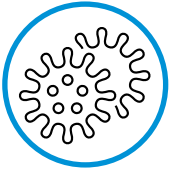


Mumps



What is mumps?

Mumps is a contagious disease that is caused by a virus. The most common symptom of mumps is swollen salivary glands, which cause one or both cheeks to become very puffy. (The salivary glands are located in your cheeks, near your jaw and below each ear.)

Mumps also causes fever and headache. People who have symptoms usually get better after a week or two, but mumps can sometimes cause serious complications. Anyone who has not been fully vaccinated is at increased risk of catching the disease, compared with people who have been fully vaccinated or who have already had mumps.

How is mumps spread?

Mumps spreads easily through the air when an infected person coughs or sneezes. People can catch it by:

- breathing the air where an infected person has coughed or sneezed
- touching an infected surface, and then touching their nose or mouth
- sharing objects (for example, cups and eating utensils) with a person who has mumps

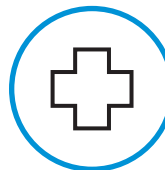
A person with mumps can spread the infection from seven days before to five days after they have symptoms. Up to half of people may have very mild symptoms, or no symptoms at all. However, these people can still spread the virus.

Prevention

You can protect against mumps with a safe and effective vaccine. For the best protection, children should receive the two recommended doses of mumps vaccine.

The vaccine is given at:

- one year of age
- four to six years of age



Is it serious?

Most people with mumps recover completely in a few weeks.

However, mumps can be serious and can cause such complications as:

- loss of hearing, which can either last a short time or, in rare cases, be permanent
- orchitis (swelling of one or both testicles) in teenaged and adult males, which can, in rare cases, lead to fertility problems
- oophoritis (swelling of one or both ovaries) in teenaged and adult females
- encephalitis (swelling of the brain), which can lead to death or permanent disability
- meningitis (swelling of the tissue covering the brain and spinal cord)

Pregnant women who get mumps during the first trimester may have a higher risk of miscarriage.

Since the approval of the mumps vaccine in 1969, the number of reported cases of mumps has gone down by more than **99%**



Symptoms

Symptoms of mumps usually appear 16 to 18 days after a person is exposed to the virus. They include:

- painful and swollen salivary glands
- fever
- headache
- muscle aches and pains
- tiredness
- having trouble chewing

What are the risks?

Individual cases and outbreaks of mumps still happen in Canada. As well, mumps remains a common disease in many parts of the world, including areas in Europe, Asia, the Pacific and Africa. Anyone who is not protected against mumps is at risk of getting infected when they travel internationally.

Although mumps is commonly thought of as a childhood disease, teenagers and adults can catch it too. Some people may be at increased risk of being exposed to mumps because of their work or leisure environments, including students attending school, people who travel internationally, military personnel, health care workers and individuals exposed to a mumps outbreak.

Stay up to date with your vaccinations

The most important way to prevent mumps is to make sure that you and your family members are vaccinated. Although people who have been vaccinated can still get mumps, they are likely to have a milder case than an unvaccinated person. There is no treatment for mumps, and it can cause long-term health problems.

The vaccines are part of the publicly funded vaccine schedule and are offered free to all people in Ontario. The mumps vaccine is required for children to attend school in Ontario and for children attending a daycare centre, unless they have a valid exemption.

Vaccination is also publicly funded for adults, if they have never had mumps or been vaccinated.

Anyone who is not protected is at risk of getting mumps.

Talk to your health care provider before you travel. For more information on global outbreaks of mumps, please visit the Government of Canada website travel.gc.ca/travelling/health-safety.



It takes all of us to protect each of us.

Talk to your health care provider or your local public health unit about the mumps vaccine.