



Mumps

- **Mumps** is an acute viral illness that causes fever, headache and usually painful swollen salivary glands, most commonly the parotid gland. Mumps often gives an appearance of swollen cheeks or jaws. Sometimes infection presents with other symptoms (such as meningitis, orchitis etc.)
- The **mumps virus is spread** from person to person by coughs and sneezes. It can also be transmitted through kissing and other direct contact with saliva. Usually close contact with a case is needed for transmission to take place.
- **Complications.**
Mumps infection after puberty may also cause painful inflammation of the
 - Testicles (called orchitis). Sterility after mumps occurs very rarely.
 - Ovaries (oophoritis) or inflammation of the breast tissue (mastitis).
 - Mumps may also rarely cause encephalitis, pancreatitis, arthritis, or inflammation of the kidneys. Deafness occurs in approximately 1 in 20,000 cases

• Prevention

Mumps can be prevented by immunisation with the MMR vaccine. This vaccine protects against three viral diseases- Measles, Mumps and Rubella. **MMR** is routinely used in the childhood immunisation programme. Students in colleges should contact their student health services for information about MMR vaccination

• MMR vaccination

- If you are **between the ages of 16 – 24 years of age** you probably only got one dose of MMR when you were in school. It is also possible that you never got any MMR vaccine*. Two doses of MMR are usually recommended to protect against mumps.
- **Entrants to college who are less than 25 years of age** - new entrants to colleges for the academic year 2008/2009 should check their MMR vaccination status before entering college. If they have not received two doses of MMR they should contact their GP and receive another dose of MMR. Students unsure of vaccination status should receive at least one dose of MMR.
- **Mumps case contacts** Anyone who shares accommodation or has been in close contact with someone who has mumps should speak with their GP – vaccination may be recommended.
- **MMR and Pregnancy** -MMR is not recommended in pregnant women. Women should avoid pregnancy for two months after vaccination. If you think you may be pregnant, speak with your doctor or student health service before getting the MMR.
- **Interval between MMR doses** – an interval of at least one month is recommended between the first and second dose of MMR.

*MMR use in Ireland

The MMR vaccine was first introduced into Ireland in 1988 for all children. Since then it has been offered to all children between 12-15 months of age. A second dose was introduced for school children, at 11-12 years of age in 1992. In 1999, the age for the second MMR dose was dropped to 4-5 years of age. This means that some teenagers and young adults who are 16 years of age and older only got one dose of MMR, or never got any dose (if they missed it when it was provided in school or by their GP). If you are not sure if you ever had MMR you should get one dose now and have another dose at least 1 month later.

For further information on mumps visit: <http://www.ndsc.ie/hpsc/A-Z/VaccinePreventable/Mumps/>