

# Mumps

## What college students need to know

### Q. What is mumps?

**A.** Mumps is a viral illness that can cause fever, body aches, headaches, fatigue, swelling of the salivary glands or pain with chewing or swallowing. About a third of people who contract the mumps virus do not develop any symptoms.

### Q. How does the mumps virus spread?

**A.** Mumps is most commonly spread when an infected person coughs or sneezes, and a non-infected person inhales respiratory droplets that contain the virus.

### Q. When can mumps be spread?

**A.** People with mumps are usually contagious from two days before to five days after they develop symptoms. A person is most contagious just before symptoms appear.

### Q. How soon after infection do symptoms occur?

**A.** Symptoms usually occur 16 to 18 days after infection. The time between infection and illness can be as short as 12 days or as long as 25 days.

### Q. Can mumps be treated?

**A.** There are currently no medications to treat the mumps virus. Instead, treatment is focused on relieving symptoms until your body's immune system fights off the infection. People who show symptoms usually recover after a week or two.

### Q. What are the symptoms of mumps?

**A.** Up to half of people who get mumps have very mild or no symptoms, and therefore do not know they were infected with mumps.

#### The most common symptoms include:

- Swollen and tender salivary glands under the ears
- Fever
- Headache
- Muscle aches
- Tiredness
- Loss of appetite

### Q. How can a person with mumps avoid spreading it to others?

- Stay at home for five days after symptoms (salivary gland swelling) begin; avoid school, work, social gatherings, and other public settings.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand cleaner.



## Preventing Mumps

1. **Ensure that you have been immunized. All college students should have received two doses of the measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccine after their first birthday. If you haven't, get vaccinated immediately.**
  - Students can get vaccinated at no cost or by their health care provider.
  - Faculty/staff should visit their health care provider.
2. **Washing your hands well and often with soap and water will help prevent mumps and other infections.**
3. **Minimize close contact with other people if you are sick.**

## Mumps *(continued)*

### Q. *Is there a vaccine to prevent mumps?*

**A.** Yes, the mumps vaccine is given on or after a child's first birthday. In the U.S., it is usually combined with measles and rubella vaccines, together known as MMR (measles, mumps and rubella). A second dose of mumps vaccine is recommended before children enter school (when they are four to six years old). People who receive two doses of mumps vaccine are much less likely to develop mumps than those who have one dose or none. Two doses of the mumps vaccine are estimated to be 88% effective in preventing the disease.

### Q. *Can people who have been vaccinated still get mumps?*

**A.** People who have had mumps vaccine are usually protected for life against mumps infection; however, it is not a guarantee. Many cases of mumps occur in previously immunized persons.

### Q. *What problems can mumps cause?*

**A.** People who show symptoms usually recover after a week or two, but mumps can occasionally cause serious complications. The most common complication is inflammation of the testicles in males. Other rare complications include:

inflammation of the brain and/or tissue covering the brain and spinal cord; inflammation of the ovaries and/or breasts in females; deafness.

### Q. *What should I do if I think I've been exposed to mumps?*

- Check your immunization records to make sure you have had two doses of vaccine.
- Be aware of signs and symptoms of mumps and seek medical care if these develop.

### Q. *What should I do if I experience symptoms of mumps?*

- **SEEK MEDICAL CARE TO BE PROPERLY DIAGNOSED.** Students should call UHS at 608-265-5600 or use [MyUHS](#) to make an appointment. Faculty and staff should contact their private health care provider.
- **STAY HOME** from work, school, sports and all public gatherings for five days after symptoms start.
- **WASH YOUR HANDS** often with soap and water.

### Q. *Where can I get more information about mumps and the vaccine?*

**A.** Visit the CDC website at: <http://www.cdc.gov/mumps/about/index.html>

## IF YOU HAVE BEEN DIAGNOSED WITH MUMPS

***Anyone diagnosed with mumps is expected to stay home from school, work, or similar activities for five days. This means:***

- Don't attend class or labs, go to work, or socialize with others during this five-day period
- Don't use public transportation

***Prevent spreading the virus by:***

- Staying home
- Covering your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze
- Washing your hands regularly with soap and water

***Soothe your symptoms by:***

- Getting plenty of bed rest
- Taking over-the-counter pain killers such as Ibuprofen or Tylenol, to relieve any pain
- Drink plenty of fluids
- Apply a warm or cool compress to your swollen glands to help reduce pain
- Eat foods that don't require a lot of chewing

**If you have questions about your symptoms call UHS at 608-265-5600.**