

Mumps

What is it?

Mumps is an infection of the glands that produce saliva. It is caused by a virus, and is most common in winter and spring. Mumps is a vaccine preventable disease. Cases of mumps are now uncommon because of routine childhood vaccinations.

What are the symptoms?

- Head and muscle aches
- Fever
- Swelling or pain of the gland at the angle of the jaw
- Rarely, mumps can lead to complications such as meningitis, inflammation of the testicles, ovaries, or pancreas; hearing loss

How soon do symptoms appear?

Symptoms of mumps usually appear 12-25 days after close contact of an infected person.

How is it spread?

- By direct contact with secretions from the nose or throat or through saliva, coughing, sneezing, sharing drinks, kissing or contact with contaminated surfaces
- Stay home if you have mumps; do not go to childcare, school, work or other public places

How long is a person contagious?

A person with the virus can infect others up to 7 days before symptoms appear until 5 days after the appearance of swelling

What do I do if I come into contact with someone who may have mumps?

- If you have no symptoms continue to participate in regular activities
- If you become symptomatic, contact your physician and inform them you were exposed to a case of mumps recently, they will administer tests for mumps. Isolate yourself at home for 5 days and call public health

When can a person return to daycare/school/work?

A person may return to regular duties 5 days after symptoms of swelling first appeared.

How is it diagnosed?

Mumps is diagnosed through a blood test, throat swab, and urine tests.

What is the treatment?

There is no treatment for mumps. Most people will recover within 2 weeks of becoming ill. The following can be done to help relieve symptoms:

- Acetaminophen (Tylenol[®], Tempra[®]) can be given for fevers. Do not give aspirin (ASA) to a child or teenager
- Avoid sour foods or liquids because they salivary glands are sensitive to sour tastes
- Avoid foods that require a lot of chewing. Instead, try soft foods such as oatmeal or mashed potatoes, or suck on popsicles or ice chips
- To ease pain, hot or cold packs can be applied

How can it be prevented?

- Cleaning your hands is the best way to prevent the spread of infection
- Practice routine cleaning and disinfection. Objects and surfaces that are frequently touched (toys, doorknobs, counters) should be cleaned with soap and water or other recommended cleaning agents
- Avoid sharing of utensils and drinks
- **Ensure your immunization record is up-to-date.** Measles Mumps Rubella (MMR) vaccine can prevent mumps. A MMR vaccination is given routinely at the age of one year and again at 18 months
- Mumps vaccination is required to enter elementary school; two doses are recommended

People are considered protected if they have the following:

- at least two documented doses of MMR vaccine on or after their first birthday
- proof of having mumps diagnosed by a doctor
- blood work indicating immunity to mumps

This information is intended to provide general health-related information about Mumps. It is not intended to replace medical consultation by your physician and/or other health care professionals.

Sources: Red Book 2008, 26th Edition, American Academy of Pediatrics. Control of Communicable Diseases Manual, 2008, 19th Edition, David L. Heymann. Mayo Clinic Staff (June 2006). *Mumps*. Retrieved August 8, 2007 from <http://www.mayoclinic.com>

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