Mumps and epidemic parotitis is a viral disease of the human species, caused by the mumps virus. Painful swelling of the salivary glands (classically the parotid gland) is the most typical presentation. Painful testicular swelling (orchitis) and rash may also occur. The symptoms are generally not severe in children. The disease is generally self-limited, running its course before receding, with no specific treatment apart from controlling the symptoms with pain medication. Mumps is a contagious disease that is spread from person to person through contact with respiratory secretions such as saliva from an infected person. Mumps can also be spread by sharing food. A person infected with mumps is contagious from approximately 6 days before the onset of symptoms until about 9 days after symptoms start.

A physical examination confirms the presence of the swollen glands. Usually the disease is diagnosed on clinical grounds and no confirmatory laboratory testing is needed. If there is uncertainty about the diagnosis, a test of saliva or blood may be carried out; a newer diagnostic confirmation, using real-time nested polymerase chain reaction (PCR) technology, has also been developed. An estimated 20%-30% of cases are asymptomatic. As with any inflammation of the salivary glands, serum amylase is often elevated.

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