



Indiana State
Department of Health
Epidemiology Resource Center

Quick Facts: Mumps

What is mumps?

Mumps is caused by a virus. It affects glands that make saliva that are located near the back of the jaw on both sides of the face and neck. Infection can occur on one or both sides causing swelling and pain of those glands. Indiana generally experiences fewer than 10 confirmed cases of mumps every year, however, in early 2016 several outbreaks of mumps on university campuses were identified, leading to a significant increase in the number of cases.

What are the symptoms of mumps?

Symptoms of mumps may include:

- Slight fever
- Tiredness
- Headache
- Pain below the ears
- Upper respiratory symptoms (Cough, runny nose, etc.)
- Swelling and tenderness along the jaw and in front of and below the ear(s)
- Difficulty chewing or swallowing

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

How is mumps spread?

Mumps is spread through indirect or direct contact with an infected person's nose or throat droplets. It can be spread when an infected person coughs or sneezes or when people share saliva (e.g. kissing) or items that come in contact with saliva (drinking glasses, eating utensils, smoking devices, etc.). People with mumps can spread it for up to 2 days before and 5 days after the start of symptoms. Anyone with mumps should stay home during that time to prevent giving the illness to others. Some people with mumps may not show all the symptoms or may not show any symptoms. People with mumps can also spread the disease before they feel sick.

Who is at risk for mumps?

Anyone who has not had two doses of mumps vaccine (usually measles-mumps-rubella, or MMR) is at risk for mumps. The risk is greatest for international travelers or people who are in contact with international travelers. There is an increased risk of miscarriage in women who are infected with mumps during the first trimester of pregnancy. Complications of mumps, such as encephalitis (swelling of the brain), testicular swelling in males who have gone through puberty, and hearing loss, are more likely to occur in adults.

How do I know if I or my child has mumps?

See your doctor if you or your child has been exposed to someone with mumps or if either of you have symptoms of mumps. Your doctor may test you for mumps or see if you are immune to the disease. Many viruses and bacteria can cause swelling and tenderness similar to that caused by mumps virus.

How is mumps treated?

Since mumps is caused by a virus, antibiotics cannot cure or treat mumps. Most treatment is geared toward alleviating symptoms. Bed rest, a soft diet (to reduce pain when chewing), and pain reliever for headaches and muscle aches are often recommended.

How can mumps be prevented?

The MMR vaccine is safe and good at preventing mumps. Most schools and some child-care centers require proof of vaccination before entry. If you have not had mumps and have no record of getting the vaccine, see your doctor. Your doctor can decide if you need a dose of vaccine. Two doses of vaccine should provide lifelong protection.

For Travelers: Mumps is a common problem in many other parts of the world. Though mumps vaccination is a part of the routine vaccination schedule, it is a good idea to check the [CDC travel guidelines](#) for the country or countries you will be visiting and ensure you are up-to-date on your routine and travel vaccinations before traveling.

All information presented is intended for public use. More information on mumps can be found at:

- <http://www.cdc.gov/mumps/about/index.html>
- <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd-vac/mumps/default.htm>
- <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/acip-recs/vacc-specific/mmr.html>