

UNIVERSITY STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES • Fact Sheet

MUMPS**WHAT IS IT?**

Mumps is a highly contagious illness caused by the mumps virus. Since implementation of the mumps vaccination program in 1967, mumps cases have dropped more than 99% in the US. However, the number of cases in 2016 and 2017 have been the highest reported in a decade. While mumps used to be primarily a childhood illness, it is now seen more commonly in college-aged young adults. Outbreaks have occurred on college campuses.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

Patients will typically experience flu-like symptoms first, followed within 48 hours by the classic presentation of parotid gland swelling. The parotid glands are salivary glands located in front of the ears and above the jaw.

- Flu-like symptoms often include fever (usually low-grade), headache, muscle aches, fatigue, and loss of appetite.
- Inflammation of the parotid gland causes pain and swelling in the jaw and/or cheek area. Swelling may occur on one or both sides of the face. If both sides are affected, swelling usually occurs on one side first, followed by the other side a few days later. Parotid gland swelling can last up to 10 days.

Symptoms usually resolve on their own within 2 weeks. Very rarely, mumps can lead to complications, such as inflammation of the testicles (orchitis), ovaries (oophoritis), or lining of the brain & spinal cord (meningitis).

HOW DO YOU GET MUMPS?

Mumps is spread by respiratory droplets from the nose and throat of an infected person. This can occur through coughing/sneezing, kissing, sharing beverages/lip balm, or contact with contaminated surfaces. After exposure to the virus, it takes about 12-25 days for symptoms to develop. However, it is possible to transmit the virus as early as 3 days before symptoms begin.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I AM FEELING ILL?

Isolate yourself, and call Student Health Services to schedule an appointment (804-828-8828 at Monroe Park & 804-828-9220 at MCV).

- To decrease the risk of infecting others, special arrangements will be made for you to enter the clinic through a different entrance.
- It is important to be evaluated so that our providers can test you for the mumps virus and discuss ways to decrease symptoms and avoid spreading the infection to others.

WHAT CAN I DO TO KEEP OTHERS FROM GETTING SICK?

Mumps is an illness that can spread easily and pose a public health concern. If you are diagnosed with mumps, it is very important to:

- Isolate yourself at home (in your own sick room if possible) to decrease transmission to others. This means avoiding public areas, classes, work, parties, and other activities for at least 5 days after the onset of swollen parotid glands.
- If you have a VCU meal plan, a friend can use your student ID to purchase meals for you.
- Wear a mask if you will be in a common area of your living space. Place the mask in a bag before disposing of it. Also remember to clean frequently touched areas.
- Practice good respiratory etiquette by covering your mouth and nose if you cough or sneeze (use your elbow if a tissue is not available), properly disposing of tissues, washing your hands often, and not sharing drinks.

WHAT IS THE TREATMENT ?

Mumps is typically a self-limited illness. Supportive care measures are used to provide symptom relief while the virus runs its course:

- Rest as much as possible throughout the isolation period.
- Drink plenty of non-caffeinated fluids, like water, tea, and sports drinks. Avoid acidic juices.
- Take ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin) or acetaminophen (Tylenol) to treat fever and/or pain.
 - Take ibuprofen with food to avoid an upset stomach.
 - Children and teenagers should avoid the use of aspirin due to the risk of developing a dangerous condition known as Reye syndrome.
- Warm or cool packs may provide relief from jaw symptoms.

HOW DO I MINIMIZE MY CHANCES OF GETTING MUMPS?

- Review your vaccination history to be sure you received both doses of the mumps vaccine. The mumps vaccine is the most effective way to prevent infection. However, there is still a 10% chance of getting mumps after being fully vaccinated.
- If an outbreak of mumps has been identified in your community, unvaccinated individuals should complete mumps immunization. A third dose of vaccine may be recommended in already vaccinated individuals.
- Wash your hands often and well. Use hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.
- Do not share drinks out of the same glass, cup, can, or bottle with others.
- Regularly clean surfaces that are frequently touched by other people (tables, doorknobs, countertops, etc.).

RECOMMENDED WEBSITE: www.cdc.gov/mumps/index.html