

# Public Health

February 10, 2017

**RE: Potential Exposure to Mumps**

Dear students/staff,

A case of mumps was identified at Halifax West High School. Mumps is a disease caused by a virus. Mumps is spread when an infected person coughs or sneezes near you, or by sharing food or drinks. Based on our investigation, we have determined that we may see new cases of mumps at the school over the next two weeks.

Symptoms may include: Swelling and pain in the jaw (one or both cheeks may look swollen), fever, headache, earache, tiredness, aching muscles and joints, sore throat, and pain when swallowing or opening your mouth, poor appetite and vomiting. It usually takes two to three weeks for symptoms to appear after you have been exposed to the virus. If you have any of the above symptoms, please see a healthcare provider such as a family doctor. Mumps can be diagnosed by a lab test done on a swab taken from the cheek and/or from a urine sample.

**For more serious symptoms, such as a stiff neck or a severe headache, painful testicles, or severe belly pain, please see a healthcare provider immediately.**

The best protection against mumps is vaccination. Most high school students are already protected by two shots of the measles–mumps–rubella vaccine. If you have not received two shots, or if you are unsure of your immunization history **please consult with your family doctor**. Two doses of measles–mumps–rubella vaccine is available at no cost to everyone in Nova Scotia born after 1970.

Please find enclosed a fact sheet about mumps for your information.

If you have questions, please call 902–481–5800 and ask to speak with a Public Health Nurse in the Health Protection Program.

Sincerely,



Trevor Arnason  
Regional Medical Officer of Health  
Nova Scotia Health Authority