

**MSAD # 13 / RSU #83
Health Alert**

**Mumps
Important Notice to Parents**

Mumps is a highly contagious viral illness characterized by painful inflammation of the salivary glands that lie just above the back angle of the jaw (parotitis – salivary gland infection). Involvement can be one-sided or bilateral. Other glands, including those in the floor of the mouth beneath the tongue and below the jaw, may also be involved, although less commonly. Viruses other than mumps and some bacteria are also known to cause swelling of the salivary glands. Mumps patients may have fever, headache, and mild respiratory symptoms or may have no symptoms other than swelling of the salivary glands. In post pubertal individuals, males may experience testicular pain and females may experience pain in ovaries. Very rarely sterility can result. The central nervous system may become involved, usually manifested by increased irritability, stiff neck, headache, and even convulsions in some cases. Symptoms of mumps generally resolve after 7–10 days. Approximately one-third of infected, unvaccinated people don't show clinical signs of salivary gland swelling, and illness may manifest primarily as a respiratory tract infection.

Transmission is by direct contact with or droplet spread of the saliva of infected persons. It should be remembered that approximately one-third of all susceptible individuals exposed to mumps will not develop apparent disease but will still be infectious.

The incubation period ranges from 12 - 25 days, averaging 16-18 days.

A person can spread mumps seven days prior to the onset of parotitis through nine days after the onset of symptoms; however, a person is most contagious two days prior to the onset of parotitis to five days after the onset of illness.

To help prevent spread of the virus, students should never share items that may be contaminated with saliva such as beverage containers. All articles soiled with nose and throat discharges should be disposed of or cleaned. Students should cover mouth with tissue when coughing or sneezing. If no tissue is available, students should be encouraged to “catch your cold in your elbow” by covering their mouth and nose with the crook of their arm and coughing or sneezing into their shirt or coat sleeve. Proper hand washing techniques should always be observed.

A live, attenuated virus vaccine is available in combination with the measles and rubella vaccine (MMR) at the age of 12 months. A second vaccination is usually given between 4-5 years of age. Vaccination is required for school entry in Maine. Parents/guardians should be encouraged to have their children vaccinated on time.

Individuals with a confirmed case of mumps should be excluded from school and isolated as directed by the Maine Center for Disease Control. Students who are attending school but have not been immunized will also be excluded from school as directed by the Maine CDC.

Mumps during the first trimester of pregnancy may be associated with an increased rate of spontaneous abortion. Exposed pregnant women should be tested for mumps immunity, if unknown, and should contact their healthcare provider.

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