The guidelines have been made by a working group with staff from departments of paediatrics in Herning, Randers, Skejby and Viborg.

The intention with the guidelines is to provide parents with advice across the following sectors: health visitors, general practitioners (family doctors), doctors on call, and the staff at paediatric departments.

You can see and download the parent guidelines at the following homepage: www.rm.dk/via53376.html

You can order additional copies from Rikke Dalsgaard at the Regional Health Office, the Central Denmark Region, Skottenborg 28, 8800 Viborg. Rikke.Dalsgaard@stab.rm.dk

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General information:
Mononucleosis – also termed glandular fever – is a virus infection which particularly affects children and young people. The disease usually lasts from 2 to 4 weeks. Glandular fever can result in marked tiredness which can last for months after the disease. Children who have had glandular fever are immune to it for the rest of their lives. The diagnosis is based on the characteristic symptoms of the illness and blood samples.

How is it contracted?
The virus is in the child's spit and children are infected through contact with toys and clothes contaminated with spit, or through kissing. The virus is transmitted from spit to the mucous membrane in the mouth, from where it can be transmitted to the lymph glands, spleen and liver via the blood.

Symptoms:
- Glandular fever usually starts with influenza-like symptoms such as general discomfort, headache, aching muscles and light fever
- After a week or two the temperature rises
- Swelling and sore throat
- Occasionally, breathing with a snoring sound
- White coating on the tonsils, bad breath, and hoarse voice
- Swollen and tender glands on the neck and sometimes also in the armpits and groin
- Liver and spleen are often enlarged
- Marked tiredness
- Sometimes stomach ache.

Good advice:
- Offer the child a lot to drink and eat
- You can ease a sore throat by giving the child soft or liquid food and hot drinks. If necessary, you can also give pain relieving medication as agreed with a doctor
- Swollen glands can make breathing difficult, but elevating the head can help. Put a pillow under the mattress or stack books under the bed
- If the child’s nose is very blocked, you can put saline drops in the nose or use a nose spray (children’s dose) – but only for a week
- Undress the child if it has a high temperature
- If the liver or spleen is affected, alcohol and hard physical activities should be avoided for about a month.

When to see a doctor:
Contact a doctor if the child:
- has difficulty breathing
- seems very weak and you have difficulty getting in contact with the child
- refuses to drink and cannot pee
- has stomach ache
- is in severe pain
- worries you and you feel insecure.

Contact your general practitioner first because he/she knows your child better than the doctor on call. You can also get good advice and guidance from the health visitor.

Treatment:
Since glandular fever is a virus infection, there is no medical treatment. All you can do is relieve the symptoms.

Prevention:
Both children and adults should keep a good hand hygiene as this has been shown to reduce infection.

Daycare/School:
The child can return to daycare or school once the fever has gone and it does not need pain relieving medication, and when the worst tiredness has disappeared.