



Glandular fever

Information for patients from Head and Neck

What is glandular fever?

Glandular fever is caused by a virus known as EPSTEIN-BARR Virus (EBV). Also known as the 'kissing disease' and is common among young adults, however it can affect any age group.

What are the symptoms?

The infection can present in several different ways. The symptoms may include:

- high fever
- sore throat
- swollen ulcerated tonsils.
- excessive fatigue (tiredness)
- enlarged lymph glands in the neck, groin, and armpits

What are the risks?

A few people may have more persistent symptoms, for example, swollen tonsils (with spots of pus or ulcers), enlarged lymph glands, and high fever causing pain, severe fatigue (tiredness), and difficulty swallowing; which can lead to dehydration. It is possible to develop more serious problems from this illness, including hepatitis, unusual liver function, and an enlarged spleen which can lead to the spleen being more vulnerable to trauma. If this happens you will be admitted to hospital.

What will happen if I am admitted to hospital?

You will be assessed in the treatment area by a doctor who will explain the reasons for your admission. The doctor will then explain the tests you will need to confirm your diagnosis, which will include a blood test (Mono Spot or ABU.Ab). This test can be negative in the early stages of glandular fever and may need to be repeated at a later stage of our illness.

You will then be shown to your bed area where the nurse will complete any necessary paperwork while discussing and planning the care you will receive during your stay. The nurse will also record your blood pressure, temperature, and pulse. You may also have been prescribed medication in the form of tablets or an injection to reduce pain or fever. If you are unable to eat or drink, due to a severe sore throat, you may be prescribed IV (intravenous) fluids to prevent you becoming dehydrated.



What treatment will I receive?

There is no specific treatment for glandular fever; however, it is recommended that you have plenty of fluids (drinks), rest, and painkillers (paracetamol), if needed. Antibiotics are sometimes given to prevent complications; some patients also need steroids to reduce swelling of their tonsils.

How long will I stay in hospital?

This will depend on your condition and your response to the treatment. Most patients remain in hospital for one or two days. This will be discussed with you by your doctor.

What should I do when I return home? (and for patients who have not been hospitalised but are recovering at home)

- If there is any evidence of liver involvement, do not drink alcohol until your liver function blood tests (arranged via your GP) return to normal.
- It is important to continue to drink plenty of fluids and rest is encouraged during your recovery. You should also continue to take any painkillers or anti-inflammatory tablets that have been prescribed for you.
- Avoid rough or contact sports for at least eight weeks, because if your spleen is enlarged, this could cause damage.
- To prevent the spread of glandular fever avoid kissing or close body contact with other people whilst you are ill.

What if I have any concerns or questions about my condition?

You may experience further episodes of lethargy (tiredness or weakness); this is normal. However, please contact your GP if any further or unusual symptoms develop and for advice regarding your return to school or work.

If you would like this information in **another language, audio, Braille, Easy Read, or large print** please ask a member of staff. You can ask someone to contact us on your behalf.

Any complaints, comments, concerns, or compliments please speak to your doctor or nurse, or contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 01227 78 31 45, or email ekh-tr.pals@nhs.net

Patients should not bring in large sums of money or valuables into hospital. Please note that East Kent Hospitals accepts no responsibility for the loss or damage to personal property, unless the property had been handed in to Trust staff for safe-keeping.

Further patient leaflets are available via the East Kent Hospitals web site www.ekhuft.nhs.uk/patientinformation