



STATE OF WASHINGTON

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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Keep Campers Safe from Mumps

June 2017

A message from the Washington State Department of Health to Summer Camp Directors:

Our state is currently experiencing a mumps outbreak. We have had nearly 900 cases since the start of the outbreak in October 2016. Children, teens, and adults need to make sure they are up to date with all recommended doses of MMR (measles, mumps, and rubella) vaccine for the best protection.

We want to alert you to the signs of mumps and what you can do to protect yourself, campers, and staff from this serious disease.

What is mumps?

Mumps is a contagious disease caused by a virus. It can happen any time of the year, and can cause long-term health problems, such as hearing loss and brain damage. It is mostly spread by coughing or sneezing, or other contact with saliva from someone who is infected. It is as contagious as flu. People with mumps usually are contagious before symptoms appear and for several days after, so those who are infected can spread it without realizing it. Adults are more likely than children to become very sick with mumps.

There is no treatment for mumps, but there is prevention in the form of a vaccine.

What are the symptoms?

Mumps symptoms typically include fever, headache, muscle aches, tiredness, and loss of appetite. Its most distinctive symptom is swelling of the cheeks, neck or jaw, though not everyone experiences this. Some people get no symptoms at all. The disease also can cause swelling of other glands, such as the testicles or ovaries. Symptoms of mumps generally last from one week to ten days.

People with these symptoms should be kept away from other campers and staff until they can be seen by a healthcare provider and evaluated for mumps.

How can I protect campers and staff?

- Send the included letter to parents/guardians of your campers, explaining the mumps outbreak and what they need to do to make sure they are protected. Please customize the letter for your organization only where indicated.

- Make sure you know if your staff and campers have been vaccinated.
- If you or your staff do not think you ever received the MMR vaccine, contact your healthcare provider as soon as possible to get immunized, or get a blood test.
- If you think a camper or staff member may have mumps, isolate them from others to prevent the disease from spreading. Have them get checked out by their healthcare provider.
- Tell people who have been or may have been exposed to mumps to contact their healthcare provider for advice.
- Remember the basics: Encourage campers and staff to cover their coughs and sneezes, and wash their hands frequently. Make sure they know it is important to tell you if they feel ill.
- Spread the word that vaccinating against mumps is important. Children are recommended to have one dose of MMR vaccine at 12-15 months old and a second dose at 4-6 years old. Anyone older than this with fewer than two doses should be encouraged to see their healthcare provider to see if they are fully protected. Those born before 1957 do not need to be vaccinated because they probably had mumps.

Where can campers and staff get vaccinated?

Washington provides all recommended vaccines at no cost for children through age 18. These vaccines are available from providers across the state. Providers may charge an office visit fee and an administration fee to give the vaccine. People who cannot afford the administration fee can ask to have it waived. Families who do not have a provider already can call the Family Health Hotline at 1-800-322-2588 or go to ParentHelp123.org to find a provider or immunization clinic.

To find your local health department, visit www.doh.wa.gov/AboutUs/PublicHealthSystem/LocalHealthJurisdictions

For more information, send an email to immunenurses@doh.wa.gov or visit the Washington State Department of Health at www.doh.wa.gov/mumps.

Sincerely,



Kathy Lofy, MD
State Health Officer

