



Mumps

What is mumps?

Mumps is a vaccine preventable disease that is caused by the mumps virus. Anyone who is not protected due to either previous mumps infection or from vaccination can get mumps.

How is it spread?

Mumps is spread by droplets of saliva or mucus from the mouth, nose or throat of an infected person, usually when the person coughs, sneezes or talks. Items used by an infected person, such as cups or soft drink cans, can also be contaminated with the virus, which may spread to others if those items are shared.

In addition, the virus may spread when someone with mumps touches items or surfaces without washing their hands and someone else touches the same surface and then touches their mouth or nose.

What are the signs and symptoms?

Mumps typically starts with a few days of fever, headache, muscle aches, tiredness, and loss of appetite, followed by swelling of salivary glands under the ears on one or both sides

Symptoms typically appear 16-18 days after infection, but this period can range from 12–25 days after infection.

Should a person with mumps be isolated?

An infected person can likely spread mumps from a few days before their salivary glands begin to swell to up to 5 days after the swelling begins.

A person with mumps should limit their contact with others during this time. For example, stay home from school and do not attend social events.

What type of treatment should be given?

Currently, there is no specific treatment for mumps. Treatment for mumps is focused on relieving

symptoms. Supportive care (bed rest, fluids, and fever reduction) is recommended.

Most people with mumps recover fully. However, mumps can occasionally cause complications, especially in adults. Complications can include:

- inflammation of the testicles (orchitis) in males who have reached puberty.
- inflammation of the ovaries (oophoritis) and/or breast tissue (mastitis)
- inflammation in the pancreas (pancreatitis)
- inflammation of the brain (encephalitis)
- inflammation of the tissue covering the brain and spinal cord (meningitis)
- deafness

If someone becomes very ill, they should contact their doctor prior to seeking medical attention. This is to reduce the possibility of spread to others while waiting to be seen by the doctor.

How can I prevent mumps?

The MMR (measles, mumps, and rubella) vaccine is the best way to prevent mumps. The MMR vaccine should be routinely given when children are 15 months old, and a second dose should be given when they are 4 years old.

If your child has not been vaccinated against mumps (MMR vaccine) contact your physician or visit the Child Health Immunization Clinic located at the Hamilton Health Centre, 67 Victoria Street, Hamilton, to have your child immunized as soon as possible.

Adapted from:

Mumps. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2019 (<https://www.cdc.gov/mumps/index.html>) accessed 11 October 2019.