spread infectious mononucleosis?

Although the virus is present in the throat during the illness and over a year after infection, it is not known how long a person is able to spread after infection. Due to the presence of the virus in the blood, persons with infectious mononucleosis should not donate blood for six months after the onset of their illness.

What is the treatment for infectious mononucleosis?

No treatment other than rest is needed in the vast majority of cases. Due to the risk of rupture of the spleen, contact sports or heavy lifting should be avoided until a physician has cleared the patient to resume these activities.

What can a person do to minimize the spread of infectious mononucleosis?

Avoid activities involving the transfer of body fluids (commonly saliva) with someone who is currently or recently infected with the disease. At present, there is no vaccine available to prevent infectious mononucleosis.

Disease Fact Sheet Series

What is measles?

Measles is a disease caused by measles virus and sometimes referred to as "hard", "red" or "10-day measles".

Who can get measles?

Measles virus can infect any person of any age who has not previously had the disease or measles vaccine.

How is measles spread?

Airborne droplets, from coughing or sneezing, spread the virus. It spreads easily and rapidly.

How soon do symptoms appear after exposure?

It takes from 8-12 days for the cold-like symptoms to appear and 14 days for the rash.

What are the signs and symptoms of measles?

The disease begins with cold-like signs and symptoms including a cough, runny nose, high temperature and red watery eyes. By the second day after onset, a red blotchy rash appears at the hairline and spreads down the body to the arms and legs. The rash disappears in the same order of appearance (head to foot) in about 5-6 days.

How can parents be sure that their child's illness is measles?

The only sure way to determine if an illness is indeed measles is through a blood test.

When and for how long is a person able to spread measles?

Measles can be spread from one day before the onset of cold-like symptoms, through the fourth day of the rash.

What are the complications associated with measles?

Among children with measles, about 10% develop ear infections, about 5% develop pneumonia, about 0.1% (1 per 1000 cases) develop encephalitis (inflammation of the brain that can result in deafness or mental retardation), and about 0.1% to 0.2% (1 to 2 per 1000 cases) die from it.

Is there a treatment for measles?

There is no specific treatment for measles.

Can measles be prevented?

Yes. Measles vaccine (usually given in combination with rubella and mumps vaccine, called measles-mumps-rubella or MMR vaccine) is recommended for all children at 12-15 months of age and again at 4-6 years of age. The 2-doses of vaccine normally provide life long immunity.

Does a past infection with measles make a person immune for life?

Yes

What is mumps?

Mumps is a viral infection that can cause swelling of the salivary glands of an infected person.

Who can get mumps?

Mumps can affect any person of any age who has not had the disease or been immunized against it.

How is mumps spread?

The virus is in the saliva of an infected person and is spread from person to person through the air by coughing, sneezing or simply talking. Mumps is less contagious than measles or chickenpox.

What are the signs and symptoms of mumps?

The disease begins with low grade fever, headache, muscle pain and general feeling of discomfort. Commonly the cheek and jaw area (salivary glands) typically swell on one or both sides within the first 2 days of illness.

How soon do symptoms appear after exposure?

Children start to show signs of mumps 2 to 3 weeks after they are exposed.

How can a doctor confirm that an illness is mumps?

Mumps is confirmed through a blood test or by testing saliva or urine.

When and for how long is a person able to spread mumps?

From 3 days before the onset of symptoms, to the ninth day after symptoms begin.

What are the complications associated with mumps?

Children under two years of age usually have mild cases of mumps.

About 1 child in every 10 who gets mumps also gets meningitis (an inflammation of the covering of the brain and spinal cord). Occasionally mumps can cause encephalitis, which is inflammation of the brain itself. Usually, the child recovers without permanent damage.

Teenage or adult men who get mumps may develop a painful swelling of the testicles. Sterility is rare. Mumps can, but rarely causes deafness or death.

Is there a treatment for mumps?

There is no specific treatment for mumps.

Can mumps be prevented?

Yes. Mumps vaccine given in combination with Measles and Rubella (called MMR vaccine) is recommended for all children at 12-15 months of age and at 4-6 years of age. The two doses of vaccine normally provide life long immunity.

Does a past infection with mumps make a person immune for life?

Yes. A common belief is that if a person gets swelling on only one side of the face he/she can get mumps a second time. This is not true.

Pertussis
(Whooping Cough)

Disease Fact Sheet Series

What is pertussis?

Pertussis is a contagious bacterial disease that affects the respiratory tract.

Who gets pertussis?

Pertussis can infect persons of all ages, but is most serious in infants and young children.

How is pertussis spread?

The bacteria are spread by contact with the respiratory droplets from an infected person through coughing. Exposure usually occurs after repeated indoor face-to-face contact. Household spread is common.

What are the signs and symptoms of pertussis?

