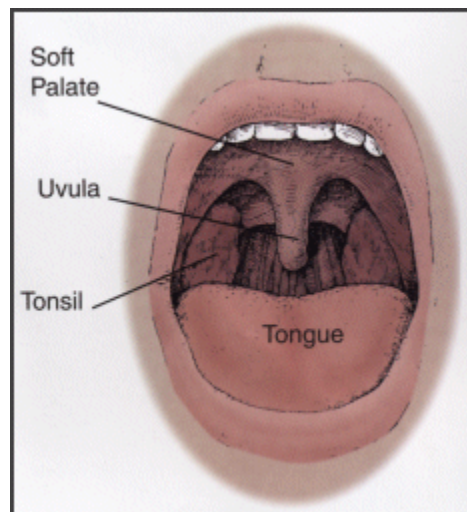


## Infectious Mononucleosis

Infectious mononucleosis is a self-limiting viral illness. This disease most frequently occurs in young adults (ages 15 to 25) although no age group is immune. The course of the disease is usually limited to two to three weeks, but convalescence varies and may require several months. The prognosis for complete recovery in infectious mononucleosis is excellent, with complications being exceedingly rare.

Initial symptoms are nonspecific and include sore throat, fatigue, "swollen glands" (enlarged lymph nodes in the neck and possibly elsewhere), chills, fevers, malaise, headache, and muscular pain. In three to ten percent of people with infectious mononucleosis, a skin rash involving the trunk and face and rarely the arms and legs may be the only sign. Less than five percent of patients with mononucleosis have jaundice (yellowing of eyes and skin). In addition, an enlarged spleen (a lymphoid organ which normally lies just under the left lower ribs) can occur. As stated above, the symptoms usually persist for two to three weeks, but can continue for months.

As with any viral disease, treatment is symptomatic and conservative. Bed rest is indicated for extreme fatigue and for as long as fever persists. Throat gargles and the use of aspirin or acetaminophen usually relieve the symptoms of sore throat and muscle aches. Appetite may decrease, but adequate fluid intake is essential. If the spleen is enlarged, use extreme caution to avoid any rough contact to the chest or abdomen, for such an injury could cause the spleen to rupture. Fatigue prevails for a period of time and necessitates a gradual return to previous activities. Once active symptoms have developed, the disease is less contagious.



If symptoms worsen or if difficulty in swallowing occurs, contact the physician or nurse who treated you. If you have any questions regarding your illness, do not hesitate to call the Nurse Advice Line after SCC business hours at 773-702-1915 or make an appointment with a SCC health care provider at 773-702-4156.