



# NEWS



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## **Health Department Seeing Rise in McLean County Mumps Cases**

*Positive cases now reported in the general community*

BLOOMINGTON – A recent rise in confirmed mumps cases not tied to the previously reported outbreak at Illinois State University in March is prompting the McLean County Health Department to alert residents of the presence of mumps in the community and strongly encourage anyone experiencing symptoms of mumps to isolate from other people until they can contact their healthcare provider to be tested for the virus. Protection against mumps is critical to contain the potential spread of mumps in the county making it important for individuals with mumps to isolate to avoid exposing others to the virus and those who are not up-to-date with their MMR vaccinations to make vaccination a priority. “We need to protect our most vulnerable populations – those who cannot get measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccine because of age or illness – from exposure to mumps virus,” explains Melissa Graven, Communicable Disease Supervisor at the health department.

As of June 5, the McLean County Health Department has 5 confirmed cases of mumps that are not connected to the March outbreak. Communicable disease investigators at the health department are tracing contacts and working with infected individuals to notify close contacts of their potential exposure to the virus. Those confirmed with mumps infection range in age from 22 to 52 years.

Residents at highest risk of getting mumps are those who have not received any doses of MMR vaccine and those who have received only one dose of MMR. Infants and children under the age of one are too young to receive MMR vaccine. Anyone unsure of their vaccination status should talk with their healthcare provider to determine their vaccination status or arrange to have a blood test (mumps titer test) to see if they show immunity to mumps. MMR vaccinations and titer test are also available at the health department.

“It is important for people to continue to get tested for mumps if they have symptoms and for health providers to report any case in which mumps is suspected as soon as possible to the McLean County Health Department, to help bring an end to the spread of the disease,” says Graven.

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In addition to being up-to-date on the MMR vaccine, residents are reminded that good health practices are an additional way to help prevent the spread of mumps. Good health hygiene includes:

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

The time between exposure to the disease and the appearance of the first symptoms of illness for mumps is between 12 days and 25 days after exposure and infection with the virus. Individuals with mumps are most infectious during the two days prior to the onset of symptoms and until 5 days after the symptoms appear. Symptoms of mumps include fever, headache, swollen salivary glands, and malaise. Some cases also cause swelling of the ovaries or testicles and in rare cases complications including deafness, meningitis, spontaneous abortion and sterility in men can occur.

Mumps is a contagious viral infection that is spread through mucous droplets from the nose or throat of an infected person. The virus is most commonly spread by coughing, sneezing, kissing, and touching surfaces with droplets on them and then touching your own mouth or nose.

The McLean County Health Department is working together with area healthcare providers and the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) to help curb the spread of mumps in the community. Individuals interested in scheduling an MMR vaccination or a titer test at the McLean County Health Department, can call 309-888-5435 for an appointment. The health department accepts both private and public health insurance. Additional information about mumps can be found at: <http://1.usa.gov/1LOrnQ>.

The McLean County Health Department is dedicated to the prevention and control of disease through health promotion, early intervention, and health protection within the county. More information about health department services can be found at: <http://health@mcleancountyil.gov> and remember to “Like” McLeanHealth on Facebook, or follow McLeanHealth on Twitter, for public health news and tips affecting you.

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