

News from the Nurse

Dear students, parents/guardians, and staff members:

This letter is to inform you about Anchorage's mumps outbreak. We have had 13 confirmed cases over the past two months.

Mumps is a contagious viral illness. Mumps symptoms often include puffy cheeks or a tender swollen jaw, fever, tiredness, and/or muscle aches. Some people do not have any symptoms.

Mumps is spread by coughing, sneezing, talking, saliva, touching contaminated surfaces and sharing cups and utensils. Infected people without symptoms may still be able to pass it to others. The time from being infected with the virus to developing symptoms is **usually 14-18 days**.



The most effective way to prevent mumps is vaccination. Make sure your MMR vaccinations are up to date. While vaccination is the best protection against mumps infection, it is not 100% effective; **some vaccinated individuals can be infected with mumps**. If you are unsure of your or your child's vaccination status or if your child has not received the vaccine or has only received one dose, ask your healthcare provider.

If you, your child or another family member has mumps symptoms, please **contact your healthcare provider**. Because mumps is contagious, your provider may not want you to come to the clinic and sit in the waiting room. Anyone diagnosed with mumps or suspected of having mumps should **stay home for the five days** after onset of puffy cheeks. If you or your healthcare provider has any questions please call the Municipality of Anchorage, Department of Health at 343-4799 or the State of Alaska, Section of Epidemiology at 269-8000.

Please find attached a Mumps Fact Sheet for your convenience. Thank you for your attention.

Annette Johansen, M.Ed., BSN, RN, NCSN
Steller Secondary School Nurse