
Mumps

What is mumps?

Mumps is a disease caused by a virus. You can catch mumps through the air from an infected person's cough or sneeze. You can also get it by direct contact with an infected surface. The virus usually makes you feel sick and causes a salivary gland between your jaw and ear to swell. Other body tissues can become infected too.

What are the symptoms?

After a person is exposed to mumps, symptoms usually appear in 16 to 18 days. But, it can take 12 to 25 days after exposure. The symptoms are usually:

- Low-grade fever
- Headache
- Muscle aches
- Stiff neck
- Fatigue
- Loss of appetite
- Swelling and tenderness of one or more of the salivary glands
- Some people have just mild symptoms, or no symptoms.

What are the complications of mumps?

Severe complications are rare. A small number of people may have inflammation of the brain and tissues that cover the brain and spinal cord (encephalitis/meningitis). Or, they may have inflammation of the testicles, ovaries or breasts. Deafness or spontaneous abortion may also occur.

How long is a person with mumps contagious?

A person with mumps can pass it to others from 2 to 3 days *before* the swelling starts until five days *after* the swelling begins.

Is there a treatment for mumps?

There is no treatment. Acetaminophen or ibuprofen can ease fever and pain.

If my child or another family member has been exposed to mumps, what should I do?

Immediately call your local health department, doctor or clinic for advice. If you never had mumps or were never vaccinated against it, you may need to stay home from work or school for a while.

What is the best way to prevent mumps?

We recommend that all children get the Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR) vaccine.

- Children should get their first MMR shot at 12 through 15 months old (as soon as possible within this time period). The second dose may be given as soon as one month after the first dose. But, it is usually given between 4 and 6 years of age.
- These people are at high risk for getting mumps: students at college, health care workers, international travelers or people living in a community with a mumps outbreak. If you are in this group, you are considered immune to mumps if you have written proof of two valid doses of a mumps-containing vaccine.

- Children of preschool age, or adults not at high risk, are considered immune to mumps if they have proof of one valid dose of a mumps-containing vaccine.
- You are also considered immune to mumps if you have a written lab report of immunity, or you were born before 1957.
- Anyone who lacks proof of mumps immunity, as defined above, should receive at least one dose of MMR vaccine. Two doses of MMR vaccine are recommended for some groups of adults. This includes health care personnel, college students, and international travelers. The doses should be given at least 28 days apart.

What are the MMR vaccine requirements for school attendance?

- For pre-kindergarten, including day care, Head Start or nursery school: one dose of MMR vaccine
- Kindergarten to 12th grade: 2 doses of MMR vaccine
- College: 2 doses of MMR vaccine.

What should I do if I'm not sure I was vaccinated against mumps?

Check with your doctor. If you were born before 1957 it's likely that you have been exposed to the virus and are immune. If you were born between 1957 and 1971 when vaccines weren't as reliable, ask your doctor if you've been properly vaccinated.

What should I or my family members do to prevent mumps if we are traveling out of the country?

Mumps is still common in many other countries. Make sure you and your children are fully vaccinated before traveling out of the U.S.

- Children, adults and adolescents should have two doses of MMR vaccine, at least 28 days apart.
- An early dose of MMR vaccine is recommended for children 6-11 months of age who will be traveling internationally. These children will still need the 2 routine doses given at 12-15 months and 4-6 years of age to ensure protection. They will receive a total of 3 MMR vaccines.

Travel and mumps:

www.cdc.gov/mumps/travelers.html

Learn more about mumps:

www.cdc.gov/mumps

How can I find out about mumps outbreaks?

www.cdc.gov/mumps/outbreaks.html

For more information about vaccine-preventable diseases:

www.health.ny.gov/prevention/immunization/