

# Mumps

Mumps is an infection of the salivary glands caused by the mumps virus. The most common gland affected is the parotid gland which causes swelling at the angle of the jaw in front of the ear.

## Signs and Symptoms:

One third of people with mumps have no symptoms. When present, symptoms can include swelling of one or more of the salivary glands, high fever, loss of appetite, tiredness and headache. Salivary gland swelling, if present, progresses to a maximum size over a period of two to three days. The salivary glands return to normal size within a week. In males, tenderness of the testicles may occur, while females may have some lower abdominal pain. Occasionally serious complications can occur, including inflammation of the brain, spinal cord and pancreas, hearing loss and sterility.

## Treatment:

Usually no treatment for mumps is required, however paracetamol will reduce the fever and pain.

## Transmission:

Mumps is spread by direct contact with either saliva or droplets from the sneeze or cough of an infected person. The most infectious period for mumps is usually about two days before until four days after the onset of the illness, but someone with the disease can be contagious for up to seven days before until nine days after the swelling of the salivary gland. People without symptoms can also pass on the disease. The time from contact with the virus to the development of symptoms is usually about 16 to 18 days, but can be longer.

## Prevention:

### Control

To reduce the spread of disease, people with mumps should be excluded from child care, school or work until five days after the onset of swelling or until the swelling disappears (whichever is sooner).

### Immunisation

There is a safe and effective vaccine for preventing mumps infection. Since the introduction of an effective mumps vaccine, there has been a marked decline in the number of cases of mumps in Australia.

The mumps vaccination is offered free of charge as part of a combined measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine for all Australian children as part of the National Immunisation Program Schedule. Single dose mumps vaccine is not available in Australia.

The National Immunisation Program Schedule recommends immunisation against mumps for all Australian children at 12 months (first dose) and 18 months of age (second dose). To ensure protection against the disease, it is important that your child receives all recommended doses of the vaccine at the recommended times.

Like all medications, vaccines may have side effects. Most side effects are minor, last a short time and do not lead to any long-term problems. Possible side effects of the MMR vaccine may include discomfort where the injection was given, fever, a non-infectious rash, drowsiness and tiredness. If side effects occur, they usually come on seven to 10 days after immunisation and last two or three days. MMRV vaccine may result in a rash with a small number of raised bumps at the injection site or occasionally elsewhere. More serious side effects are extremely rare but can include severe allergic reactions. Contact your immunisation provider if you or your child has a reaction following vaccination which you consider serious or unexpected.

## Help and assistance:

For further information please contact your local doctor, community health centre, or nearest [public health unit](https://www.health.qld.gov.au/system-governance/contact-us/contact/public-health-units/default.asp) (<https://www.health.qld.gov.au/system-governance/contact-us/contact/public-health-units/default.asp>).

## Related Content

- [Having a vaccination: what to expect](#) (/HealthConditions/2/Infections-Parasites/192/Immunisation-Vaccination/732/Having-a-vaccination-what-to-expect)
- [Measles fact sheet](#) (/HealthConditions/2/Infections-Parasites/41/Viral-Infections/402/Measles)
- [Rubella \(German measles\) fact sheet](#) (/HealthConditions/2/Infections-Parasites/41/Viral-Infections/742/Rubella-German-measles)

## Other Resources

- [13 HEALTH](http://www.health.qld.gov.au/13health/) (<http://www.health.qld.gov.au/13health/>) (13 43 25 84)
- [Queensland Health immunisation](https://www.health.qld.gov.au/public-health/topics/immunisation/default.asp) (<https://www.health.qld.gov.au/public-health/topics/immunisation/default.asp>)
- [Immunise Australia](http://immunise.health.gov.au/) (<http://immunise.health.gov.au/>) (call 1800 671 811)

## References

Heymann, D. (Ed). Control of Communicable Diseases Manual, 19th edition. American Public Health Association: Washington, 2008.

National Health and Medical Research Council. The Australian Immunisation Handbook, 10th edition.