

F a c t s

MUMPS

What is mumps?

Although a serious disease, mumps is now very uncommon. The vaccine that children receive at 1 year of age and a booster at 18 months prevents almost all cases of mumps.

What are the symptoms?

Symptoms include fever and swollen glands at the jaw line on one or both sides of the face. Sometimes the child's testicles, joints, kidneys, and the lining of the brain are mildly affected. Mumps rarely causes deafness. The infection is usually much more severe in adults. A blood test is required in order for a physician to make a diagnosis.

How is it spread?

Mumps is spread from person to person through the air and by direct contact with the saliva of an infected person.

When is it contagious?

People with mumps may spread the virus up to seven days before the glands start to swell and as long as nine days later.

What is the incubation period?

It takes about 15-18 days to come down with mumps after being in contact with someone who has the disease.

Is there a vaccine?

The vaccine should be given to everyone over 1 year of age who has not previously received the vaccine. Although it will not necessarily prevent mumps if given at the time of exposure, the vaccine will prevent the disease the next time the person is exposed to the infection.

How is it treated?

There is no treatment for mumps. Since the infection is caused by a virus, antibiotics have no effect.

What can I do as a parent?

If another child has mumps, check your child's immunization record to see if he or she has had the mumps or MMR (measles, mumps, rubella) vaccine. It is usually given after 1 year of age and a booster at 18 months. If your child has not had the mumps or MMR vaccine and is 1 year of age or older, contact your physician or Public Health to have your child vaccinated as soon as possible.

— *Health & Environment Facts* —

Contact your physician if you think your child has mumps. Although the infection cannot be cured, a physician can suggest ways to make your child feel better. If your child has mumps, he or she should not return to the childcare facility or school until at least nine days after the swollen glands first appeared.

For more information please call Public Health at 376-9420 or 1-800-263-3456.