



John Elias Baldacci
Governor

Maine Department of Health and Human Services

Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention
(Maine CDC)
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Brenda M. Harvey
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Dora Anne Mills, MD, MPH
Public Health Director
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Dear Parent/Guardian,

Maine is currently experiencing an outbreak of mumps, a highly contagious viral infection spread through respiratory droplets, or through direct contact with infected saliva. The most common symptom is swelling of the cheeks and jaw due to inflammation of one or both of the saliva glands near the ear and back of the jaw (parotitis). If your child has any of these symptoms, please bring them to his/her physician or health care provider.

While most people experience uncomfortable symptoms for about ten days and fully recover, complications can occur. These complications include: meningitis, encephalitis and infertility.

In accordance with current Maine law, all children in grades K-12 must be vaccinated with two (2) doses of MMR vaccine in order to be present in school. Parents do have the option to write a letter requesting their child be exempt from this law on very specific grounds (religious, philosophical or medical) defined in the law.

If parents are granted an exemption, the exemption clearly states that the child will be excluded from school if there is evidence of mumps disease in the school or within your child's community. Under such a circumstance, the unvaccinated child will be excluded from school until such time as the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention (Maine CDC) determines it is safe for the child to return to school. However, at a minimum, any child not appropriately vaccinated with MMR vaccine **will be excluded** from school for eighteen (18) days from the onset of symptoms of the last identified case. Every new case of mumps in a school triggers a new eighteen-day exclusion.

The Maine CDC's Immunization Program distributes MMR vaccine free of charge to many pediatric practices in the state. **The Maine CDC strongly encourages you to have your child vaccinated with two (2) doses of measles, mumps and rubella vaccine (MMR) if your child has not been previously vaccinated against measles, mumps and rubella.** You may access the state law on immunizations in school at <http://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/rules/05/071/071c126.doc>. More information on mumps may be obtained on our website: www.mainepublichealth.gov.

If you have any questions or concerns, please call the Maine CDC at 207-287-3746.

Sincerely,

Dora Anne Mills, MD, MPH
Director, Maine CDC
Maine State Health Officer

Our vision is Maine people living safe, healthy and productive lives.
www.mainepublichealth.gov