Mumps
An illness requiring droplet precautions

What is mumps?
Mumps is a viral disease that causes an infection of the salivary glands. There is a mumps vaccine (contained in the measles, mumps, rubella [MMR] vaccine) that can prevent this illness.

What are the symptoms?
Mumps symptoms include:

• Fever.
• Headache.
• Muscle aches.
• Swelling of the glands close to the jaw.

Some persons experience complications associated with this illness such as meningitis, inflammation of the testicles or ovaries, inflammation of the pancreas, and deafness (usually permanent).

Mumps is a reportable disease and the health department is notified whenever a case is diagnosed so that post-exposure follow up care can be given to protect others who may have come in contact with you and are at risk of becoming ill.

How is mumps spread?
The mumps virus is spread when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks. Tiny droplets are spread this way, hence, the term “droplet precautions.” Touching something with the mumps virus on it and then touching the mouth or nose is another way of “catching” the disease.

Mumps is about as contagious as influenza and rubella, but less so than measles or chickenpox. Healthy persons may be able to spread the disease from about 3 days before symptoms appear to about 4 days after. In some cases, the virus has been isolated from saliva as early as 7 days before symptoms appear to as late as 9 days after symptoms start.

That means that you can pass on the mumps virus to someone else before you know you are sick, as well as while you are sick.
Questions?

Call 206-598-6122

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or health care provider if you have questions or concerns. UWMC clinic staff is also available to help at any time.

Healthcare Epidemiology and Infection Control: 206-598-6122

Please tell your health care provider if you think you have the mumps or have been around someone with the mumps.

**Persons with symptoms should practice “respiratory hygiene” by wearing a mask, washing their hands often, and disposing of tissues in wastebaskets when coming into a health care facility. Free “Cover Your Cough Kits” are available at the Information Desk and at clinic intake areas.**

**How is it diagnosed?**

Mumps is diagnosed by clinical symptoms. The diagnosis can be verified by sending respiratory specimens to the virology laboratory. Blood tests can also confirm if a person is susceptible or immune.

**How are others protected from the mumps?**

At University of Washington Medical Center, we place a “Droplet Precautions” sign near the doorway of your room to alert health care workers and your visitors to observe expanded precautions when caring for you.

**What does it mean to be in droplet precautions?**

Health care workers and caregivers wear masks, gowns, and gloves when providing care.

Visitors who have not been vaccinated are at risk of acquiring disease and should not visit you.

**Hand washing for 15 seconds, using alcohol hand gels, and environmental cleanliness are emphasized.**

You will be asked to in your room unless you need to go to other departments in the hospital for treatment. If you leave your room, you will be asked to wash your hands and to wear a yellow gown, gloves, and a mask.

Please do not use the nutrition rooms while you are “in isolation.” When you want a snack or ice water, ask a member of your health care team to bring it to you.

**When can the precautions be stopped?**

Droplet precautions for the mumps are usually stopped after 9 days, if you no longer have symptoms.