

Mumps

Fact Sheet

What is Mumps?

Mumps is a reportable contagious disease caused by a virus. It can have serious complications in young adults. It can be prevented by vaccination.

What are the symptoms?

Fever, headache, muscle aches and pains, tiredness, loss of appetite; followed by painful swelling of one or both salivary glands (located within your cheek, near your jaw line, below your ears). Swelling may be noticed on one side or both sides of the jaw and usually occurs within the first 2 days. It may appear as an earache or tenderness when touching along the angle of the jaw. These symptoms usually last ten days.

What are the possible complications?

Mumps can cause inflammation of the brain and spinal cord with headache or a stiff neck, swelling of one or both testicles, swelling of the ovaries, swelling of the breasts, inflammation of the pancreas, and deafness (may be permanent). Spontaneous abortion can occur if infection happens in the first three months of pregnancy.

How is mumps spread?

Mumps is highly contagious. After diagnosis, the individual should be isolated from others for five days. Mumps spreads through direct contact with saliva from an infected person. Droplets from coughs or sneezes can enter the nose or mouth. Infection can also result from kissing, or by sharing food or beverages. The virus can also survive on surfaces. Touching a surface contaminated by the mumps virus and then touching your nose or mouth can cause infection.

How can mumps be prevented?

Mumps can be prevented with a vaccine called MMR (a three-in-one vaccine that provides protection against measles, mumps, and rubella). To be fully protected from contracting mumps, two immunizations are required.

Other Questions?

Talk to your health care provider or call our Communicable Disease Program at 613-966-5500 or 1-800-267-2803, ext. 349. | TTY Dial 711 (1-800-267-6511) | hpePublicHealth.ca

References

- Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, Mumps & Mumps Vaccine, November 2009.
- Heymann, D. L., (2008). *Control of Communicable Diseases Manual*. (19th Ed.). Washington, DC: American Public Health Association

CD-193
2011/04/14

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