



MUMPS

DISEASES AND CONDITIONS



What is mumps?

Mumps is a contagious viral disease usually characterized by fever, swelling, and tenderness of one or more salivary glands under the jaw and in the cheeks. Before routine vaccination for mumps was introduced, it was a common childhood illness. However, now that most people in Canada have been vaccinated, the annual number of mumps cases reported is very low.

What are the symptoms of mumps?

People infected with the mumps virus may not have any symptoms or more commonly, very mild symptoms. Treatment of individuals with mumps focuses primarily on providing comfort and supportive measures.

Symptoms of mumps include:

- Painful swelling of one or both salivary glands (located within your cheek, near your jaw line, below your ears), called parotitis
- Fever
- Headache
- Muscle aches and pains
- Tiredness
- Loss of appetite

Most people recover from the infection, but in rare cases, mumps can be serious and there is no treatment. Individuals that become seriously ill may develop encephalitis (infection of the brain), or meningitis (swelling of the covering of the brain and spinal cord). Other complications include orchitis (swelling of the testicles), oophoritis (swelling of the ovaries), pancreatitis, or hearing loss. In rare cases, men with both testicles infected with mumps can become sterile.

If you suspect that you or your child has mumps, limit contact with others and immediately contact a health care provider, indicating that you suspect mumps.

Who is at risk?

Standard immunization procedure used since 1996 includes two doses of MMR (measles, mumps, rubella) vaccine. As of 2004, 94% of Canadian children had received a single dose of the MMR vaccine by their 2nd birthday. Most children under the ages of 12 years have had two doses of mumps vaccine due to the introduction of a second dose of measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine in 1996-97. This has left a susceptible group, approximately 12 years and older.

It is assumed that most people over the age of approximately 40 years have natural immunity to mumps. It is important to note, that the age at which natural immunity to mumps can be assumed is not known with certainty and that some individuals born prior to 1970 may still be susceptible to mumps.

Mumps infection during the first trimester of pregnancy has an increased risk of spontaneous abortion.

How is mumps spread?

Mumps is a contagious disease that is spread from person-to-person through direct contact with respiratory droplets from the mouth or nose of an infected person. When an infected person coughs or sneezes, these droplets enter the nose or mouth of another person. Mumps can also be spread through saliva, sharing drinks, or kissing. The virus can also survive on surfaces. Touching these surfaces and then touching your nose or mouth can also result in infection.

Once you come into contact with mumps, it takes 14 – 25 days for symptoms to develop (symptoms usually develop in about two weeks). A person with mumps is able to spread the infection from seven days before to nine days after symptoms develop. However, people infected with mumps who do not develop swelling of the salivary glands or other symptoms can also spread the virus.

How can I minimize my risk?

Vaccination remains the best protection against mumps. The mumps vaccine is given in the same shot with measles and rubella. This combined vaccine is called the MMR vaccine. The MMR vaccine is part of the routine vaccinations available free to all children in Ontario. The first dose of MMR vaccine is given at 12 months of age and a second dose is now given at 18 months of age.

All adults born in 1970 or later should receive at least one dose of MMR vaccine. Because of an increase in mumps cases and outbreaks across Canada it's recommended that adults born in 1970 or later receive a second dose.

Adults, who have not had mumps or have never been vaccinated with a mumps containing vaccine, can also be vaccinated.

Is the MMR vaccine safe?

Yes, the MMR vaccine is very safe and effective. Most children will have no side effects, however, mild redness, swelling, and pain at the injection site may occur. MMR vaccine can cause a rash and/or fever, which is not contagious, in some children five to 12 days after the needle is given.

Who should not have MMR vaccine?

The following children and adults should not have MMR vaccine, anyone who:

- is allergic to neomycin or gelatin.
- has had a severe allergic reaction to a prior dose of this vaccine.
- has a severely impaired immune system.
- is ill with a fever or infection worse than a cold.
- is pregnant - women should not become pregnant within one month after getting the MMR vaccine.

Also, receiving antibody-containing products (e.g., immune globulin, whole or packed red blood cells) may interfere with the mumps vaccine. MMR vaccine should be given at least two weeks before or at least three months following administration of any antibody-containing product.

If you think that you or your child is in any of these groups, please talk to your doctor or the Windsor-Essex County Health Unit.

Where can I get the MMR vaccine?

The MMR vaccine is publicly funded and available at your doctor's office. If you do not have a family doctor, call the health unit for information on immunization clinics.

Important: After your child receives any immunization, make sure his/her personal immunization record (sometimes called the Yellow Card) is updated. Keep your records in a safe place. You may be asked to show this record of immunization when your child registers for school or daycare.



What more can I do to minimize my risk?

If you or someone you know is infected with the mumps, or any other contagious illness, there are several steps you can take to reduce the spread of infection.

- Minimize contact of the infected person with others (especially pregnant women and individuals with a weakened immune system).
- The infected person should not go to childcare, school, work, or other public places.
- Wash your hands well and often with soap or use a hand sanitizer.
- Do not share eating utensils, lipsticks, or other objects that have come in contact with the infected person.
- Frequently clean and sanitize objects and surfaces (e.g., toys, counters, doorknobs, phones, etc.), with soap and warm water and/or a disinfectant.
- Cover your mouth when you cough or sneeze with a tissue or your elbow.

For more information on mumps.

Visit the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care, at
www.health.gov.on.ca/english/public/pub/disease/mumps.html

or

**Windsor-Essex County
Health Unit**
www.wechealthunit.org
519-258-2146

References:

Public Health Agency of Canada. (2007). *Update on mumps outbreak in the Maritimes: National Summary June 8, 2007*. Retrieved June 14, 2007 from http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/mumps-oreillons/prof_e.html.