

Guide to Managing Mumps in Workplaces

Mumps is a contagious viral illness spread through coughing, sneezing and talking via droplets. It is not as infectious as measles, but it is easily spread. Mumps can have some serious complications for some people; inflammation of the testicles (1 in 4 people) and inflammation of the brain's lining (meningitis - 1 in 7 people) and a small chance of miscarriage for non-immune pregnant women, for instance.

Actions to take if an employee has suspected mumps.

1. If any staff at your workplace is suspected of having mumps, they should be sent home until they are seen by a doctor. They can return only if cleared of mumps. You do not need to do anything else unless **mumps is confirmed** by a doctor or through a test.
2. If you have two or more suspected cases of mumps at your workplace please phone Auckland Regional Public Health Service (ARPHS) on 623 4600 for support and advice.
3. **If mumps is confirmed**, the person should not return to your organisation until after the end of the fifth day after the swelling started (day 0 is the day the swelling began).

You will need to know their infectious period. The person with mumps should be told this by their doctor, or you can calculate it by asking when the swelling started. A person is infectious two days before their swelling, the day the swelling appeared, then five days after. Write these dates down:

Person was infectious from _____ to _____

Person with mumps to provide the dates from their doctor

The **person with mumps** should stay at home until the end of the infectious period.

4. Work out who else may have been exposed to the mumps virus in your workplace or organisation. These people are known as 'close contacts.'

A 'close contact' is anyone who has been within a metre of the person with mumps, or who may have used a keyboard or phone infected with the virus, **at any time during the infectious period**. Mumps is spread through coughing, sneezing and talking.

5. After you have identified close contacts, you will need to inform them and ask them to check their immunity to mumps. **Please do not name the person with mumps.**

Those born before 1 Jan 1982 are considered immune. All other close contacts can ask their family doctor or find their Tamariki Ora/Well Child or Plunket book.

Close contacts who cannot find evidence of having one measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccination can get vaccinated immediately for free. They are able to return to work after this, if they provide evidence.

GUIDE TO MANAGING MUMPS

Those with one MMR vaccination at the time of exposure should get a second MMR to increase their protection against mumps, measles and rubella.

Those who cannot get an MMR vaccination because they are pregnant, have a weakened immune system, or are allergic to vaccine components are advised to stay in quarantine.

Those close contacts who are not immune and who choose not to be vaccinated with one MMR are recommended to stay away from work in quarantine.

Please give close contacts the [Information for Close Contacts](#) fact sheet. This explains how to check immunity, and how long to go into quarantine.

People are free to come to work if they -

- Have documented proof of at least one measles mumps rubella (MMR) vaccination – close contacts should get a second MMR immediately (free at their doctor) and return straight to work OR
- Have had a documented diagnosis of mumps OR
- Have had a blood test proving mumps immunity OR
- Were born before 1 Jan 1982

Staff or other close contacts born after 1 Jan 1982 AND who can't, or choose not to, get at least one MMR vaccination are advised to stay in quarantine.

You can use our [Mumps Quarantine Calculator](#) to provide the end of quarantine date to close contacts. This is how long contacts should be away from work, if they cannot prove their immunity. Quarantine starts 12 days after first contact with the infectious person and ends 25 days after the last contact.

End of Quarantine _____ [Use the online calculator](#)

6. Please be aware that some people are at greater risk from mumps, such as non-immune pregnant women and anyone with a weakened immune system. These staff should talk to their doctor if they have been exposed to mumps at your workplace.
7. Encourage people in your workplace to get vaccinated immediately if they have been close contacts. All employees under 30 years are a priority for MMR vaccination as they are less likely to have been vaccinated. Young men are most likely to develop the common complication of mumps, inflammation of the testicles, which can reduce fertility. The MMR vaccine also protects against measles, which is currently circulating in Auckland.
8. Let your employees know there has been mumps so they can watch for symptoms, even if they are vaccinated. People who have been vaccinated may still catch mumps. Two doses of the MMR vaccine protect around 85 percent of people against mumps. The vaccine's effectiveness also declines over time.

Information for Close Contacts Exposed to Mumps

You have been near someone who has mumps

You have been given this information as you've been near someone with mumps. This means if you are not vaccinated or immune, you may get mumps too. If you were born before 1 January 1982, you are considered protected against mumps.

Mumps is a viral illness spread through talking, coughing and sneezing. If you have been within a metre of someone with mumps while they were infectious, you may have caught the disease.

1. **Please watch out for mumps symptoms** - fever, headache, muscle aches, tiredness, and loss of appetite. The salivary glands on one or both sides of the face, cheeks or jaw may become swollen and sore after two days.
2. **You can go to work if you were born before 1 Jan 1982, have had mumps, have been vaccinated with one MMR vaccine or if you get vaccinated immediately.** You can return to work straight away, but please watch for symptoms, and seek medical attention if you suspect mumps (but phone your doctor first).

Protection from mumps vaccination can decline over time. There is still a small possibility a vaccinated person will get mumps. Please watch for mumps symptoms (above) even if you have had a MMR vaccine.

If you need to see a doctor, please phone before visiting and tell them you have been exposed to mumps. You can also call Healthline on 0800 611 116 for advice.

3. **If you work in healthcare**, you can only attend work if you can prove you have TWO MMR vaccinations or have had mumps previously. If you've had only one MMR vaccination, you are advised to get a second MMR immediately, but should still stay away from work for the quarantine period.
4. **You are advised to stay away from work, if born after 1 Jan 1982, AND you:**
 - have not had one MMR and do not wish to get an MMR immediately.
 - are 'immunocompromised' (due to a medical condition or medication that has weakened your immune system).

