



## Mumps - Infection Prevention

Mumps is a viral illness spread through droplets from sneezing or coughing and contact with contaminated surfaces. The infected person is typically contagious for 2 days before symptoms start and 5 days after the appearance of salivary gland inflammation. Some people are contagious for longer. Mumps can lead to serious complications, particularly in adolescents and adults.

### Key symptoms of mumps

- Initial symptoms **resemble those of a common cold or flu**, including fever, muscle aches, loss of appetite, weakness, fatigue, and headache.
- Within a few days, **swelling and inflammation develop in one or both salivary glands** located near the ears (cheeks) or under the jaws, often extending to the throat.



Healthy child

Child with mumps

**It's worth noting that general cold or flu symptoms may then indicate mumps illness, especially if cases are known in the local area.**

**The time between infection and onset of symptoms is usually around 3 weeks.**

To prevent spread (transmission): **Individuals diagnosed with mumps should isolate themselves at home, away from work and school, and limit contact with others for at least 5 days after the onset of gland inflammation, preferably in a separate room if others in the household are susceptible (unvaccinated or never had mumps).** If the illness lasts more than 5 days, continue to limit contact with others and avoid social events until recovery is well advanced (no fever, mild/no symptoms). **Caregivers** should wear protective masks and gloves when in close contact (<1 meter) with the infected person and practice regular handwashing. The infected person should also then wear a protective mask. Routine cleaning of surfaces with soap and water or disinfectants is recommended.

If mumps are present in **a specific setting like a school or workplace**: Everyone and their household members should check their vaccination status and monitor for symptoms.

Those potentially **exposed to the virus** (been near an infected person) should stay home for 3 weeks (and work remotely if possible), avoiding gatherings and crowded places.

**If you experience symptoms** of mumps, it's crucial to: Stay home, work remotely if possible, adhere to infection prevention measures, and avoid attending school or public events. Wear a mask if you need to go out among others, regardless of vaccination status.

See additional details about [mumps](#) and [vaccination to prevent mumps](#).

**The Chief Epidemiologist**