

Mumps Virus

The mumps is a contagious disease caused by the mumps virus. The signs and symptoms can vary in severity from one person to another and can consist of fever, headache, muscle aches, tiredness, loss of appetite, and swelling and tenderness of the salivary glands under the ears. Most commonly, people with mumps will have swelling of the cheeks and jaw, caused by the inflammation of the salivary glands. Symptoms often begin to appear 16-18 days after exposure and can last from 12-25 days. Complications with this virus are not common but can occasionally become severe.

The mumps spreads through mucus from the throat or nose of an infected person. Direct contact with the infected person and/or touching objects and surfaces can also spread the virus. The infected person is contagious for a few days. Therefore, doctors recommend isolating the person for 5 days after their glands begin to swell. The best way to prevent mumps is to get the vaccination. You can also reduce your chances of getting the mumps virus by washing your hands often, cleaning commonly touched surfaces and objects frequently, and not sharing eating utensils.

For more information about the Mumps Virus, or the current outbreak, please visit the CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) website at <http://www.cdc.gov/mumps/index.html> .

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