

February 9, 2017

Dear Grant County School Parents and Employees:

The Grant County Health District (Public Health) is investigating several confirmed and possible mumps cases in Grant County. Now is the time to verify your immunization records for vaccine against mumps, the MMR (Measles, Mumps and Rubella) vaccine. This letter provides information specific to checking your vaccination history for protection against mumps, or verifying immunity to mumps. Large outbreaks of mumps are occurring across the U.S., including in Washington state.

If mumps cases are identified in your school ALL students and staff without proof of immunity will be excluded from school and school activities through 25th day after last exposure (if only one case is identified, ALL students and staff without proof of immunity will be excluded from 12th through 25th day after exposure, but having only one case is rare).

During an outbreak there are stricter requirements for proof of immunity:

- Written documentation of 2 doses of mumps vaccine (MMR), OR
- Written documentation of physician-diagnosed mumps, OR
- Serologic evidence of immunity (Blood Titer Test).
- Those born before 1957 are usually considered immune and do not have to prove their immunity.

What should I do now?

- School employees are considered high risk for mumps. Only one dose of MMR is required (other than healthcare workers) until there are mumps (an outbreak) in their school or countywide, then 2 doses. School employees are **encouraged** at this time to get two doses.
- Pregnant women cannot receive the MMR vaccine; pregnant students and staff should contact their healthcare provider, there is a blood test that can be done to check for immunity to mumps.
- If your K-12 child or school employee does not have any doses of MMR, you need to get them one dose of MMR as soon as possible and then a second dose of MMR after 28 days have passed.
- If your K-12 child or school staff employee has one dose of MMR, they need to get their second dose of MMR as soon as possible.
- If your child or school employee has two doses, you are good, however you should still watch for symptoms of mumps and contact your school with the written proof of the vaccines so they can update your student's vaccine records.
- Regardless of vaccination status against mumps, if your child or any member of your family develops mumps symptoms, please contact your healthcare provider. Keep them home and away from other persons and from public settings for at least 5 days after suspecting the disease or until a healthcare provider has seen him or her. If your healthcare provider has any questions, please have them call GCHD 509-766-7960.
- Make sure that you are also safe and immune against mumps or measles. You would also need a proof of immunity if your child becomes ill with mumps. Contact your doctor to get you vaccinations updated, if needed.

What if I choose to not vaccinate?

- If there is a mumps outbreak in your school and you choose to not vaccinate your student (or school employee) who is not immune, they will be EXCLUDED through 25 days after the last possible exposure



(contact). If there are additional cases in the school then the duration of the school exclusion will be extended, often for additional weeks, unless you choose to immunize your child (or school employee) with MMR. If excluded, they will be allowed back to school immediately if you choose to vaccinate him/her with MMR.

What if my child or school employee is prohibited by medical condition or pregnancy from getting MMR?

If there is a mumps outbreak in your school and they are not immune, they will be EXCLUDED through 25 days after the last possible exposure (contact). If there are additional cases in the school, then the duration of the school exclusion will be extended.

What is mumps?

Mumps is a very contagious illness caused by a virus. It can cause fever, headache, and swelling of the cheeks and jaw. In rare cases, mumps can have serious complications that may require hospitalization. Up to 30% of people with mumps infection will have no symptoms.

How is mumps spread?

A person with mumps can spread the virus by coughing, sneezing, or talking. It can also be spread by sharing cups or eating utensils, and by touching objects or surfaces with unwashed hands that are then touched by others.

Who is at risk of getting mumps?

- Infants who are too young to receive mumps vaccine (less than 1 year of age).
- Children over 1 year of age who have not received at least 1 dose of MMR.
- Adults born in or after 1957 who have not been vaccinated or have not previously had mumps disease. Note: Persons born before 1957 probably had mumps as children and are usually considered immune.
- Pregnant women cannot receive the MMR vaccine; if your student is pregnant, please speak with your healthcare provider. There is a blood test to test for immunity.

Mumps signs and symptoms:

- Swelling of the cheeks and jaw
- Fatigue
- Loss of appetite
- Muscle aches
- Headache
- Tiredness
- In teenage boys swelling of testicles, in teenage girls breast inflammation or ovarian swelling
- In rare cases, mumps can lead to more serious complications that may require hospitalization

Additional information about mumps can be found at:

<http://granthealth.org/mumps>

Sincerely,



Dr. Alexander Brzezny, MD, MPH
Grant County Health Officer
