

DRAFT: MUMPS PUBLIC FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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## **DESCRIPTION OF MUMPS**

### ***What is mumps?***

Mumps is a disease that is caused by the mumps virus. It spreads easily through coughing and sneezing. Mumps can cause fever, headache, body aches, fatigue and inflammation of the salivary (spit) glands, which can lead to swelling of the cheeks and jaws.

### ***Who gets mumps?***

Mumps is a common childhood disease, but adults can also get mumps. While vaccination reduces the chances of getting ill considerably, even those fully immunized can get the disease.

### ***How do people get mumps?***

Mumps is spread from person to person. When an infected person talks, coughs or sneezes, the virus is released into the air and enters another person's body through the nose, mouth or throat. People can also become sick if they eat food or use utensils, cups or other objects that have come into contact with the mucus or saliva (spit) from an infected person.

### ***What are the symptoms of mumps?***

The most common symptoms include:

- Fever
- Headache
- Muscle aches
- Tiredness
- Loss of appetite
- Swollen and tender salivary glands under the ears on one or both sides (parotitis)

### ***How long does it take for symptoms to appear?***

The incubation period is the time between exposure to an infectious disease and the appearance of the first signs or symptoms. The average incubation period for mumps is 16-18 days, with a range of 12-25 days. Fever may persist for 3-4 days and parotitis, when present, usually lasts 7-10 days.

Up to one third of individuals who get mumps have very mild or no symptoms, and therefore do not know they were infected with mumps.

### ***How long is someone with mumps infectious?***

The infectious period is the time period during which an infected person can spread the disease to others. Persons with mumps are usually considered most infectious from 1-2 days before onset of symptoms, until 5 days after onset of parotitis (inflammation of the salivary glands).

### ***Are there complications with a mumps virus infection?***

In children, mumps is usually a mild disease. Adults may have more serious disease and more complications. More than half of the deaths due to mumps happen among people over 19 years of age. Although severe complications due to mumps are rare, the following complications can still occur:

- Swelling of the brain or of the tissue lining the brain and spinal cord (encephalitis/meningitis)
- Swelling of the testes (orchitis)
- Swelling of the ovaries (oophoritis) or breasts (mastitis)
- Miscarriage
- Deafness, usually permanent

### ***How is mumps diagnosed?***

Mumps is diagnosed by a combination of symptoms and physical signs and laboratory confirmation of the virus, as not all cases develop characteristic parotitis and not all cases of parotitis are caused by mumps.

### ***What is the treatment for mumps?***

There is no “cure” for mumps, only supportive treatment (bed rest, fluids and fever reduction). Most cases will recover on their own.

If someone becomes very ill, he/she should seek medical attention. The ill person should call the doctor in advance so that he/she doesn't have to sit in the waiting room for a long time and possibly infect other patients.

### ***How can mumps be prevented?***

Getting vaccinated against mumps is the best way to prevent the disease. This vaccine is included in the combination measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) and measles-mumps-rubella-varicella (MMRV) vaccines.

### ***Where can I get a mumps vaccination in Louisiana?***

- Your private health care provider
- Your student health center
- Most community pharmacies
- If you are uninsured, call a public health unit

### ***In addition to vaccination, how else can we prevent mumps?***

Some additional things people can do to help prevent the spread of mumps include:

- Stay at home for 5 days after symptoms begin; avoid school or work settings.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
- Don't share eating utensils or food.
- Clean surfaces that are frequently touched (such as toys, doorknobs, tables, counters, etc.) with soap and water or with cleaning wipes regularly.
- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand cleaner.

For additional information and materials on proper handwashing techniques, please visit the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

### ***If I think I have been exposed to mumps, what should I do?***

If you feel you have been exposed to mumps, you should take extra care to monitor for the signs and symptoms (low grade fever, fatigue, and swollen jaw/cheek) for several weeks following the possible exposure. Take extra precautions during this time to practice good hand and cough hygiene, and do not share utensils, drinks, etc.

If ANY of these symptoms develop, even mild, you should contact your health care provider or student health center immediately and stay isolated from others.

Some students may be excluded from school if they are not fully vaccinated:

- Students who have had one MMR vaccination in their lifetime should get a second MMR vaccine and be allowed to remain in school.
- Students who have never received a MMR vaccine and with no other evidence of mumps immunity should immediately begin the vaccination series. These students may be excluded from class until after they begin the vaccination series.

Potentially exposed students that have been exempted from mumps vaccination for medical, religious or other reasons should be excluded until the 26th day after the onset of parotitis in the last person with mumps in the affected school.

### ***Why do mumps outbreaks still occur?***

Outbreaks can still occur in highly-vaccinated U.S. communities, particularly in close-contact settings. In recent years, outbreaks have occurred in schools, colleges, and camps. However, high vaccination coverage helps limit the size, duration, and spread of mumps outbreaks. For more information on outbreaks, please visit <http://www.cdc.gov/mumps/outbreaks.html>

***I don't recall if I received the mumps vaccine. How do I locate official copies of my vaccination records?***

If you need official copies of vaccination records, or if you need to update your personal records, there are several places you can look:

- Ask parents or other caregivers if they have records of your childhood immunizations.
- Try looking through baby books or other saved documents from your childhood.
- Check with your high school or college health services for dates of any immunizations. Keep in mind that generally records are kept only for one to two years after students leave the system.
- Check with previous employers (including the military) that may have required immunizations.
- Check with your doctor or public health clinic. Keep in mind that vaccination records are maintained at doctors' offices for a limited number of years.
- Contact your state's health department. Some states have registries (Immunization Information Systems) that include adult vaccines. LINKS is the official immunization registry for Louisiana.

