



**Northwestern
Health Unit**

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Cases of mumps in the region

The Northwestern Health Unit (NWHU) has been notified of cases of mumps in some communities in the region. Mumps is a viral illness that can be prevented by vaccination. There is no treatment for mumps.

The most common symptoms of mumps are swollen, painful cheeks and neck, fever, headache, muscle aches, weakness and loss of appetite. Complications are rare but serious, including inflamed ovaries or testicles, hearing loss, and meningitis. Those who may be at higher risk of getting mumps include those who have not been vaccinated adequately for mumps, school aged children, those who participate in or organize youth team sports, and those born from 1970 to 1992 who likely only have 1 dose of the vaccine.

Mumps vaccine as part of the Measles-Mumps-Rubella vaccine (MMR) can be 75-95% effective in preventing mumps; the vaccine is the best way to prevent mumps. Immunization protects the individual, and also protects the spread to friends and family. The NWHU's Medical Officer of Health recommends a second MMR for everyone up to age 47 in our region at this time (unless there is a medical reason for not vaccinating). Please check your immunization records to be sure you have had both doses.

Mumps can also be prevented by regular hand washing or using a hand sanitizer, coughing or sneezing into a tissue or sleeve, not sharing water bottles, straws, cigarettes or anything else that may have saliva.

People who are ill should stay home from work or school and avoid public places, especially:

- Those who currently have a fever.
- Those who have swollen, painful cheeks and neck, particularly if there has been recent contact with people with mumps.

If you think you or your child may have mumps you can call Telehealth Ontario at 1-866-797-0000. If you visit an emergency room or clinic, sanitize hands and put on a mask at the entrance and tell someone that you may have mumps. This will help protect other sick people in the waiting area.

If you have other questions, please contact the NWHU at 1-800-830-5978.

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