

Mumps

What is Mumps?

Mumps is an acute viral infection of the salivary glands caused by the mumps virus. Since the mumps vaccine became available in 1967 the number of cases of mumps reported has declined significantly. The annual number of mumps cases reported in the province is very low.

What are the symptoms of Mumps?

Common symptoms include fever, headache, muscle aches and pains, fatigue, pain and swelling in one or more salivary glands. One out of three people who are infected with mumps do not have salivary gland swelling while as many as 40 - 50% have respiratory symptoms. Less common symptoms may include swollen and tender testicles in males. Rare complications include arthritis, encephalitis (inflammation in the brain), meningitis (infection in the lining of the brain), pancreatitis (inflammation of the pancreas) or deafness. The infection is usually much more severe in adults.

How is Mumps spread?

Mumps is contagious and spreads easily by contact with respiratory secretions like saliva. Sharing food, drinks or cigarettes, or kissing someone who has the virus can also put you at risk. When an infected person coughs or sneezes, the virus spreads through droplets in the air. You can be exposed to the virus even if you are a few feet away from someone with mumps. People with mumps may spread the virus seven days before the glands start to swell until as long as nine days later. It takes about 12 – 25 days to come down with mumps after being in contact with someone who has the disease.

What should I do if I have Mumps?

There is no specific treatment for mumps.

Call your doctor if you have symptoms of mumps infection, or if you have been in contact with someone who has mumps. People who have the recommended immunization are unlikely to develop mumps, as well people who have had mumps cannot get it again. Individuals diagnosed with mumps or suspected of having mumps should not attend day care, school or work, should not participate in any group activities and should not have any visitors until nine days after the onset of symptoms.

What if I am pregnant?

Call your doctor if you have symptoms of mumps infection, or if you have been in contact with someone who has the mumps. Mumps infection in the early stage of pregnancy may increase the rate of miscarriage. Mumps does not appear to cause birth defects.

MUMPS CAN BE PREVENTED BY IMMUNIZATION

This fact sheet provides basic information only. It must not take the place of medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. Always talk to a health care professional about any health concerns

**For further information contact the Infectious Disease Program at 625-8318
or toll free 1-888-294-6630, ext. 8318.**

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