

Mumps

Mumps is an infection caused by a virus that is now uncommon in Australia because we have a vaccine for it. About one-third of people with mumps only have mild symptoms or no symptoms at all. When symptoms do occur, they include swelling of the glands that produce saliva, high fever and headache. Men and adolescent boys may have tender testicles. Very rarely, women and adolescent girls may have abdominal pain because of inflammation of the ovaries.

Serious complications can sometimes occur, including swelling of the spinal cord and brain, and hearing loss. Very rarely, a person can become infertile. In extremely rare cases, a person may die.

How it spreads

The mumps virus spreads from person to person via droplets in the air that contain the virus. People get infected by breathing in droplets when an infected person breathes, coughs or sneezes on them.

Vaccination against mumps is included in the measles–mumps–rubella (MMR) vaccine, which is part of the routine childhood vaccination schedule in the Australian National Immunisation Program.

Exclusion period

Exclude for 9 days or until swelling goes down (whichever is sooner).

Actions for educators and other staff

Follow the exclusion period in the *Staying healthy* guidelines.

Contact your local public health unit for advice if you have a case of mumps in your service. In New South Wales and the Northern Territory, education and care services must notify their local public health unit about any cases of mumps in the service.

Ensure staff and children have good hand and respiratory hygiene.

Ensure staff use appropriate cleaning practices, as described in the *Staying healthy* guidelines.

Actions for parents and carers

Make sure your child is vaccinated against mumps by keeping their childhood vaccinations up to date.

Keep your child at home until they feel well **and** the swelling has gone down, or it is 9 days after the swelling started.

Teach your child to cough or sneeze into a tissue, then throw the tissue into a bin and wash their hands. If there are no tissues nearby, teach them to cough or sneeze into their inner elbow instead of their hands.

More information about mumps

See healthdirect for more information on prevention, diagnosis and treatment of mumps (healthdirect.gov.au/mumps).

To find out if a child needs medical help:

- use the online symptom checker (healthdirect.gov.au/symptom-checker)
- speak to a registered nurse by calling the 24-hour health advice hotline on 1800 022 222.