



Diseases Fact Sheet - Mumps

South Dakota Department of Health

Office of Disease Prevention Services - 605-773-3737 -(1-800-592-1861 in South Dakota only)

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What is it?

Mumps is an acute viral disease characterized by fever, swelling and tenderness of one or more of the salivary glands.

Who gets mumps?

Mumps is found world-wide. Although anyone may contract the disease, mumps usually occurs in people between the ages of five and 25. Mumps is more common during winter and spring.

How is mumps spread?

Mumps is transmitted by direct contact with saliva and discharges from the nose and throat of infected individuals.

What are the symptoms of mumps?

Symptoms of mumps include fever, swelling and tenderness of one or more of the salivary glands, usually the parotid gland (located just below the front of the ear). Approximately one-third of infected people do not exhibit symptoms. Severe complications are uncommon in vaccinated individuals but occur more frequently in adults.

How soon after infection do symptoms occur?

The incubation period is usually 16 to 18 days, although it may vary from 12 to 25 days.

What complications have been associated with mumps?

Swelling of the testicles occurs in 15-25 percent of infected males. Mumps can cause central nervous system disorders such as encephalitis (inflammation of the brain) and meningitis (inflammation of the covering of the brain and spinal column). Other complications include arthritis, kidney involvement, deafness and inflammation of the thyroid gland and breasts.

When and for how long is a person able to spread mumps?

Although the mumps virus has been isolated from saliva from 2 to 7 days before gland swelling and may continue for 5 or more days after onset of disease, the infectious period is considered to be from 3 days before to 5 or more days after symptom onset.

Does past infection with mumps make a person immune?

Yes. Immunity acquired after contracting the disease is usually permanent.

Is there a vaccine for mumps?

Yes. Mumps vaccine is given routinely as MMR (measles, mumps and rubella) to children at 12-15 months of age, with a second dose at 4-6 years of age. Others that have not been vaccinated with MMR and are not immune should receive 2 doses of MMR separated by at least 28 days.

[Learn About Immunizations in South Dakota](#)

What can be done to prevent the spread of mumps?

The single most effective control measure is maintaining the highest possible level of immunization in the community. Children should not attend school during their infectious period.

Related Sites:

- [South Dakota Department of Health, Immunization Program](#)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
 - [Mumps Information Page](#)
 - [Mumps Vaccination](#)
 - [Vaccines and Immunizations](#)
 - [Parents Guide to Childhood Immunizations](#)