

COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO
HEAD START-PRESCHOOL SERVICES DEPARTMENT
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Mumps

What is mumps? It is an illness caused by a virus. It is rare today because most children are immunized against it. It can last one or two weeks with:

- Swollen painful glands under the jaw or cheeks
- Fever and headache

Although most children recover, it can cause inflammation of the brain and spinal cord (meningitis) and hearing loss. It can be dangerous for:

- *Pregnant women because it can cause miscarriage.*
- *Teen and adult men because it can cause sterility.*

How does mumps spread? It spreads by:

- Being in a room together, coughing, and sneezing
- Touching mucus from the nose or saliva
- Kissing on the lips
- Sharing food, eating utensils, and mouthed toys
- People who have had mumps or were immunized cannot catch it again.

When is mumps contagious?

- From seven days *before* until nine days *after* the start of swelling of the glands.
- After exposure, it takes two to three weeks to get sick.

How do I know if my child has mumps? If you see the symptoms, see your doctor immediately. Mumps is diagnosed by the typical symptoms and a special blood test.

What should I do if my child has mumps?

Treatment: Follow your doctor's recommendations:

- Help the child recover by encouraging rest, nutrition, and plenty of fluids to drink.

Keep the child home: until nine days after the start of swelling of the glands. Notify your Head Start program immediately.

To limit the spread:

- Immunize children against mumps at 12 to 15 months of age.
- Report cases of mumps to the local health department.
- Don't expose infants, children who have not been immunized, or pregnant women.
- Wipe noses with clean tissues, throw them away, and wash your hands.
- Cough and sneeze into your elbow and away from people.
- Don't share food, pacifiers, bottles, or toothbrushes. Wash eating utensils, drinking cups, and mouthed toys well between uses.
- Don't kiss children on the mouth.
- Open windows indoors and maximize outdoor play.