



Mumps

What is Mumps?

Mumps is an illness caused by a virus that commonly causes swelling of one or more of the salivary (parotid) glands.

How is it spread?

You can spread mumps when you cough or sneeze and the droplets enter the nose or mouth of another person. The mumps virus is also spread through saliva. If someone shares your cigarette, or drinking straw they can become infected. You can spread mumps even if you do not have symptoms of mumps. If you think you or your child has mumps, you need to let your doctor know so that they can take special care in the office to prevent spreading it to other people.

What are the symptoms?

Symptoms of mumps include:

- Fever
- Headache
- Muscle pain
- Tiredness
- Loss of appetite
- Swollen and painful glands. Most often it is the glands just below and in front of the ear that become swollen.

The symptoms of mumps can start about 12-25 days after being in close contact with someone with mumps.

What are the complications of mumps?

Complications of mumps may include:

- Meningitis
- Swelling of the testicles (orchitis) or of the ovaries (oophoritis)
- Pancreatitis
- Hearing loss

If you become infected with the mumps virus during pregnancy while in the first trimester there is an increased risk of spontaneous abortion. There is no evidence to suggest deformities of the fetus if you have mumps during pregnancy.

How do I know if I have Mumps?

Your health care provider may ask you to have a blood test or a swab taken from your throat or inside of your cheek. Your health care provider may also ask you for a urine sample to be tested. Testing of mumps must be done during a specific timeframe and include special arrangements with the lab to prevent spreading it to other people

What is the treatment for Mumps?

There is no specific treatment for mumps. Symptoms may be relieved by the application of intermittent ice or heat to the affected neck/testicular area and by acetaminophen/paracetamol (Tylenol®) for pain relief. Aspirin is not used due to a possible link with Reye's syndrome. Gargling with warm salt water, soft foods, and extra fluids may also help relieve symptoms.

It is recommended to avoid fruit juice or any acidic foods, since these stimulate the salivary glands, which can be painful.

How do I protect myself and others?

You can help stop the spread of mumps by washing your hands after coughing or sneezing, before preparing foods, before eating and after using the washroom. If you do cough or sneeze, cover your nose and mouth. Do not share cigarettes or drinks from the same glass, water bottle or straw as others.

The best way to prevent mumps is to get the mumps vaccine. Mumps vaccine in combination with measles and rubella (MMR) is routinely given soon after the first birthday. A second dose is given as part of a combination vaccine for measles, mumps, rubella and varicella (MMRV) at 4-6 years of age. The vaccine is publicly funded (free) in Ontario. Proof of vaccination against measles, mumps and rubella, or a valid exemption is required by law for all children attending school in Ontario.

Call the Communicable Disease Team: ext. 8809



Is there anything special I need to know about mumps?

Anyone with mumps or suspected mumps will be excluded from school until a full 5 days have passed since the onset of parotitis (swollen salivary glands). People who are not fully immunized against mumps will be excluded from school if a case of mumps is identified in their school. If you do not have a doctor, call the Vaccine Preventable Team at the health unit for more information.