



# UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND UNIVERSITY HEALTH CENTER

Accredited by the Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care, Inc.  
www.health.umd.edu

## Questions and Answers About Mumps

Mumps is a communicable disease, commonly associated with swelling of one or more of the salivary glands. The parotids, the largest of the salivary glands, situated below and in front of the ear, may become swollen and tender.

Q: What causes mumps?

A: Mumps is caused by a virus. People get it through contact with someone who already has the disease.

Q: How soon do symptoms appear?

A: Symptoms typically appear 16-18 days after infection, but this period can range from 12-25 days after infection.

Q: What are the symptoms of mumps?

A: Fever, swelling and tenderness of the parotid and salivary glands. There may be chills, malaise, headache, and pain below the ear. People

may only have cold-like symptoms or no symptoms at all.

Q: What is the mode of transmission?

A: The mode of transmission is by droplet spread or by direct contact with saliva of an infected person, through kissing, drinking from a glass, or touching contaminated surfaces.

Q: How long is an infected person able to spread the disease?

A: Mumps virus has been isolated from respiratory secretions 3 days before the start of symptoms until 9 days after onset.

Q: If I am exposed to mumps, what should I do?

A: You should seek medical attention immediately. If someone seeks medical attention, they should call their doctor in advance so

that they don't have to sit in the waiting room for a long time and possibly infect other patients.

Q: How do I protect myself?

A: Mumps vaccine (usually MMR), is the best way to prevent mumps. Other things people can do to prevent mumps and other infections is to wash hands well and often with soap. Eating utensils should not be shared and surfaces that are frequently touched should also be regularly cleaned with soap and water, or with cleaning wipes.

Q: Where else can I get information?

A: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (Mumps Information from CDC)

Iowa Department of Public Health (Mumps information)

Revised 10.06

**Published for the University of Maryland community.**

This paper is made from 30% post consumer waste. Don't let the cycle stop here, please recycle this after you recover.