



NEWS



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Bloomington High School Seeing Increase in Mumps Cases

BLOOMINGTON – The McLean County Health Department has added Bloomington High School (BHS) to the list of sites with increased mumps activity. BHS now has three or more cases of mumps linked to the school. Letters are being sent to all students, teachers, and staff alerting them to the situation and explaining what they can do to protect themselves from contracting the virus.

As of October 1st, test results have confirmed 28 positive mumps cases in McLean County, with additional tests pending. Individuals with confirmed mumps virus tests remain in the 15 to 54 age range, with the biggest concentration those between the ages of 15 and 20.

With the arrival of fall it may become more challenging to recognize onset symptoms of mumps. Explains Melissa Graven, Communicable Disease Program Supervisor, “As we enter into flu season it might be difficult to know if symptoms such as headache, low-grade fever, or achiness are due to infection with mumps or the flu. What we ask is that individuals experiencing any of these symptoms stay home from school or work. If it’s mumps, the symptoms will typically progress to swelling of the salivary glands around the lower portion of the face and upper portion of the neck. Anyone who develops swollen salivary glands, testicles, or ovaries should contact their healthcare provider right away to get tested for mumps.”

Preventative steps everyone should be taking to avoid getting the mumps include the following good health practices:

1. Make sure you are up-to-date on two (2) doses of the measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccine.
2. Avoid close contact with individuals who are sick.
3. Avoid sharing drinks, eating utensils, and cigarettes with others.
4. Wash your hands well and frequently with soap and water. If soap and water is not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
5. Clean frequently touched surfaces (doorknobs, tables, desks, counters) regularly with soap and water or with cleaning wipes.

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The McLean County Health Department is working together with county schools and post-secondary schools, area healthcare providers, as well as the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to help curb the spread of mumps in the community.

The Illinois Department of Public Health continues to test symptomatic individuals and the health department is available to provide MMR vaccinations to those that do not have the two (2) required doses of the vaccine. Anyone unsure of their vaccination status can also make an appointment at the health department, or with their healthcare provider, to have a mumps titer test done to test for immunity to mumps. To schedule an MMR vaccination or a titer test 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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