



INDIANA UNIVERSITY

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT
FOR UNIVERSITY ACADEMIC AFFAIRS
University Environmental Health and Safety

Quick Facts: Mumps

What is mumps?

Mumps is caused by a virus. It affects glands that make saliva. These glands are near the jaw area on both sides of the face and neck. Infection can occur on one or both sides causing swelling and pain of those glands. In 2014, there were 8 confirmed cases of mumps in Indiana.

What are the symptoms of mumps?

Symptoms of mumps may include:

- Slight fever
- Tiredness
- Headache
- Pain below the ears
- Upper respiratory symptoms (Cough, runny nose, etc.)
- Swelling and tenderness along the jaw and in front of and below the ear(s)

Most people recover completely in a few weeks. People who do not have swelling may still spread the virus to others.

How is mumps spread?

Mumps is spread through indirect or direct contact with an infected person's nose or throat droplets. It can be spread when an infected person coughs or sneezes. People with mumps can spread it for up to 2 days before and 5 days after the start of symptoms. Anyone with mumps should stay home during that time to prevent giving the illness to others. Some people who get mumps have very mild or no symptoms, and often do not know they have the disease. Symptoms typically appear 16-18 days after infection, but this period can range from 12-25 days after infection.

Who is at risk for mumps?

Anyone who has not had two doses of mumps vaccine (usually the measles-mumps-rubella vaccine, or MMR) is at risk for mumps. The risk is greatest for international travelers or people who are in contact with international travelers. There is an increased risk of miscarriage in women who are infected with mumps during the first trimester of pregnancy. Complications of mumps, such as encephalitis (swelling of the brain) and hearing loss, are more likely to occur in adults.

How do I know if I have mumps?

See your doctor if you have been exposed to someone with mumps or if you have symptoms of mumps. Your doctor may test you for mumps or see if you are immune to the disease. Many viruses and bacteria can cause swelling and tenderness similar to that caused by mumps virus.

How is mumps treated?

Since mumps is caused by a virus, antibiotics cannot cure or treat mumps. Most treatment is geared toward alleviating symptoms. Bed rest, a soft diet (to reduce pain when chewing), and pain reliever for headaches and muscle aches are often recommended.

How can mumps be prevented?

The MMR vaccine is safe and good at preventing mumps. Most schools require proof of vaccination before entry. If you have not had mumps and have no record of getting the vaccine, see your doctor. Your doctor can decide if you need a dose of vaccine. Two doses of vaccine *should* provide lifelong protection.

Other ways to stay healthy and prevent spreading the illness:

- **Check your immunization records** to ensure that you've had two doses of the MMR
- **Practice good hygiene habits:** wash your hands regularly with soap and water; sneeze and cough into a tissue or your elbow; and avoid sharing drinks, food, and utensils.
- **Watch for symptoms, even if you have been vaccinated.** Early symptoms usually begin 16 to 18 days after infection and are similar to those of the flu: fever, headache, muscle aches, and fatigue. Swelling of the cheek and jaw area (salivary glands) usually follows and is a classic symptom of mumps.
- **If you experience symptoms call your campus health center or your health care provider:**
 - o **IU-Bloomington:** call the IU Health Center at 812-855-6511 during office hours or 812-330-3790 after hours or if not a student, call your health care provider to make an appointment.
 - o **IUPUI:** call IUPUI Campus Health at 317-274-8214 or 317-274-2274 to schedule an appointment.
 - o **Regional Campuses:** contact your health care provider to make an appointment.
- **Stay home if you are sick.** Anyone suspected of having mumps should stay home from school, work, or similar activities for five days. This means don't attend class or labs, go to work, or socialize with others during this five-day period and don't use public transportation. Self-isolation until your infectious period ends will reduce the chance of getting others sick. Mouth and nose should be covered during any sneezing or coughing and hands should be washed frequently.

I got the vaccine but still got mumps. Does this mean the vaccine doesn't work?

The MMR vaccine prevents most, but not all, cases of mumps and complications caused by the disease. People who have received two doses of the MMR vaccine are about nine times less likely to get mumps than unvaccinated people who have the same exposure to mumps virus. However, some people who receive two doses of MMR can still get mumps, especially if they have prolonged, close contact with someone who has the disease. If a vaccinated person does get mumps, they will likely have less severe illness than an unvaccinated person.

For Travelers: Mumps is a common problem in many other parts of the world. Though mumps vaccination is a part of the routine vaccination schedule, it is a good idea to check the CDC travel guidelines for the country or countries you will be visiting and ensure you are up-to-date on your routine and travel vaccinations before travelling.

More information on mumps can be found at:

- [Center for Disease Control and Prevention](#)
- [CDC – Mumps Vaccine](#)
- [Indiana State Department of Health](#)
- [IU Health Center](#)
- IU Environmental Health and Safety