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MUMPS ALERT

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During 2017, over 5,629* mumps cases were reported in the U.S. to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; 110† mumps cases were reported to the Georgia Department of Public Health (DPH) during the same time period. Despite high vaccination levels with MMR, mumps cases remain elevated – primarily due to a number of outbreaks in settings of prolonged close contact with others who have mumps, such as within classrooms, sports teams, campus dorms, and other crowded environments.

Mumps is transmitted by contact with infectious respiratory tract secretions and saliva. Certain behaviors such as kissing, or sharing utensils, cups, lip balm or cigarettes which result in an exchange of saliva, can increase spread of the virus.

Mumps infection is characterized by the acute onset of unilateral or bilateral tender swelling of the parotid (parotitis) or other salivary glands, typically preceded by a nonspecific prodrome of muscle aches, loss of appetite, malaise, headache, and fever. The incubation period is usually 16 to 18 days (range 12-25 days). Patients are infectious from 2 days before through 5 days after parotitis onset. Rarely, complications of orchitis in adolescent males (<10%), and oophoritis in adolescent females (≤1%) can occur. Mumps is the only infection that can result in epidemic parotitis. MMR vaccine remains effective in preventing most cases of mumps, as well as the associated complications.

The GA DPH urges healthcare providers to maintain heightened awareness for mumps and offers the following reminders for diagnosis and containment:

- Mumps should be considered in persons with acute parotitis unexplained by a more likely diagnosis, **regardless of vaccination history.**
- Persons suspected of having mumps should be instructed to **isolate themselves (ie no return to school, work, or public places) until 5 days after the onset of parotitis.** Patient education should include refraining from behaviors that result in the exchange of saliva, and respiratory etiquette should be advised.
- Laboratory testing for mumps is required for confirmation. This includes buccal swabs for mumps PCR and mumps culture, and blood for serology testing (see Mumps Laboratory Testing Guidance).
- **All suspect cases of mumps should be reported at the time of testing to the Health Department** by calling either the District Health Department or the GA DPH at 404-657-2588 (during business hours), or 1-866-PUB-HLTH after hours or weekends.
- The GA Public Health Laboratory can accept specimens for testing at no charge if pre-arranged through the Health Department (see Mumps Laboratory Testing Guidance).
- Ensure patients are up to date on their vaccinations. Healthcare personnel should have documented evidence of mumps immunity on file at their work location.

We appreciate your efforts to protect the health of Georgia's residents by diagnosing, reporting, and helping to contain this disease. For questions or concerns please contact Ebony Thomas, MPH (Ebony.Thomas@dph.ga.gov) or Jessica Tuttle, MD (Jessica.Tuttle@dph.ga.gov) at 404-657-2588.

* 2017 data are preliminary and subject to change

† Includes suspect, probable, and confirmed cases