



## FACT SHEET: MUMPS

**Mumps is a viral infection of the salivary glands.**

**Mumps is best known for the puffy cheeks and swollen jaw that it causes.**

### SYMPTOMS OF MUMPS

Symptoms usually start 12 to 25 days after exposure to the virus.

Common symptoms of mumps include:

- Fever, headache
- Muscle aches and pains
- Swelling of the salivary glands around the jaw and cheeks
- Chewing and swallowing may become painful
- Fatigue/tiredness and loss of appetite

One out of three people who are infected with mumps do not experience jaw and cheek swelling. They may have no symptoms or mild cold-like symptoms. Less common symptoms may include swollen and tender testicles in males.

### HOW MUMPS IS SPREAD

Mumps is contagious. It spreads through saliva or mucus from the mouth, nose, or throat. It is spread person to person through:

- Coughing, sneezing, or talking
- Coming into contact with a person's saliva by sharing drinks, food, eating utensils or kissing
- Touching objects or surfaces, such as toys, with unwashed hands that are then touched by others

### HOW IS MUMPS DIAGNOSED

Mumps is diagnosed with a blood test, a urine test and a swab from the throat or salivary gland.

### HOW IS MUMPS TREATED

There is no treatment for mumps. It is caused by a virus and so antibiotics will not treat a mumps infection. Some medications may be given to relieve symptoms.

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# Mumps

(Page 2 of 2)

## WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I THINK I HAVE SYMPTOMS?

Call your healthcare provider if you have symptoms of mumps infection, or if you have been in contact with someone who has mumps. Tell your healthcare provider that you think you have mumps before going to their office. This will allow the healthcare provider to prepare for your visit and protect other patients.

Persons diagnosed with mumps or suspected of having mumps should not attend daycare, school, work or participate in group activities. Infected individuals should also refrain from having visitors over for five days following the start of salivary gland swelling or until a diagnosis of mumps is ruled out by lab testing. Persons diagnosed with the virus should also avoid sharing food, drinks, water bottles or kissing others.

## PREVENTION OF MUMPS

Two different vaccines can prevent mumps. They are MMR (measles, mumps & rubella) and MMRV (measles, mumps, rubella and chickenpox also known as varicella) vaccines. MMR vaccine is routinely given to children at 12 months of age. MMRV is routinely given before school entry (4 to 6 years of age). Two doses of vaccine normally provide life-long immunity.

Those born between 1970 and 1992 in Ontario may have only received one dose of mumps containing vaccine. If you are in this age group, get a second mumps vaccination (given as MMR) if you have not had one, especially if you are a post-secondary student or healthcare worker. Those born before 1970 are assumed to be immune to mumps through natural infection. If you are unsure of your vaccination status, contact your healthcare

provider or Southwestern Public Health.

## HAVE YOU BEEN IN CONTACT WITH SOMEONE WHO HAS MUMPS?

If you have been in contact with a person who has mumps, avoid kissing or sharing food, drinks, cigarettes, water bottles or musical instruments. Cover your mouth when you cough and sneeze into your sleeve. See your healthcare provider immediately if symptoms develop.

Getting vaccinated for the mumps after being exposed to the virus will not prevent infection. However, if you don't become infected, the vaccine will provide protection against future exposures.

## COMPLICATIONS ASSOCIATED WITH MUMPS

Mumps is not usually serious, but sometimes the virus may cause complications in children and adults. These include the following conditions:

- Inflammation of the testicles (orchitis)
- Inflammation of the breasts (mastitis)
- Inflammation of the ovaries (oophoritis)
- Inflammation of the brain (encephalitis)
- Inflammation of the tissue covering the brain and spinal cord (meningitis)
- Temporary hearing loss or permanent deafness
- Fetal loss during the first three months of pregnancy

## REFERENCES

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Mumps [Internet]. Atlanta: CDC; 2016. Available from: <https://www.cdc.gov/mumps/index.html>  
Heymann DL. Control of Communicable Diseases Manual. 20th ed. Washington, DC: American Public Health Association; 2015.

## MORE INFORMATION



### Southwestern Public Health

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