

PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY: MUMPS

Kent State University Health Services and the health departments of the City of Kent and Portage County have recently become aware of confirmed mumps at the Kent State University –Kent Campus. Therefore, University Health Services, is advising all students and university employees that it is likely that the mumps virus is circulating in our area and to be aware of signs and symptoms of the virus.

What is mumps?

Mumps is a viral illness characterized by fever, body aches, headaches, fatigue, loss of appetite and swollen glands, especially the salivary glands in front of the ear (parotids). While most cases do not lead to serious complications, some patients may develop viral meningitis (inflammation of the brain covering) or orchitis (testicular inflammation). Very rarely, deafness or sterility may result. Mumps is common during winter and spring months.

How does mumps spread?

Mumps is contagious and is most commonly spread by coughing and sneezing. Patients are contagious from two days before until five days after their symptoms develop. Symptoms usually appear 14-18 days after exposure, although it may vary from 14 to 25 days. *Ohio law requires patients with mumps to be isolated for five days after the onset of symptoms.*

What is the treatment for mumps?

There is no specific treatment for mumps other than rest, fluids and medicine for the symptoms of pain and fever.

How can mumps be prevented?

In the United States, the mumps vaccine is given in combination with measles and rubella (MMR) at age 1, with a second dose prior to kindergarten entry. After two doses of vaccine, 80-90 percent of people will develop immunity to mumps. While vaccination does not protect everyone from developing mumps, individuals who do get mumps after being vaccinated are at lower risk of complications. Maintaining a high rate of immunizations in the community helps to prevent the spread of mumps.

What should I do to protect myself against mumps?

- Verify your immunization status. If you have not already done so, locate your immunization records and submit them to University Health Services via fax to 330-672-2272, email to immunizations@kent.edu or drop them off at the DeWeese Health Center.
- If you have not been immunized against mumps (MMR vaccine), or have only received one dose of the vaccine, call University Health Services at 330-672-2322 or the Portage County Health District at 330-296-9919, ext. 119 to schedule an immunization appointment.
- Wash your hands or use sanitizer frequently, cover your coughs and sneezes, and don't share drinks or utensils.

What should I do if I become ill with symptoms of mumps?

- If you develop symptoms of mumps, call University Health Services at 330-672-2322 for an appointment to confirm the diagnosis. Stay home from class, work and social events for five

days after symptoms begin. Limit contact with babies and those with weakened immune systems.

- Visit the University Health Services website for further information at www.kent.edu/uhs or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) at www.cdc.gov/mumps.

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