

# About...Mumps (*Infectious parotitis*)

## What is mumps?

Mumps is a viral illness that affects glands that produce saliva. These glands are located near the jaw area on both sides of the face and neck. Infection can occur on one or both sides.

## What are the symptoms of mumps?

Symptoms of mumps include:

- fever
- fatigue
- headache
- pain below the ears
- swelling and tenderness along the jaw and in front of and below the ear(s)
- possible swelling of the testicles in males

People who do not have swelling may still spread the virus to others.

## How is mumps spread?

The mumps virus is spread by contact with saliva or droplets that are released through the nose or mouth when an infected person coughs or sneezes. Persons with mumps should stay home from child care, school, or work during the contagious period to prevent spreading the disease. (The contagious period is seven days before and nine days after the appearance of symptoms.)

## How do I know if I have mumps?

See your health care provider if you have been exposed to someone with mumps. Your health care provider may test you for mumps or see if you are immune to the disease.

## How is mumps treated?

Since mumps is a viral infection, antibiotics are not effective. Currently, there are no antiviral medications used to treat mumps. Bed rest, a soft diet (because it is painful to chew), and pain reliever for headaches and muscle aches are often recommended.

## How can mumps be prevented?

The measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccine is safe and effective for preventing mumps infection. If you have not had mumps and/or have no record of having the MMR vaccine, see your health care provider to decide if you should receive the vaccine. Two doses of vaccine normally provide lifelong immunity.

For additional information on mumps, please visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Web site at: <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd-vac/mumps/default.htm>

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