

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 22, 2010; 1:35 pm

DPHSS Release No. 2010-025

Since January 2010, over 100 cases of mumps have been reported to Guam Department of Health and Social Services. New cases are being reported daily and this case count will continue to increase. Cases have been reported from numerous communities and villages around Guam.

Mumps is a viral illness that can cause fever, headache, muscle aches, tiredness and painful swelling of the salivary glands under the ears. Rarely, people may have complications from mumps including painful swelling of the testicles in males after puberty, deafness, or swelling in or around the brain. Mumps can be spread from person-to-person through oral or respiratory secretions. Guam DPHSS urges the public to make sure that their shots are up to date to prevent mumps and other diseases. Although two doses of Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR) vaccine offers the best protection against mumps (with 90% vaccine effectiveness), a small number of people can still get mumps even if they have been vaccinated. People who are not fully vaccinated are at higher risk of getting mumps.

In order to stop the spread of mumps on Guam, Guam DPHSS is working on finding and interviewing cases, assessing risk factors, and developing the best response to stop this outbreak. A team from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is assisting Guam DPHSS in this important work. The public is asked to report any illnesses with facial swelling to Guam DPHSS (see number below) and to have people sick with these symptoms stay home from work, school, or gatherings until 5 days after the swelling began. In addition, Guam DPHSS will soon begin calling some doctors' offices daily to check on any new mumps cases that may have been seen.

Thank you for helping to protect our community by reporting any current or recent cases of illness with the above symptoms in your family. This information will help Guam DPHSS put in place the best possible interventions to prevent illness.

Ways the public can keep their families healthy:

- 1) Make sure your family members are fully immunized with the Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR) vaccine.
- 2) Have people sick with mumps symptoms stay home from school, work, and gatherings until 5 days after facial swelling began.
- 3) Wash your hands with soap and water frequently, avoid sharing eating or drinking utensils, clean frequently touched surfaces, minimize contact with sick persons, cover your cough with a tissue or sleeve.
- 4) Report current or recent cases of facial swelling to the number below. A public health staff person will ask a few questions that will help Guam DPHSS stop this outbreak.

Ways that the medical community can help:

- 1) Report ALL cases of acute onset of unilateral or bilateral tender, self-limited swelling of the parotid or other salivary gland(s), without other apparent cause.
- 2) If your office is selected to participate in daily reporting of these cases, please have your staff compile a list of names of patients seen with these symptoms every day. A public health staff person will call to ask for information on the cases recorded the previous day.
- 3) Remember that mumps can occur in persons who have been vaccinated.
- 4) Do not wait for test results before reporting suspected mumps cases to Guam DPHSS. Mumps IgM results may be negative during mumps infection, especially in previously vaccinated individuals.

**Suspected Mumps Cases should be reported to Guam DPHSS Immunization Program at: Phone: 735-7143, or Fax 734-1475.**