



# NEWS



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
September 4, 2015

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## **A Fourth Mumps Case Confirmed in McLean County** *McLean County now in an outbreak status*

BLOOMINGTON – As of September 4<sup>th</sup>, test results have confirmed that McLean County has four confirmed mumps cases prompting the Illinois Department of Public Health to declare the recent mumps activity an outbreak. The health department is continuing to trace contacts and investigate cases, in addition to working closely with local medical providers. Those confirmed with mumps infection range in age from 8 months to 19 years.

“It is likely that we will see more positive cases before the outbreak is contained, which is why we are continuing to encourage unvaccinated residents and those who spend time in large group settings, to make sure they are up-to-date on their MMR vaccinations,” says Walt Howe, director of the McLean County Health Department; adding, “Certainly if anyone is experiencing any symptoms of mumps infection they should isolate themselves and contact their healthcare provider immediately.”

Mumps is a viral infection that causes swelling in the salivary glands near the jaw. It is a contagious disease spread through mucous droplets from the nose or throat of an infected person. The virus is most commonly spread by:

1. coughing, sneezing, and kissing
2. touching surfaces with droplets on them and then touching your own mouth or nose

The symptoms of mumps include fever, headache, swollen salivary glands, and malaise. Some cases also cause swelling of ovaries or testicles and rare complications include deafness, meningitis, spontaneous abortion and sterility in men. These symptoms generally appear 12 to 25 days after becoming infected. Individuals are most infectious during the two days prior to developing symptoms until five days after the symptoms appear.

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Residents are also again reminded that good health practices are an additional way to help prevent the spread of mumps. Specifically the following five good health practices are very important:

1. Avoid sharing drinks, eating utensils, and cigarettes with others.
2. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze and put the used tissue in a trash can. If you do not have as tissue, cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve or elbow, not your hands. Wash your hands after handling used tissues.
3. Wash your hands well and frequently with soap and water. If soap and water is not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
4. Clean frequently touched surfaces (doorknobs, tables, counters) regularly with soap and water or with cleaning wipes.
5. Avoid close contact with individuals who are sick.

Says Howe, “Our biggest message to the McLean County community remains: continue to be vigilant by practicing good health practices and certainly if you are not current on your MMR vaccinations, obtain the vaccine from your healthcare provider, or the health department as soon as possible.”

The Illinois Department of Public Health continues to test symptomatic individuals and the health department is available to provide MMR vaccinations those that do not have the two required doses of the vaccine. To schedule an MMR vaccination at the McLean County Health Department, call 309-888-5435. The health department accepts both private and public health insurance. Additional information about mumps can be found at, <http://1.usa.gov/1LOrnnQ>

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