

# Mumps

## Frequently Asked Questions



Revised November 15, 2017

The Hawaii State Department of Health (DOH) has been investigating an increasing number of cases of mumps infection statewide. The disease has been confirmed in children and adults, both vaccinated and unvaccinated.

### What can I do to prevent mumps?

The best way to prevent mumps is to get vaccinated. The MMR vaccine protects against measles, mumps, and rubella.

### **Routine MMR Vaccination Recommendations:**

- All children should receive two doses of MMR vaccine. The first dose is typically given at age 12–15 months and the second dose routinely at age 4–6 years.
- All adults born in 1957 or later should receive at least one dose of MMR vaccine (persons at high risk for exposure to mumps, including college students, health care workers, and international travelers, should receive two doses).

### **Outbreak MMR Vaccination Recommendations:**

During the mumps outbreak in Hawaii, in addition to the routine vaccination recommendations above, **adolescents** (aged 10-19 years) **and adults** (born in 1957 or later), should receive **an additional MMR vaccine dose now**.

The outbreak dose of MMR vaccine is recommended, **regardless of:**

- Previous age-appropriate vaccination; or
- Documentation of a blood test showing immunity to mumps

MMR vaccine doses should be separated by at least 4 weeks. A person should receive no more than 3 doses of mumps-containing vaccine.

Before vaccines were available, nearly everyone was infected with mumps during childhood. The majority of people born before 1957 are likely to have been infected with mumps and therefore are presumed to be protected. During the mumps outbreak, persons born before 1957 who are unsure if they had mumps disease previously should talk to their healthcare provider about vaccination.

### What else can I do to prevent mumps?

In addition to getting vaccinated, practice good health habits including covering the nose and mouth with a tissue or arm when sneezing or coughing, and frequent and proper hand washing.

I remember receiving the MMR vaccine as a child, but I can't find my record. Is it harmful to receive the MMR vaccine again?

Self-reported doses of MMR vaccine without written documentation should not be accepted as valid. Persons without adequate documentation should be considered as “not vaccinated” and should receive age-appropriate vaccination. In general, although it is not ideal, receiving extra doses of vaccine poses no medical problem.

Can a person who has received 2 doses of MMR vaccine still get mumps?

Yes. While the best way to prevent mumps is to get vaccinated, no vaccine is 100% effective. The MMR vaccine prevents most, but not all, cases of mumps. Two doses of vaccine are 88% effective at protecting against mumps and one dose is 78% effective. This means if 100 people all received two doses of vaccine, 12 of them will still be able to get infected because, unlike the others, their immune system didn't recognize the vaccine and so won't protect them from infection.

What is the maximum number of doses of mumps-containing vaccine a person should receive?

A person should receive no more than 3 doses of mumps-containing vaccine. Although receiving extra doses of vaccine poses no medical problem, there is no data to support additional doses.

How many doses are recommended for healthcare workers?

Healthcare workers and other persons at high risk for exposure to mumps, including college students and international travelers, should routinely receive two doses of MMR vaccine. During the outbreak, all adolescents (aged 10-19 years) and adults (born in 1957 or later), including healthcare workers, are recommended to receive an additional dose of MMR vaccine, regardless of a positive mumps titer.

How is mumps spread?

Mumps is spread through saliva or mucus via coughing, sneezing or talking, and also through physical contact with contaminated objects or surfaces.

Persons with mumps are infectious several days *before* they develop swollen glands, making it challenging to avoid exposure to mumps in close spaces such as schools and offices.

What are the symptoms of mumps?

The most common symptoms include fever, headache, muscle aches, tiredness, loss of appetite, and swollen and tender salivary glands in front of the ears on one or both sides (parotitis). Some people who get mumps have very mild or no symptoms. Others may feel sick but will not have swollen glands.

Symptoms usually start 16–18 days after infection with the virus, but the onset can range from 12–25 days.

Most people with mumps recover completely in a few weeks.

What should I do if I think I have mumps?

Consult your health care provider and **remain at home to avoid spreading the disease to others** until cleared for return to work or school. According to Hawaii State Law, a person with mumps may not attend school, work, or travel for 9 days after the start of swollen salivary glands.

What if I don't have health insurance or a healthcare provider?

For assistance, call Aloha United Way 2-1-1.

For more information about mumps, visit

[http://health.hawaii.gov/docd/disease\\_listing/mumps/](http://health.hawaii.gov/docd/disease_listing/mumps/).