

Minnesota Department of Health

Mumps

What is mumps?

Mumps is a viral infection that primarily affects the parotid or other salivary glands.

What are the symptoms of mumps?

Most common symptoms include swollen glands in front of and below the ear, headache, and low-grade fever.

What are the complications associated with mumps?

Up to 30% of all people infected with the mumps virus do not have symptoms. Orchitis (swelling of the testicles) is a common symptom in males after puberty. Rarely, swelling of the spinal cord and brain (encephalitis) occurs.

How is mumps diagnosed?

Mumps is diagnosed with a blood test specific for mumps antibody. Healthcare providers will also collect a nose, urine, or throat swab to further test for the virus.

How is mumps spread?

The virus is found in fluids from the mouth and nose of someone with mumps. The virus is spread when fluid containing the virus gets in your nose, mouth, or eyes. This can happen when a person with mumps coughs or sneezes near you, or by touching the fluid and then touching your eyes, nose, or mouth. Sharing beverage containers, eating utensils, cigarettes, and kissing are other examples of how the virus can be spread in fluids between individuals.

How long is a person able to spread mumps?

Mumps can normally be spread 3 days before symptoms appear through about 4 days after.

Mumps is most contagious 48 hours before the illness begins.

What can be done to prevent the spread of mumps?

The best way to prevent mumps is to be fully immunized. Persons who have mumps should stay at home for 5 days after onset of swelling so that they do not spread it to others.

Is there a treatment for mumps?

There is no treatment for mumps, only symptom care.

Is there a vaccine for mumps?

Mumps vaccine is contained in the **MMR** vaccine (**M**easles, **M**umps, **R**ubella). Two doses of the vaccine are needed for long-term protection.

Minnesota state law requires that all children 15 months of age or older, in childcare settings or schools, be vaccinated against mumps or have a legal exemption.

Adults do not need the mumps vaccine if:

- They had two doses of the vaccine
- They had mumps.

But you should call your healthcare provider to see if you need to be vaccinated for measles and rubella.



Vaccine-Preventable Disease Surveillance
P.O. Box 64975
St. Paul, MN 55164-0975
651-201-5414, 1-877-676-5414
www.health.state.mn.us/immunize