

News Release

February 22, 2017

Toronto Public Health Investigates Mumps Outbreak

Toronto Public Health (TPH) is currently investigating 14 lab-confirmed cases of mumps involving individuals 18 to 35 years of age. While TPH continues to follow up with exposed individuals who are known to the confirmed cases, the investigation to date has identified that many of these cases have frequented bars in the west downtown core of Toronto. This may be a contributing factor in the circulation of this viral infection.

The mumps virus is found in saliva and respiratory droplets. It is spread from person to person through coughing, sneezing, and coming into contact with a person's saliva by sharing drinks or utensils, food or water bottles, or by kissing. A major factor contributing to outbreaks is being in a crowded environment, such as attending the same class, playing on the same sports team or living in a dormitory with a person who has the mumps.

The risk to the general public from this infection is low. However, it is important that the public know mumps is circulating in Toronto and the following measures are recommended:

- Check your immunization record to make sure you and your family members are up to date with the mumps vaccination (MMR or MMRV). If you are unsure, check with your health care provider. Individuals born after 1970 should have two doses of the vaccine.
- If you are travelling, ensure your immunizations are up-to-date before you leave, including family members travelling with you.
- Watch for symptoms of mumps. These include swelling and pain in one or more salivary glands (sides of the cheeks and jaw), fever, headache, muscle aches and pains, fatigue and loss of appetite. These symptoms can last up to 10 days.
- Call your doctor if you have symptoms of mumps infection, or if you have been in contact with someone who has mumps. Tell your doctor that you think you have mumps before going to the doctor's office. This will allow the doctor to prepare for your visit and protect other patients.

Complications from mumps infection can include encephalitis (infection in the brain), meningitis (infection in the lining of the brain), painful swelling of the testicles or the ovaries, pancreatitis and hearing loss. Pregnant women who become infected with mumps during the first three months of pregnancy are at risk of miscarriage. For further information about mumps, visit <http://www.toronto.ca/health>.

Toronto is Canada's largest city, the fourth largest in North America, and home to a diverse population of about 2.8 million people. It is a global centre for business, finance,

arts and culture and is consistently ranked one of the world's most livable cities. In 2017, Toronto will honour Canada's 150th birthday with "TO Canada with Love," a year-long program of celebrations, commemorations and exhibitions. For information on non-emergency City services and programs, Toronto residents, businesses and visitors can visit <http://www.toronto.ca>, call 311, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, or follow us on Twitter at <http://www.twitter.com/TorontoComms> and on Instagram at <http://www.instagram.com/cityofto>.

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