Mumps

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What is mumps?

Mumps is a contagious disease caused by a virus. It spreads easily through coughing and sneezing. There is no cure for mumps, and it can cause long-term health problems. The MMR vaccine protects against mumps.

What are the symptoms of mumps?

Mumps usually causes the following

- Fever
- Headache
- Muscle aches
- Tiredness
- Loss of appetite (not wanting to eat)
- Swollen glands under the ears or jaw

These symptoms last 7 to 10 days.

Some people with mumps have no symptoms. Others feel sick but do not have swollen glands.

How serious is mumps?

Most children infected with mumps recover fully, but the disease can occasionally cause serious, lasting problems. These include meningitis (infection of the covering of the brain and spinal cord) and deafness. In rare cases, mumps is deadly.

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. Children with mumps should stay home from school or child care settings for at least 5 days to avoid spreading the disease to others.

What is the MMR vaccine?

The MMR vaccine is a shot that combines vaccines for three diseases—measles, *mumps*, and rubella. The mumps vaccine protects children by preparing their bodies to fight the mumps virus. Almost all children (9 children out of 10) who get two doses of the MMR vaccine will be protected from mumps.

Benefits of the MMR vaccine

- Saves lives.
- Protects young children from serious disease.
- Keeps others safe.

Side effects of the MMR vaccine

- The most common side effects are usually mild and include the following:
  - Fever in 1 out of 6 people.
  - Mild rash in 1 out of 20 people.
- Swollen glands in the cheeks or neck in very few people.
- Fever high enough to cause a seizure (jerking or staring) occurs in 1 out of 3,000 people. These seizures do not cause any long-term harm.
- Temporary joint pain and stiffness (mostly in teens and adults).
- Serious allergic reaction to the MMR vaccine occurs in fewer than 1 in 1 million people.

When should my child get the MMR vaccine?

Children usually get two doses of the MMR vaccine at the following ages for best protection:

- The first dose at 12 through 15 months; and
- The second dose at 4 through 6 years old.

They can get MMR at the same time as other vaccines.

Why should my child get the MMR vaccine?

Getting your child the MMR vaccine protects him or her against mumps (and two other very contagious diseases: measles and rubella). It also helps stop the spread of disease in the community. The more people get the MMR vaccine, the smaller the chance of a mumps outbreak.

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Is the MMR vaccine safe?

The MMR vaccine is very safe, and it is effective at preventing mumps (as well as measles and rubella). Vaccines, like any medicine, can have side effects. Most children who get the MMR vaccine have no side effects. Those that do occur are typically very mild, like a fever or rash.

If my child does not get the MMR vaccine, will he or she get mumps?

Children who have not had the MMR vaccine and are exposed to mumps could get sick.

Before the MMR vaccine, mumps made about 200,000 people sick each year in the U.S. That number has dropped dramatically since the vaccine was introduced in 1967.

Mumps outbreaks occurred in the United States in 2006 and 2009, making thousands of people sick. If vaccination rates were lower, these outbreaks would have been much larger.

Is the MMR vaccine linked with autism?

No, many large and reliable studies of MMR vaccine have been done in the United States and other countries. None of these studies have found a link between autism and the MMR vaccine.

There are a couple of reasons why people believe autism is linked to vaccination. The first is because sometimes signs of autism don't appear until around the age the MMR vaccine is given. If a child is diagnosed shortly after getting vaccinations, this may seem like cause and effect.

Another reason some people think MMR is linked to autism is because of a study published in 1998 from the United Kingdom. One of the authors claimed that the MMR vaccine could contribute to the development of autism. That study got a lot of attention in the news. Since 1998, 10 out of 13 of the study's authors have withdrawn their support of the study, and the journal has retracted it.

Where can I learn more about the MMR vaccine?

To learn more about MMR or other vaccines, talk to your child's doctor.

Call **800-CDC-INFO** (800-232-4636) or go to ***http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines*** and check out the following resources:

- Mumps—Vaccine Q & A for Parents: ***http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd-vac/mumps/vac-faqs.htm***
- Infant Immunizations FAQs: ***http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents/parent-questions.html***
- Vaccines website for parents: ***http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents***

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, American Academy of Family Physicians, and American Academy of Pediatrics strongly recommend all children receive the MMR vaccine according to the recommended schedule.