

March 26, 2019

Dear Parent/Guardian,

In the past few weeks, you may have heard about mumps at a college in Philadelphia. You may have some questions about mumps and whether your child could have a chance of getting mumps.

Mumps is a virus that can spread between people. The virus spreads when someone who is sick coughs, sneezes or talks close to you. We have not yet seen mumps cases spread from the college to our schools. However, there are some main things that we can do to make sure that our schools stay safe and healthy.

The best way to not get the mumps, is to get two MMR shots. The MMR shot is usually given to babies 12-15 months old and again to children 4-6 years old. If your child has not gotten 2 doses of the MMR shot, now is the time to get them up to date. The MMR shot also protects against another important viral illness that is causing outbreaks: measles. There are measles outbreaks in many communities here in the U.S. and in many countries around the world.

Please take this time to look at your child's shot records and make sure they are up to date with MMR. **All shots required for school** and recommended by your child's doctor should be given. Shots required for school are a very important way to help keep your children and our community healthy. Every student must have their shots up to date. This is the law.

The school staff will be following the steps below to keep our students safe and healthy:

- Review student shot records to ensure that students are up-to-date on ALL shots. Any student who is not up-to-date should be given their shots as soon as possible. Contact your school nurse if you do not know where to go to get shots for your child.
- Ask students and staff to always cover their mouth and nose with a tissue or sleeve whenever coughing or sneezing.
- If there is a mumps case found at school, any child with mumps will not be allowed in school for 5 days from the time their symptoms began. Students who did not get the shots may not come to school for up to 25 days. These students are more likely to get sick and spread the virus to others.

Thank you for your understanding. Please contact your school nurse with any questions or concerns.

Certified School Nurse

Telephone Number

cc: School Principals and Assistant Superintendents

MUMPS

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

What is mumps?

Mumps is a vaccine-preventable illness that is caused by the mumps virus.



What are the symptoms?

Symptoms of mumps include swollen salivary glands (parotitis), fever, headache, muscle aches, tiredness, and loss of appetite. These symptoms start 12-25 days after a person is exposed to the virus. Most people with mumps get better within 7-10 days. However, some persons may have mumps complications including: inflammation of the testicles (orchitis) in males who have reached puberty, inflammation of the ovaries (oophoritis) and/or breast (mastitis) in females who have reached puberty, meningitis and deafness.

How does mumps spread?

Mumps is spread when a sick person coughs, sneezes or talks. Individuals with mumps can spread the virus from 2 days before until 5 days after they develop parotitis.

Who is at risk of developing mumps?

Individuals who have not had two doses of the Measles, Mumps, and Rubella (MMR) vaccine or have not had mumps disease are at higher risk for getting the illness. There have been recent outbreaks among college students.

How is mumps diagnosed and treated?

Laboratory tests are the only sure way to diagnose mumps. There is no specific treatment. Individuals who are ill with mumps should get plenty of rest, drink fluids and take medication to relieve symptoms of mumps like headache and muscle aches.

What should I do if I think I have mumps?

If you have signs and symptoms of mumps it is important to stay home for five days from the start of symptoms, especially parotitis, so that you won't spread the virus to others. Contact your doctor if symptoms continue or more serious complications begin.

How is mumps prevented?

The best way to prevent mumps is to get two doses of the MMR vaccine. Vaccine is usually given to infants 12-15 months old and again to children between 4-6 years of age. Anyone who has not been vaccinated should get the MMR vaccine. Even if you have already received two doses, a third MMR can be given to those at-risk during an outbreak.

Mumps can also be prevented by these actions:

- Have person's ill with mumps stay home from school / work for 5 days after their glands swell and avoid close contact with household contacts / roommates.
- Always cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve when you sneeze and cough.
- Wash your hands with soap or alcohol-based hand sanitizers, especially before eating or touching your face.
- Do not share drinking glasses or eating utensils with others.

* For more information about mumps, please visit the following resource:

<https://www.cdc.gov/mumps/>

For more information:

- Contact your doctor.
- Refer to <http://www.phila.gov/Health/>
- Contact the Philadelphia Department of Public Health, Division of Disease Control at

215-685-6740.



Updated: 2/28/19