



**Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte**  
**Health Service Executive**  
**Mumps factsheet**

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***What is mumps?***

Mumps is a viral infection that is spread from person to person. It is a potentially serious disease for children and young adults and is very common in young children not vaccinated against it.

Symptoms of mumps infection include high temperature, headache, and swelling of cheek and jaw. Symptoms tend to decrease after one week and have usually resolved after 10 days. Children are most infectious from 2 days before to 5 days after onset of symptoms. Symptoms can develop from 14 to 25 days after exposure.

***Why should I be concerned about Mumps?***

Most healthy children get over mumps with no problems. There are, however, a number of complications that can happen with mumps. Meningitis (inflammation of the covering of the brain) can occur. Adults and boys are more at risk of this complication if they develop mumps. More rarely encephalitis (inflammation of the brain itself) and deafness can occur. In teenage boys and men Mumps can cause inflammation of the testicles (orchitis). Inflammation of the ovaries (oophoritis) in teenage girls is much less common. Mastitis (inflammation of the breast) has also been reported in females. Contrary to popular belief Mumps is not a frequent cause of infertility. Pancreatitis (inflammation of the pancreas) can also occur, although this is uncommon. Death is exceedingly rare. Mumps in early pregnancy has been associated with an increased risk of miscarriage.

***What should I do if I think my child has Mumps?***

If your child develops swelling of the cheeks and jaw line bring them to your doctor for examination. Your doctor will be able to tell you if it is Mumps and will advise you what to do. There is no specific treatment for Mumps. If your child is diagnosed with Mumps, to prevent the spread of Mumps to others, your child must stay at home from school and after school care **for 5 days after onset of symptoms.** [If your child has developed Mumps, please inform the creche manager]

***How can I stop Mumps spreading in the family?***

Anyone who has neither had Mumps nor received the Mumps vaccine should contact their doctor to discuss vaccination. MMR is safe and effective in preventing infection. The first dose of the MMR is usually given to children at 12 months of age, with a second dose given at 4-5 years of age. If your child is not fully up to date with their vaccines, please contact your GP to arrange vaccination.

Two doses of the MMR vaccine are required to give the best protection. There should be a gap of at least one month between the first and the second MMR vaccine – please discuss this further with your GP.

**Further information on mumps is available from:**

HSE Immunisation Guidelines website:  
<http://www.hpsc.ie/a-z/vaccinepreventable/mumps/>

Health Protection Surveillance Centre  
<http://www.hse.ie/eng/health/immunisation/hcpinfo/guidelines/>