

Facts about Mumps

Description

An acute viral illness caused by the mumps virus (Paramyxoviridae).

Symptoms

Fever, headache, muscle aches, tiredness, and loss of appetite; followed by swelling of salivary glands. The parotid salivary glands (which are located within your cheek, near your jaw line, below your ears) are most frequently affected.

Complications

Severe complications are rare. However, mumps can cause: Inflammation of the brain and/or tissue covering the brain and spinal cord (encephalitis/meningitis), inflammation of the testicles (orchitis), inflammation of the ovaries and/or breasts (oophoritis and mastitis), spontaneous abortion, or deafness (usually permanent).

Transmission

The mumps virus replicates in the upper respiratory tract and is spread through direct contact with respiratory secretions or saliva or through fomites. The infectious period or time that an infected person can transmit mumps to a non-infected person is from 3 days before symptoms appear to about 9 days after the symptoms appear. The incubation time, which is the period from when a person is exposed to virus to the onset of any symptoms, can vary from 16 to 18 days (range 12-25 days).

Diagnosis

Should be made by your physician and laboratory testing may be required.

Treatment

Currently, there is no specific treatment for mumps.

Prevention

The mumps vaccine, which is contained in the MMR (measles, mumps, and rubella) vaccine, can prevent this disease.