In infants and young children, the disease begins much like a cold with a runny nose, possible low grade fever and a mild but irritating cough for 1-2 weeks. The illness progresses to spells of explosive coughing that can interrupt breathing, eating and sleeping and is commonly followed by vomiting and exhaustion. Following the cough, the patients may make a loud crowing or "whooping" sound as they struggle to inhale air (hence the common name "whooping cough"). The severe coughing spells can last for several weeks to two months or longer. In older children, adolescents and adults the symptoms are usually milder and without the typical whoop.

What are the complications associated with pertussis?

In infants less than 6 months of age, the most common complication is bacterial pneumonia (17%) followed by neurologic complications such as seizures (2.1%) and encephalopathy (0.2%). Loss of weight from nutritional disturbance and dehydration is also a complication from the disease. More than half of the infants with confirmed pertussis require hospitalization.

How soon do symptoms appear after exposure?

Usually 7-20 days.

(OVER)

When and for how long is a person able to spread pertussis?

Pertussis is most contagious in the early stage of the illness before the onset of the explosive coughing spell. The spread of pertussis may be up to three weeks or more after cough onset. The spread period can be reduced to 5 days after the initiation of an appropriate course of antibiotics administered in the early stages of illness.

Is there treatment for pertussis?

There are four antibiotics recommended for the treatment of pertussis that will shorten the period of communicability. Your doctor may choose one of these antibiotics for treatment. The appropriate antibiotics include either a 5-day course of azithromycin, a 7-day course of clarithromycin or a 14-day course of either erythromycin or trimethoprim/sulfamethoxazole (TMP/SMX). Persons with pertussis should be isolated from school, work or similar activities until they have completed at least the first 5 days of an appropriate antibiotic therapy. The remaining doses of antibiotics need to be taken as prescribed.

How can the spread of pertussis be prevented?

Treatment is recommended for well persons who are close contacts (especially household contacts) of the case to prevent or reduce the severity of illness. Any untreated contacts of a case that develops a persistent cough should be tested for pertussis. Confirmed or suspected cases of pertussis that do not receive appropriate antibiotics should be isolated for 3 weeks.

How is pertussis confirmed?

Confirmation is by Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) assay or by laboratory culture of a nasal swab specimen obtained during the early stage of illness. PCR is the test of choice for laboratory diagnosis of pertussis.

How can pertussis be prevented?

Routine immunization of infants and children with acellular Pertussis (aP) vaccine is recommended at 2, 4, 6 and 15-18 months of age with a booster dose at 4-6 years of age. It is given in a combination with Diphtheria and Tetanus vaccines called DTaP. The effectiveness of the vaccine in children who have received at least 3 doses is estimated to be 80%; and protection is even greater against severe disease. Protection will begin to diminish after about 3 years. Persons who experience pertussis after immunization usually have a milder case. DTaP vaccine is currently recommended for children 2 months through 6 years of age. A safe and effective acellular pertussis vaccine for adolescents and adults was licensed in 2005. Called Tdap, the vaccine is routinely recommended as a one time booster for children 11-12 years of age. It is also recommended as one time booster for adults.

Does past infection with pertussis make a person immune?

Confirmed pertussis is likely to confer immunity. However, the duration of immunity from past infection is unknown.

What is rubella?

Rubella is a viral infection that is most serious in pregnant females because it can harm their unborn baby. It is also called German measles or 3-day measles.

Who can get rubella?

Rubella can affect anyone who has not had rubella or who has not been immunized against it.

How is rubella spread?

Rubella is spread through the air by coughing, sneezing or talking.

What are the signs and symptoms of rubella?

In children the disease usually begins with a rash. The rash appears on the face and neck. The rash lasts about 2-3 days. In older children and adults there may be a low-grade fever, swollen glands in the back of the neck and an upper respiratory infection (URI) before the rash begins.

How soon do symptoms appear after exposure?

Usually 12-23 days after the person is exposed to the rubella virus.

How can a doctor confirm that an illness is rubella?

Confirmation is through a blood test.

When and for how long is a person able to spread rubella?

Rubella can be spread from about a week before the rash starts until about a week after. Infants with CRS can spread virus for months after birth.

What are the complications associated with rubella?

For most children and adults rubella is relatively mild. However, if a woman is in her 1st trimester of pregnancy catches the disease her baby has up to a 90% chance of being born deaf, blind, mentally retarded, with heart defects or stillborn. These conditions are referred to as Congenital Rubella Syndrome (CRS).

Is there a treatment for rubella?

There is no specific treatment for rubella.

Can rubella be prevented?

Yes. Rubella vaccine given in combination with Measles and Mumps (called MMR vaccine) is recommended for all children at 12-15 months of age and at 4-6 years of age. The two doses of vaccine normally provide life long immunity.

Does a past infection with rubella make a person immune for life?

Yes