



State of Maryland
Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services Systems

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To: EMS Clinicians

From: Timothy Chizmar, MD
State EMS Medical Director

Date: February 18, 2026

Re: **Mumps: What You Need to Know**

Recently, the Maryland Department of Health has noted an increase in mumps cases. There have been 14 cases reported in Maryland thus far in 2026, compared to 4 cases in all of 2025. These recent cases have been occurring primarily in adults in the Baltimore metropolitan area. However, mumps can occur in any age group, and cases may increase throughout the state.

Since we do not encounter mumps frequently, here are a few reminders about its clinical presentation and associated precautions:

- **Signs and Symptoms:** Mumps is a viral illness that usually involves fever as well as pain, tenderness, and swelling in the salivary glands of the cheek (parotitis) and jaw area. Swelling may occur on one side of the face or both sides, and usually lasts 3-7 days, though it can last up to 10 days.
- **Mode of Transmission:** Mumps is spread through direct contact with saliva or respiratory droplets from the mouth, nose or throat. Patients are considered to be infectious 2 days before, and up to 5 days after, the onset of parotitis. The period of time from exposure to development of symptoms (incubation period) may be as long as 2-3 weeks.
- **Potential complications:** Mumps complications include: meningitis, encephalitis, pancreatitis, hearing loss, and swelling of the testicles, ovaries or breasts. Complications are less frequent in vaccinated patients.
- **Precautions:** If you encounter a patient with suspected mumps, please take droplet and standard precautions. All EMS clinicians should use a surgical mask, gown, gloves, and eye protection. The patient should be asked to wear a surgical mask.
- **Vaccination:** Vaccination is the most effective way to protect against mumps. The measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine is important to prevent measles as well. Adults who have never received the MMR vaccine and were born after 1957 should receive 2 doses, 4 weeks apart. Children should receive the MMR through their pediatrician according to the childhood immunization schedule.

If you believe that you have been exposed to a patient with mumps, please contact your department infection control officer or leadership for further guidance.

For more information, please see: <https://health.maryland.gov/phpa/IDEHASharedDocuments/MDH-Mumps-Guidelines.pdf>. Please contact the Office of the Medical Director (410-706-0880; tchizmar@miemss.org) if you have any questions regarding this memo.