

Mumps Vaccine: Our Best Protection

Mumps is a contagious disease that causes fever, aches, and swelling in the cheek or jaw area. It also can lead to other problems like hearing loss and brain damage. There is no treatment for mumps, but there is a way to prevent it: the combination measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine. It protects you and helps stop the spread of the mumps virus to others.

Sometimes people who have MMR vaccine still get mumps. Why is that?

The vaccine is effective at preventing mumps, but it is not perfect. There is still a small chance of getting mumps if you're vaccinated. Nearly **9 out of 10 people get lasting protection** from the vaccine.

Number at Risk of Getting Mumps



“Because some people do not get lasting protection from the vaccine and mumps spreads easily from person to person, outbreaks can still occur in vaccinated populations. But, if unvaccinated, many, many, more people would become ill.”

~ Dr. Jeff Duchin, Public Health—Seattle King County

MMR vaccine is 88% effective against mumps in people who have had two doses. That means of every 100 vaccinated people exposed, only 12 of them are at risk for getting infected with mumps. In contrast, **all unvaccinated people are at risk. The number of people who get mumps in an outbreak would be much larger if fewer people were vaccinated.** In addition, complications happen more often and are more serious among unvaccinated people who get mumps. Luckily, more than 9 out of 10 Washington kindergartners have both of their MMR vaccine doses.

Even though vaccinated people might get sick in an outbreak, the risk of getting sick is much greater for people who haven't been vaccinated. For example, in one recent summer camp outbreak, 43% of the unvaccinated people got mumps when they were exposed, but less than 4% of vaccinated people got it. But because there were so many more vaccinated campers than campers who didn't have the vaccine, the number of cases in vaccinated people was higher.

Did You Know?

Before the vaccine program started, the U.S. saw more cases of mumps in a week than we see now in an entire year.

How does mumps vaccine help?

- MMR vaccine provides **significant protection** from mumps, and greatly reduces the risk of complications.
- Since the widespread use of MMR vaccine in the U.S., there has been a **99% decrease** in the number of people with mumps.
- MMR vaccine doesn't just protect against mumps—**it also protects against measles and rubella**, which are even deadlier diseases.

What you can do

- **Get vaccinated.** Make sure you and your kids are up to date on MMR vaccine. Check with your healthcare provider. MMR vaccine is available to all Washington kids at no cost.
- **Find the vaccination rate of your school** at www.schooldigger.com.
- **Sign up for MyIR**, which lets you see your family's vaccinations at home and get reminders. Go to doh.wa.gov/immsrecords.