



Municipality of Anchorage

Public Health Advisory

Department of Health and Human Services

February 9, 2018

Dear Anchorage School District students, parents/guardians, staff and faculty:

Anchorage is currently experiencing an outbreak of mumps. Since May 2017 over 230 people have been diagnosed with mumps. Prior to this outbreak, only 3 persons in Alaska were diagnosed with mumps in the past 5 years. Some students and staff in the Anchorage School District have recently been diagnosed with mumps.

Mumps is a contagious viral illness that is spread from person to person by contact with respiratory droplets such as when coughing, sneezing, talking, touching contaminated surfaces and sharing cups and utensils. Common symptoms are painful, puffy, swollen cheeks, a tender swollen jaw, fever, tiredness, and muscle aches. It usually takes about 14-18 days from when someone is exposed/infected with the virus to when they develop symptoms. Infected individuals can spread mumps without realizing it; the infectious period is 7 days, 2 days before symptoms start and for 5 days after.

The most effective way to prevent mumps is vaccination – 90% of persons who have had two doses of MMR vaccine are immune to mumps. It is recommend that persons who received their second MMR vaccination more than 5 years ago get a 3rd dose now to provide greater protection during this outbreak. Make sure you and your family members are up to date on MMR vaccination.

If you, your child or another family member has mumps symptoms, please contact your healthcare provider. Because mumps is contagious, healthcare workers may not want you to come to the clinic and sit in the waiting room. To stop the spread of mumps, persons with mumps should stay home and away from others for five days after the start of puffy cheeks.

If you are unable to see a healthcare provider please contact the Anchorage Department of Health at 343-4767 or 343-4799 to make arrangements for testing.

If you have any questions please call the Municipality of Anchorage, Department of Health at 343-4799 or the State of Alaska Section of Epidemiology at 269-8000.

Sincerely,

Bruce Chandler, MD, MPH
Medical Officer
Municipality of Anchorage