***I am not sure how many doses of MMR vaccine I received. Should I get vaccinated? Is it safe to receive an extra dose of MMR vaccine?***

Yes, you should get vaccinated. It is safe to receive another vaccine if you are unsure of your vaccination history. There is no evidence that adverse (unfavorable) reactions are increased when MMR is given to a person who is already immune to one or more of the components of the vaccine. Contact your health care provider for further information.

## **MUMPS VACCINATION**

***Can the vaccine cause mumps?***

No. While the vaccine is made from a live virus, it is attenuated, meaning it has been weakened. It can cause minor symptoms like fever, but it cannot cause mumps.

***Who should get the MMR vaccine?***

Children should get two doses of MMR vaccine:

- First dose: 12-15 months of age
- Second dose: 4-6 years of age (may be given earlier, if at least 28 days after the first dose)

Some infants younger than 12 months should get a dose of MMR if they are traveling out of the country. This dose will not count toward their routine series.

Some adults should also get a MMR vaccine. Generally, anyone 18 years of age or older who was born after 1957 should get at least one dose of MMR vaccine, unless they can show that they have had all three diseases covered by the vaccine (measles, mumps and rubella).

MMR vaccine may be given at the same time as other vaccines.

***Who should get the MMRV vaccine?***

Children between 1 and 12 years of age can get a "combination" vaccine called MMRV, which contains both MMR and varicella (chickenpox) vaccines.

Two doses of MMRV vaccine are recommended:

- The first dose at 12 through 15 months of age
- The second dose at 4 through 6 years of age

These are recommended ages. But children can get the second dose up through 12 years as long as it is at least 3 months after the first dose.

Children may also get these vaccines as two separate shots: MMR (measles, mumps and rubella) and varicella vaccines.

Anyone 13 or older who needs protection from these diseases should get MMR and varicella vaccines as separate shots.

MMRV may be given at the same time as other vaccines.

### ***Who should NOT receive a mumps vaccine?***

Anyone who experiences a severe allergic reaction (e.g., hives, swelling of the mouth or throat, difficulty breathing) following the first MMR/MMRV shot should not receive a second shot. Anyone who knows they are allergic to a vaccine component (gelatin, neomycin) should not receive this vaccine.

Pregnant women should not receive the MMR vaccine, and pregnancy should be avoided for four weeks following vaccination with MMR. While there is no evidence that the mumps vaccine causes fetal damage, women are advised not to receive the MMR vaccine during pregnancy as a safety precaution based on the theoretical possibility of a live vaccine causing disease.

Severely immunocompromised people should not be given MMR vaccine. Immunocompromised means a person is less capable of battling infections because of an immune response that is not properly functioning. This includes people with a variety of conditions, including congenital immunodeficiency, AIDS, leukemia, lymphoma, generalized malignancy, or those undergoing immunosuppressive therapy.

### ***Can individuals with an egg allergy receive a MMR vaccine?***

Yes, individuals with egg allergies can safely receive the vaccine. If you have any concerns, speak to your health care provider.

### ***How effective is the mumps vaccine?***

Two doses of mumps vaccine are 88% effective at preventing the disease; one dose is 78% effective.

### ***How safe is this vaccine?***

MMR is a very safe vaccine. Most side effects are mild and related to the measles or rubella components of the vaccine (fever, rash, temporary joint symptoms). A vaccine, like any medicine, is capable of

causing serious problems such as severe allergic reactions. However, the risk of MMR vaccine causing serious harm is extremely small.

***Does the MMR vaccine cause 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.

Some people may mistakenly 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 the article.

***Some people who have had both of the recommended MMR shots are still getting mumps. Does that mean that the vaccine is not effective?***

No, the mumps vaccine is effective. During outbreaks, we know that the people who have not been vaccinated against mumps have a much greater chance of getting mumps than those who are vaccinated. As with any vaccine, not everyone who is vaccinated will develop immunity and be protected. For the mumps vaccine, approximately 90% of people will be protected after receiving the recommended two vaccines but about 10% of individuals will not develop immunity and remain susceptible. So we expect that during an outbreak when many people are being exposed every day, some people will get the mumps.

## **SCHOOL SETTINGS**

***What are the requirements for mumps vaccination in school settings?***

LOUISIANA STATE LAW requires the following prior to school entry:

Preschool/kindergarten: two MMR shots, along with other required vaccines.

Sixth grade (11 -12 years of age): two MMR shots, in addition to other required vaccines.

Institutions of higher learning (college): two MMR shots, along with other required vaccines.

Some people may be exempt from these requirements.

***What is the guidance for staff in a school?***

Teachers and all staff should have their immune status verified. All staff should be educated on hygiene, prevention and signs and symptoms of disease.

***Should students without acceptable presumptive evidence of immunity be excluded from school?***

Schools can make the decision to exclude students in consultation with public health authorities. To assist with control of mumps outbreaks in schools and colleges, students with zero doses of MMR vaccine and with no other evidence of mumps immunity might be excluded from schools and colleges affected by a mumps outbreak or excluded from schools that are unaffected but deemed by local public health authorities to be at risk for transmission of disease. Excluded students can be readmitted immediately after they are vaccinated. Students who have been exempted from mumps vaccination for medical, religious, or other reasons might be excluded until the outbreak is over.

## **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

### ***Where can I get more information on mumps?***

- Your health care provider
- Centers for Disease Control & Prevention: [www.cdc.gov/mumps](http://www.cdc.gov/mumps)

This information is intended for educational purposes only and is not intended to replace consultation with a health care professional.