



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

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MUMPS

Dear Parent or Guardian:

There has been a case of mumps in your child's school and your child may have been exposed. It is recommended that all children have 2 doses of MMR (measles, mumps and rubella) vaccine, one at 12-15 months and a second at 4-5 years. If your child has received 2 doses of MMR, the chance of him/her developing mumps is low. If, however, your child has not been fully vaccinated then there is a greater risk that he/she might get mumps.

What is Mumps?

- Mumps is a viral infection.
- Symptoms include fever, headache and swelling of the cheek and jaw.
- Rare complications include meningitis (inflammation of the covering of the brain), encephalitis (inflammation of the brain), and deafness.
- In males, mumps can cause inflammation of the testicles (orchitis) but, contrary to popular belief, it is not a frequent cause of infertility.
- The mumps virus is spread from person to person by coughs and sneezes. It can also be spread through direct contact with saliva or discharges from the nose and throat.
- People with mumps are infectious for up to 7 days before the cheek swelling appears and remain infectious for up to 5 days after symptoms develop.
- Symptoms develop 12 to 25 days after exposure to a case of mumps.

What should I do now?

If your child has not received the 2 doses of MMR then you should bring them to your GP for vaccination. The vaccine may not protect them if they have been exposed this time but it will reduce their risk of getting mumps if they are exposed again.

What should I do if my child develops mumps?

- Contact your GP who will be able to tell you if your child has mumps and will advise you what to do. There is no specific treatment for mumps.
- Your child must stay at home for 5 days after the symptoms develop. They should also avoid any other social settings during this time.
- Frequent hand washing, especially after contact with secretions from the nose or throat, will be very important for everyone in the family.
- Anyone in the family who was born after 1977 and who has never had mumps nor received 2 doses of the MMR vaccine should go to their family doctor to discuss vaccination.

Thank you for giving this your attention. Please bring this letter with you if you go to your GP for vaccination or advice.

Yours faithfully,

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