



**DALLAS COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
OFFICE OF PUBLIC INFORMATION**

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*Frequently Asked Questions About Mumps
from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*

What is mumps?

It is an infection caused by the mumps virus.

Who can get mumps?

Anyone who is not immune from either previous mumps infection or from vaccination can get mumps. Before the routine vaccination program was introduced in the United States, mumps was a common illness in infants, children and young adults. Because most people have now been vaccinated, mumps is now a rare disease in the United States. Of those people who do get mumps, up to half have very mild, or no symptoms, and therefore do not know they were infected with mumps.

What are the symptoms of mumps?

The most common symptoms are fever, headache, muscle aches, tiredness and loss of appetite followed by onset of parotitis (swollen and tender salivary glands under the ears-on one or both sides).

Mumps can lead to hearing loss, aseptic meningitis (infection of the covering of the brain and spinal cord) in about 10% of cases, painful, swollen testicles in 20% to 30% of males who have reached puberty (orchitis) but rarely does this lead to fertility problems, and painful swollen breasts in about 30% of women who have reached puberty (mastitis), and in a very few cases, inflammation of the ovaries.

Are there complications of mumps?

Severe complications are rare. However, mumps can cause:

- Inflammation of the brain and/or tissue covering the brain and spinal cord (encephalitis/meningitis)
- Inflammation of the testicles (orchitis)
- Inflammation of the ovaries and/or breasts (oophoritis and mastitis)
- Spontaneous abortion particularly in early pregnancy (miscarriage)
- Deafness, usually permanent

How soon do symptoms appear?

Symptoms typically appear 16-18 days after infection, but this period can range from 12-25 after infection.



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How is mumps spread?

Mumps is spread by mucus or droplets from the nose or throat of an infected person, usually when a person coughs or sneezes. Surfaces of items (e.g. toys) can also spread the virus if someone who is sick touches them without washing their hands, and someone else then touches the same surface and then rubs their eyes, mouth, nose etc. (this is called fomite transmission).

How long is an infected person able to spread the disease?

Mumps virus has been isolated from respiratory secretions 3 days before the start of symptoms until 9 days after onset.

Is there a vaccine to prevent mumps?

Yes. Two doses of mumps-containing vaccine, given as combination measles, mumps, rubella (MMR) vaccine, separated by at least 28 days, are routinely recommended for all children. The first dose is given on or after the first birthday; the second is given at 4 - 6 years of age. MMR is a live, weakened (attenuated) vaccine. Most adults who have not been vaccinated should also receive 1 dose of MMR vaccine, but adults who work in healthcare, a school/university setting, and persons at high risk of exposure to mumps should get 2 doses. Pregnant women and persons with an impaired immune system should not receive live attenuated vaccines (MMR vaccine).

If I had mumps as a child, can I get it again/should I get vaccinated?

Most people who have mumps will be protected (immune) from getting mumps again. There is a small percent of people though, who could get reinfected with mumps and have a milder illness. If mumps was not diagnosed by a physician, then that person is not considered immune and vaccination is recommended.

For more information on the mumps or the current outbreak, visit www.cdc.gov.