

SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
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South Dakota reports mumps case

PIERRE, S.D. – State health officials are investigating a mumps case in a college student in Lake County, the state's first case since 1991. The student is in exclusion to prevent transmission and the Department of Health is identifying contacts of the student and determining their vaccination status. The department is working closely with Dakota State University and will be conducting immunization clinics over the weekend as needed.

South Dakota has been on the alert for mumps as the result of a large outbreak in neighboring Iowa. The Iowa outbreak began in December 2005, and as of April 20, 975 suspect, probable and confirmed cases have been reported to the Iowa Department of Public Health. Additional cases of mumps, possibly linked to the Iowa outbreak, are also under investigation in several neighboring states.

“Please check your vaccination records. If you or your family are not up to date, call your health care provider to be vaccinated. The vaccine is routinely given at 12-15 months and as a booster prior to kindergarten entry,” said Dr. Lon Kightlinger, State Epidemiologist for the Department of Health. “And as with any infectious disease, practice good hygiene – wash your hands often, cover your mouth when you cough or sneeze, and stay home when you're sick.”

Kightlinger said the department is identifying individuals who had contact with the case during the infectious period and checking their vaccination status. Mumps cases are excluded from work and school for nine days after becoming ill to prevent further spread of the disease.

The department has provided South Dakota hospitals with updates of the Iowa outbreak and facilities have been checking the immune status of their staff. Health care workers are at high risk for mumps, along with school age and college age students. These individuals should check their immunization records to make sure they are up to date on MMR vaccination. Evidence of immunity includes physician diagnosis, or lab confirmation of previous mumps infection, birth before 1957 or one dose of MMR vaccine.

Swollen and inflamed salivary glands are a primary symptom of mumps, which is an acute viral disease. Individuals who experience such symptoms should seek medical care. Although older people may contract the disease, mumps usually occurs in children between the ages of five and 15. It is transmitted by direct contact with saliva and droplet discharges from the nose and throat of infected individuals.

The cornerstone of mumps prevention is vaccination with the MMR vaccine (measles-mumps-rubella). In South Dakota, 89% of children 19-35 months old are fully vaccinated. The MMR vaccine has been mandatory for school entry in South Dakota since 1978 and is a pre-matriculation requirement for South Dakota colleges and universities. The MMR vaccine is also recommended for health care workers.

South Dakota's high MMR immunization levels are one result of an aggressive immunization campaign following a 1997 measles outbreak in the central part of the state. In response to the outbreak, the state launched a second dose MMR campaign to make sure all school children in the state were immunized. By January 1998, 99.7% of the targeted 5th through 12th graders had received the second dose.

For more information about mumps, see the web at www.state.sd.us/doh/Pubs/mumps.htm.