



# Mumps

## What is mumps?

Mumps is a vaccine preventable disease that is caused by the mumps virus. Anyone who is not immune due to either previous mumps infection or from vaccination can get mumps.

## How is it spread?

Mumps is spread by droplets of saliva or mucus from the mouth, nose or throat of an infected person, usually when the person coughs, sneezes or talks. Items used by an infected person, such as cups or soft drink cans, can also be contaminated with the virus, which may spread to others if those items are shared. In addition, the virus may spread when someone with mumps touches items or surfaces without washing their hands and someone else touches the same surface and then touches their mouth or nose.

## What is the incubation period?

The incubation period is about 16-18 days. However, mumps transmission likely occurs before the salivary glands begin to swell and within the 5 days after the swelling begins.

## What are the signs and symptoms?

Mumps typically starts with a few days of fever, headache, muscle aches, tiredness, and loss of appetite, followed by swelling of salivary glands.

## Should a person with mumps be isolated?

It is recommended to isolate mumps patients for 5 days after their glands begin to swell.

## What type of treatment and care should be given?

Currently, there is no specific treatment for mumps. Supportive care should be given as needed. If someone becomes very ill, they should contact their physician prior to seeking medical attention. This is to reduce the possibility of spread to others while waiting to be seen by the doctor.

Most people with mumps recover fully. However, mumps can occasionally cause complications, and some of them can be serious. Complications may occur even if a person does not have swollen salivary glands (parotitis) and are more common in people who have reached puberty.

**Do not give aspirin, (acetylsalicylic acid, ASA) or any products that contain aspirin to children.**

## Where can a child receive vaccination against this disease?

The MMR (measles, mumps, and rubella) vaccine is the best way to prevent mumps. The MMR vaccine should be routinely given when children are 15 months old, and a second dose should be given when they are 4 years old.

If your child has not been vaccinated against mumps (MMR vaccine) contact your physician or visit the Child Health Immunization Clinic located at the Hamilton Health Centre, 67 Victoria Street, Hamilton, to have your child immunized as soon as possible.

Adapted from:

*Mumps*. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2010 (<http://www.cdc.gov/mumps/>, accessed 26 March 2014)

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