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WHAT IS MUMPS?

Mumps is an infection that is caused by a virus. The virus affects the saliva producing glands, which are the glands located below the ears. Mumps is spread by direct contact with the saliva of an infected person. It can be spread through coughing or sneezing.



These images were obtained from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's Public Health Image Library.

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Mumps can occur among unimmunized children, adolescents, and young adults. Adults born before 1957 may be immune to the disease due to natural infection. Although Mumps can affect people of all ages, the greatest risk of infection occurs among older children. Mumps tends to be more common during the winter and spring months.

SYMPTOMS

The symptoms of Mumps include a fever and swelling and tenderness of the salivary glands. Mumps can lead to encephalitis (inflammation of the brain) and meningitis (inflammation of the spinal column). Mumps can also lead to arthritis, kidney problems, inflammation of the thyroid gland, inflammation of the breasts, and deafness. For males, there is a 15%-25% chance that swelling of the testicles could occur.

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TREATMENT

The swelling caused by mumps usually goes away in approximately ten days. Acetaminophen, which is an ingredient found in Tylenol, is often used to relieve the symptoms and discomfort caused by mumps.

Although Mumps symptoms usually begin 15 to 18 days after exposure to the virus, an infected person is contagious three days prior to the onset of symptoms until four days after the onset of symptoms.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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- **I had Mumps when I was younger, am I immune?**

Yes. If you have had the disease before, you are permanently immune.

- **How can I prevent myself from getting Mumps?**

There is a vaccine that is offered to children. The vaccine is given to the child either on or after the child's first birthday. This vaccine is given in combination with the vaccine for Measles and Rubella and is often referred to as the MMR vaccine. The vaccine usually provides lifelong protection against the virus.

- **Where can I get the vaccination?**

The MMR vaccine is offered at the Denton County Health Department, but you should also contact your health care provider for information on this vaccine.

- **My child attends a daycare, can he/she get Mumps from other children?**

Yes. Mumps can be easily spread in daycares. If your child has the Mumps, do not let your child attend the daycare or school for nine days after the symptoms begin to prevent getting other children sick.

- **Can I die from Mumps?**

Death due to Mumps is rare.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

Department of State Health Services
<http://www.dshs.state.tx.us>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
<http://www.cdc.gov>

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