

Potential New Jersey mumps outbreak prompts investigation

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Health officials in New Jersey are investigating a possible outbreak of the mumps. A cluster of cases of the contagious virus quickly spread

among an eight-person family in Hunterdon County, the state department of health said March 5th.

The original infection could be tied to recent international travel, officials said.

No other details about the case were released due to privacy laws.

People with the mumps quickly start exhibiting symptoms, including fever, headache, muscle aches, tiredness and loss of appetite.

After several days, the salivary glands can swell, causing puffy cheeks and other discomfort in the face. It can also cause swelling of the brain, testicles, ovaries or [breast tissue](#), which could lead to a number of other complications including brain inflammation, infertility or deafness.

The New Jersey Department of Health advised residents to get vaccinated against mumps, measles and rubella if they hadn't done so already.

"These viruses are incredibly contagious, so if you suspect you may have measles, mumps, or rubella, it is important to call ahead before visiting any [health care provider](#) or facility so they can take special precautions," acting health commissioner Dr. Kaitlan Baston said in a statement.

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the number of mumps cases fluctuates year-to-year. There were 436 cases reported in the country last year.

"As a physician and as a mom, I understand what it is like to try to keep your kids and your family healthy," Baston said. "The best way to keep you and your loved ones safe is to get the MMR shot. If you or your family have not gotten the shot, now is the time."

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