

Mumps Facts

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

In rare cases, mumps is deadly. Adults are more likely than children to become very sick with mumps.

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.

What should you do if you get these symptoms?

Do not go to work or school or to public places. If you or your child gets any of these symptoms, call your doctor's office before going to the clinic. Tell them you or your child may have mumps. The doctor may not want you to sit in the clinic waiting area. Instead your doctor may ask you to come into the clinic another way. These steps will keep from spreading mumps to the other people.

The MMR Vaccine

The best way to protect against mumps is to get the MMR vaccine. The MMR vaccine also protects against measles and rubella. It is also called the MMR shot.

The Arkansas Department of Health (ADH) is asking that all children and adults get up-to-date with their MMR shots according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations.

The following groups are recommended by CDC to get the MMR vaccine:

- **Children younger than 6 years of age** need one dose of MMR vaccine at age 12 through 15 months, followed by a second dose of MMR vaccine at age 4 through 6 years.
- **Children age 7 through 18 years not previously vaccinated** need one dose of MMR vaccine, followed by a second dose of MMR vaccine at least 4 weeks after the first dose.
- **Adults born in 1957 or later and not previously vaccinated** need one dose of MMR vaccine. A second dose of MMR vaccine is needed for some adults, who are at high risk for exposure, such as students in college, people who work in a health care facility, or those who travel internationally. The second dose should be given a minimum of 28 days after the first dose.
- **Adults born before 1957 are considered to be immune** to mumps and do not need to get the MMR vaccine.

ADH also recommends these steps for young children and adults during this mumps outbreak:

- **Children less than 4 to 6 years of age, who attend preschool at schools with mumps cases or live in large households, are considered to be at high risk for exposure to mumps.** Therefore, those children older than 12 months of age, who have received their first dose of MMR vaccine, should receive their second dose as soon as possible after the minimum waiting period of 28 days between doses is over.
- **Adults, who live in large households or travel internationally, are at increased risk for exposure to mumps.** Therefore, those adults born in 1957 or after, who have received their first dose of MMR vaccine, should receive their second dose as soon as possible after the minimum waiting period of 28 days between doses is over.