

Facts about Mumps

Mumps is a disease caused by the mumps virus. Mumps can be a serious disease that can sometimes cause damage to the brain, deafness and other complications.

After someone catches the mumps virus, it can take 2 to 3 weeks for signs to appear. The common signs of mumps are:

- swollen glands in front and below the ears or under the jaw (usually)
- fever
- headache
- earache

How is Mumps Spread?

Mumps is spread through contact with droplets coughed, sneezed or breathed into the air by someone with mumps virus or by contact with the saliva of someone with mumps. Mumps is catching from 7 days before the glands swell until 9 days after they begin to swell. Mumps is most catching from 1 to 2 days before the glands swell until 4 to 5 days after.

Mumps is much less common since routine immunization of children against mumps began.

Mumps is a reportable disease in British Columbia. If there is a case of mumps in a child or adult in the child care centre or school, immediately report the case to the Licensing Officer or Public Health Nurse assigned to your centre or school.



MUMPS is a vaccine-preventable disease

Mumps vaccine is provided free to healthy children, aged one year and older, as part of routine immunization. It is given in a shot that also includes vaccine against measles and rubella (MMR). MMR vaccine is also provided free to older children and adults, born after 1970, who have not had mumps disease or mumps vaccine. Two doses of a mumps vaccine are recommended for best protection.



What to Do at Home

- Make sure your child has the MMR vaccine when it is offered as part of routine immunization.
- If another child has mumps and your child has not had the MMR vaccine:
 - ask your doctor or Public Health Nurse to give your child the vaccine.
 - watch for signs of mumps in your child.
- If your child gets mumps, tell the caregivers at the child care centre or school.



Children with mumps should not return to the child care centre or school until nine days after their glands begin to swell and only if they feel well enough to take part in activities, unless otherwise directed by the Medical Health Officer.

Acetaminophen (Tylenol™, Tempra™) or ibuprofen (Advil™, Motrin™) may help reduce a fever and provide some comfort. Always follow the directions on the package about how much and how often to take acetaminophen or ibuprofen.

Never give products containing ASA (acetylsalicylic acid, such as Aspirin™) to anyone under the age of 20 years. Use of ASA products by children can lead to Reye's syndrome, a serious condition affecting the brain and liver.