MUMPS

What is it?

Mumps is caused by a virus.

How do I know if someone has it?

A person will have fever, swelling and tenderness of one or more salivary glands in the neck and possibly mouth and throat. This can occur in one or both sides of the neck. Adult males can develop orchitis (inflamed testicles).

Is it infectious?

Yes, mumps is infectious for 7 days before and up to 5 days after the swelling first appears. It is carried from one person to another via droplets, eg sneezing or direct contact with saliva.

What is the incubation period?

This is normally 18 days but can be 12 to 25 days.

Is there any treatment?

There is no specific treatment but MMR vaccine is available to persons over 13 months.

What should I do if someone has the illness?

- If unsure about the diagnosis, consult a doctor.
- Keep the person cool by reducing the amount of bedding or clothing and by giving paracetamol as prescribed on the bottle.
- The infected person should rest while they have a fever.
- Ensure the infected person covers their mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing.
- Make sure that handkerchiefs and flannels are washed well in a washing machine or hot soapy water. Always wash your hands well afterwards.
- A person finding it sore to swallow will find thick and smooth drinks (eg soups, milkshakes) easier to tolerate.

How soon can someone return to school or work?

The person should stay away for 5 days from the onset of the swelling.