Mumps: What you need to know

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

Mumps is most commonly spread when an infected person coughs or sneezes, or talks and a non-infected person inhales respiratory droplets that contain the virus. Most mumps cases do not lead to serious complications.

Who is at risk

People at highest risk are those who have not received any doses of the MMR vaccine and those who have received only one dose of the MMR vaccine. To check your immunization status or to get vaccinated, please contact your medical provider.

A major factor contributing to outbreaks is being in a crowded environment, such as attending the same class, playing on the same sports team, or living in a dormitory with a person who has mumps.

What to watch for

- Swollen glands in front of and below the ear or under the jaw
- Fever
- Headache
- Earache
- Among males, mumps can lead to painful swelling of the testicles
- Among women, mumps can lead to swelling of the ovaries, which may cause abdominal pain, or swelling of the breasts

To learn more

More information about mumps at www.cdc.gov/mumps

More information about the MMR vaccine at www.GoColumbiaMO.com/Health/Clinic_and_Nursing/Immunizations

Anyone who experiences the symptoms listed above should contact their health care professional immediately.

What you can do

To prevent mumps:
- Get up to date on your MMR vaccine
- Cover your cough or sneeze
- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water

If you become infected with mumps:
- Contact your medical provider
- Stay at home for five days after symptoms begin
- Cover your cough or sneeze
- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water

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