

MUMPS FACT SHEET

Parents are kindly requested to keep their children out of school for minimum of 7 days after the swollen glands appear.

What is mumps?

Mumps is a contagious disease caused by a virus. It spreads easily through coughing and sneezing. There is no treatment for mumps, and it can cause long-term health problems.

What are the symptoms of mumps?

Mumps usually causes the following symptoms for about 7 to 10 days:

- Fever
- Headache
- Muscle aches
- Tiredness
- Loss of appetite (not wanting to eat)
- Swollen glands under the ears or jaw

Some people who get mumps do not have symptoms. Others may feel sick but will not have swollen glands.

Is it serious?

In most children, mumps is pretty mild. But it can cause serious, lasting problems, including:

- Meningitis (infection of the covering of the brain and spinal cord)
- Deafness (temporary or permanent)
- Encephalitis (swelling of the brain)
- Orchitis (swelling of the testicles) in males who have reached puberty
- Oophoritis (swelling of the ovaries) and/or mastitis (swelling of the breasts) in females who have reached puberty

How does mumps spread?

Mumps spreads when an infected person coughs or sneezes. Mumps can spread before swollen glands appear and for 5 days afterward. Good hygiene including proper hand-washing can help prevent the spread of the virus.

How mumps is treated?

There are currently no medications to treat the mumps virus. Instead, treatment is focused on relieving symptoms until your body's immune system fights off the infection. The infection will usually pass within a week or two. The self-care techniques listed below may help.

- Paracetamol and ibuprofen can be used to reduce a high temperature (fever) and treat any aches or pains.
- Get plenty of bed rest until symptoms have passed
- If your child has a high temperature, make sure they drink plenty of fluid because they may be at risk of dehydration.
- Keeping hydrated will also help reduce discomfort caused by swollen glands but avoid irritant, acidic drinks such as fruit juice; water is the best fluid to drink.
- Apply a warm or cool compress to your swollen glands to help reduce any pain.
- Eat foods that don't require a lot of chewing, such as soup, mashed potatoes and scrambled eggs.

If your symptoms don't improve after seven days, or suddenly worsen, contact a doctor for advice.