

## **MANAGING YOUR MUMPS**

### **What Is Mumps?**

Mumps is a contagious viral infection that causes painful swelling of salivary glands. These glands, on both sides of the jaw, make saliva. Mumps is most often seen in children between 10 and 15 years old.

Before the mumps vaccine was developed, mumps was a common childhood illness. It's now much less common.

Complications can happen, usually in adults. Hearing can be lost temporarily. Organs can become swollen and irritated. These organs include testicles in boys who have gone through puberty and men (sometimes with infertility), ovaries or breasts in women and girls who have gone through puberty, pancreas, lining of the brain, heart, and joints.

### **What Causes Mumps?**

A virus causes mumps. It spreads easily from person to person by airborne droplets or direct contact. It takes 14 to 18 days to come down with mumps. People with mumps are contagious 48 hours before and up to 6 days after swelling begins.

### **What Are the Symptoms of Mumps?**

Earliest symptoms before the swelling are feeling sick, no appetite, and often a headache. Then, symptoms include pain and swelling on one or both sides of the neck, in front of the ears at the corner of the jaw; trouble swallowing or talking; fever; and rash. Fever is better in 3 or 4 days, and swelling and pain get better in about a week. About half the people don't have symptoms.

### **How Is Mumps Diagnosed?**

The health care provider will make a diagnosis from the medical history and physical examination. Tests may also be done on a throat swab and blood samples.

### **How Is Mumps Treated?**

Recovery usually takes 10 days and usually gives lifetime immunity to mumps. Acetaminophen or ibuprofen can help reduce fever and pain. Cool compresses to the jaw can also ease pain.

Tepid sponge baths can bring high temperature down. Drink more fluids, but not acidic or sour liquids. Avoid spicy foods and foods that make more saliva or need a lot of chewing. Rest until fever disappears and strength returns. Children shouldn't go to school until they're no longer contagious (8 to 9 days after swelling resolves).

### **DOs and DON'Ts in Managing Mumps**

- ✓ **DO** drink plenty of fluids (not sour or acidic).
- ✓ **DO** stay home to avoid exposing other people. Rest while you have fever and until strength returns.
- ✓ **DO** use an ice pack near the testicles to help pain if the testicles are affected. Wear an athletic supporter.
- ✓ **DO** use cool compresses on the jaw for discomfort.
- ✓ **DO** eat a soft diet without spicy irritating foods that may make more saliva or need a lot of chewing.
- ✓ **DO** call your health care provider if you have vomiting, diarrhea, temperature more than 101° F, or severe headache that acetaminophen doesn't help.
- ✓ **DO** call your health care provider if pain or swelling develops in your testicles.

✓ **DO** call your health care provider if symptoms aren't better in about 7 days.

⊗ **DON'T** give aspirin to children younger than 16 because of the risk of Reye syndrome, a dangerous illness.

⊗ **DON'T** send children to school until they're no longer contagious.

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FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact the following sources:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Tel: (800) 311-3435; Website: <http://www.cdc.gov>
- American Academy of Pediatrics: Tel: (847) 434-4000; Website: <http://www.aap.org>

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