Some people will need to stay home in quarantine

If you are not immune to mumps and are not going (or able) to get vaccinated, you are advised to go into quarantine.

This means staying home, away from work and education, and from others who are not immune. You will need to stay in quarantine until you know you are not getting sick with mumps. It can take up to 25 days for a person infected with mumps to develop symptoms.

Staying in quarantine is important because if you are getting sick with mumps, you can spread it to others even before you feel sick or show symptoms. You should stay at home and not go out into the community – on public transport or to public places such as schools, supermarkets, church or other places of worship, gyms or sports events.

What is the quarantine period?

If you saw the person with mumps during their infectious period – 2 days before the swelling, the day of the swelling and 5 days after the swelling appeared - note the dates that you saw them.

- If you are not immune to mumps, you should stay at home in quarantine:
 - You go into quarantine 12 days after the first day you saw the person with mumps.
 - You count 25 days from the last time you saw the person with mumps. The end of the 25th day is the day your quarantine period finishes.
- An online quarantine calculator is available at www.arphs.health.nz/mumps-q-calculator.

Q and As for workplaces and organisations

HOW INFECTIOUS IS MUMPS AND DO I HAVE TO WORRY?

Mumps is not as infectious as measles but it does spread easily to people through coughing, sneezing and talking. While it is usually a mild disease, it can have serious complications. Anyone who is pregnant and not immune, or immunocompromised is most at risk if they have been exposed to the virus. Young men usually develop the most common complications, inflammation of the testicles with the possibility of reduced fertility. There is also a chance of inflammation of the lining of the brain (meningitis).

Please let any staff who may have been exposed to the virus know (see 'close contacts' below), so they can get at least one measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine, and also watch for symptoms.

WHO IS A CLOSE CONTACT?

Anyone who has been within a metre of the person with mumps during their infectious period is a 'close contact'. Anyone who has shared a keyboard, desk, phone or similar with someone with mumps may also have been infected.

If the only exposure is for a short period - in a large lunchroom, a bathroom or a lift for example - there will be a lower risk, and those people would not be considered close contacts. There is still a small possibility however that others may catch mumps.

For that reason, it is useful to provide information widely to all staff, ask them to check their immunity, and to watch out for mumps symptoms – fever, headache, muscle aches, tiredness and loss of appetite. The salivary glands on one or both sides of the face, cheeks or jaw may become swollen and sore after two days.

There is information on the Auckland Regional Public Health Service (ARPHS) website. Remind staff if they feel unwell to ring their doctor before they arrive.

I HAVE STAFF BORN OVERSEAS, HOW DO I DETERMINE THEIR IMMUNITY?

Staff exposed to mumps need to have evidence of immunity, otherwise it is recommended they get vaccinated or go into quarantine. Please check the chart below.

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| <p><i>People are immune and not at risk of mumps if they...</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have had one (ideally two) doses of <u>Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR) vaccine</u> documented in a Well Child/Tamariki Ora book or at a doctor's practice. • Were born before 1 Jan 1982. • Have been previously diagnosed with mumps • Have had a blood test confirming immunity |
| <p><i>People are not immune and are at risk of mumps if they...</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are born after 1 Jan 1982 • Have had no doses of MMR vaccine • Have never had mumps • Have a severely weakened immune system. |

IF STAFF ARE VACCINATED STRAIGHT AWAY, CAN THEY COME TO WORK?

Staff who have been exposed to mumps can come back to work straight away after vaccination but they should be aware of symptoms in case they do develop mumps. The vaccine does take time to work.

Encouraging your staff to get vaccinated right away means they are protected for measles and rubella as well. Measles is highly contagious and currently circulating in Auckland.

THERE ARE PREGNANT WOMEN (OR SOMEONE IMMUNOCOMPROMISED) IN OUR ORGANISATION – WHAT DO I TELL THEM?

Any pregnant woman who knows she is immune or has been vaccinated with even one dose of MMR is not considered to be at risk. Non immune pregnant women who may have been in contact with the mumps case should see their lead maternity carer or doctor. Anyone receiving cancer treatment or with a weakened immune system should also seek medical advice.

CAN I GET MY STAFF VACCINATED?

The MMR vaccine is free for those who have not had two vaccinations. You should encourage your staff to go to their GP, or your health and safety staff could organize vaccinators at your workplace.

THE INFECTIOUS STAFF MEMBER HAS HAD CONTACT WITH MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC?

If the case (person with mumps) has been within a metre of members of the public and you have contact details for these people, you could alert them and suggest they watch out for the symptoms and check their immune status.

If the staff member has been in contact with the mumps virus but does not currently have mumps, you will only have to consider action if the staff member is subsequently confirmed with mumps.

DO PEOPLE WHO HAVE BEEN EXPOSED TO MUMPS HAVE TO TELL OTHERS?

You do not need to tell anyone else that you may have been exposed to mumps, or are in quarantine, except for visitors. If you are confirmed with mumps by your doctor or a test, then you will need to inform your workplace that you have mumps, and then tell any family and social contacts.

I'VE ONLY HAD ONE MMR – DO I HAVE TO GET ANOTHER VACCINATION, OR STAY AWAY FROM WORK?

You can go to work if you have had one MMR (Measles, Mumps and Rubella) vaccine. It is a good idea to have a second MMR as soon as possible, but this has to be at least a month since your first MMR.