

Alaska Public Health Advisory

February 1, 2018

Updated Guidance for Mumps Virus Testing through Public Health

The Anchorage mumps outbreak that started during the summer of 2017 continues to spread.^{1,2} Over 500 specimens have been collected and sent to the laboratory for mumps virus testing. To date, 186 confirmed and 26 probable cases have been reported to the Alaska Section of Epidemiology (SOE);² 287 have tested negative.

The SOE is modifying specimen collection and testing recommendations to address laboratory capacity issues during the current outbreak in Alaska. The purpose of this health alert network message is to provide updated guidance for mumps virus testing for specimens submitted for laboratory testing through public health. Providers can also submit specimens for mumps virus testing at certain commercial laboratories (e.g., Quest Diagnostics) for patients who do not meet the criteria outlined below or for whom a faster turnaround time is desired. *Please continue to report all suspect mumps cases to the Alaska Section of Epidemiology (SOE) even in the absence of testing.*

Who to test:

- Test symptomatic patients who present with parotitis lasting ≤ 7 days, acute salivary gland swelling, orchitis or oophoritis unexplained by another more likely diagnosis (e.g., consider ruling out influenza or strep throat with a rapid test), in Anchorage and elsewhere in Alaska.
- Testing is not necessary for symptomatic Anchorage patients who report exposure to a confirmed or probable mumps case (e.g., household or family member) in the 12-25 days prior to their symptom onset. When possible, please document the name of the individual(s) to whom they were exposed.
- If mumps is high on the differential diagnosis, providers can continue to test in order to rule out mumps for reasons including: uncertain signs and symptoms, uncertain exposures, and possible mumps-related encephalitis or oophoritis.
- Do not test asymptomatic patients.

What test to order:

- RT-PCR (molecular) testing should be done to confirm the diagnosis.
 - Collect a buccal swab in Universal Transport Media (UTM) for virus detection by RT-PCR from all patients with suspect mumps infection.³
 - For patients with orchitis, collect a urine sample (minimum 50 ml in a sterile cup) in addition to a buccal swab.

Where can tests be performed:

- RT-PCR testing is available free of charge through the Alaska State Public Health Laboratories (both Anchorage and Fairbanks locations) for patients that meet the criteria above.
 - Specimens are routed to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, Georgia for testing. Turnaround time is estimated to be at least 2 weeks.

- RT-PCR testing is also available (and may be billable to insurance) at certain commercial laboratories (e.g., Quest Diagnostics) for patients who do not meet the criteria or for whom a faster turnaround time is desired. SOE will not pay for or ship these specimens.

Remember:

- All patients should be counseled about self-isolation and excluded from work or school for 5 days after parotitis onset.
- Patients should be informed that they may be contacted by public health for a follow-up interview.
- **All suspect and confirmed mumps infections are reportable to the SOE at 907-269-8000 during business hours or by fax using the [Infectious Disease Report Form](#) (907-563-7868, 24-hours a day).**

References:

1. Alaska Section of Epidemiology (SOE) *Bulletin*. "Mumps Outbreak Update and Recommendations for a Third Dose of Vaccine." No. 28, November 15, 2017. Available at: http://www.epi.alaska.gov/bulletins/docs/b2017_28.pdf
2. Alaska SOE mumps webpage. Available at: <http://dhss.alaska.gov/dph/Epi/id/Pages/Mumps.aspx>
3. Alaska SOE "Information for Healthcare Providers about Mumps and Testing". Available at: <http://dhss.alaska.gov/dph/Epi/id/SiteAssets/Pages/Mumps/MumpsforHCP020918.pdf> (corrected link)

For more information:

- Alaska-specific information on mumps and testing: <http://www.dhss.alaska.gov/dph/Epi/id/SiteAssets/Pages/Mumps/InformationforHCPSuspectedCaseMumps.pdf>
- Alaska Section of Laboratories Mumps Testing information: <http://dhss.alaska.gov/dph/Labs/Documents/LaboratoryTests.pdf> (see page 42)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Mumps webpage: <https://www.cdc.gov/mumps/>