

Mumps

FACT SHEET



Washtenaw County
Health Department

What is Mumps?

Mumps is an acute viral illness that typically causes swollen salivary glands. Mumps is no longer very common in the United States but outbreaks continue to occur.

What are the symptoms?

- Usually start with fever, headache, muscle aches and tiredness
- Swelling of the parotid salivary glands (parotitis) in front of and below the ears. Parotitis can occur on one or both sides of the face.
- Swelling usually goes away in about 10 days.
- In males, sometimes the first symptom is painful swelling of one or both testicles.

Some people with the mumps virus have no symptoms.

Symptoms can appear 12 to 25 days after exposure, typically 16 to 18 days. Call your doctor if you suspect you or your child has mumps. A blood test and/or salivary gland culture should be done to confirm that the illness is mumps.

How is it spread?

- The virus is spread by infected droplets in the air from coughing and sneezing or by direct contact with infected droplets from coughing and sneezing or with saliva.
- A person may be contagious several days before parotid swelling begins until 5 days after the swelling appears.
- A person with mumps should be isolated at home for the 5 days after the swelling appears.

How is it treated?

- Get plenty of rest.
- Drink plenty of fluids (i.e., water or juice).
- Tylenol can be used to reduce fever and discomfort. **Aspirin should not be used in children with viral illnesses since there have been cases associated with the development of Reye Syndrome.**

What are the serious complications?

In children, mumps is usually a mild disease. Adults may have a more serious infection. Mumps in males can result in a condition called orchitis. This is when one or both testicles become inflamed, enlarged and painful. Rarely, orchitis may result in a decreased sperm count and even infertility.

Mumps may also lead to:

- Encephalitis
- Meningitis (inflammation of the brain tissue or the lining of the central nervous system)
- Deafness
- Inflammation of the pancreas

How is it prevented?

Vaccination is the best way to prevent mumps. The vaccine is given in combination with the measles and rubella vaccines, known as MMR vaccine. Two (2) MMR injections are needed to be completely immunized. During an outbreak of mumps, a third dose of MMR vaccine may be recommended.

This fact sheet is for information only and is not meant to be used for self-diagnosis or as a substitute for consultation with a health care provider. For more information contact your health care provider or visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at www.cdc.gov.