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Mumps case identified in area counties

By Sarah Sobanski

The **first case of mumps** in more than five years has been confirmed in Hastings and Prince Edward counties.

Hastings Prince Edward Public Health announced it had confirmed the case mid-May. Project manager for public health Bill Sherlock couldn't reveal more on where the case was for patient confidentiality, but said area residents should be aware of mumps symptoms.

?It's just good to know and review your immunization records,? said Sherlock. ?It serves as a reminder to ensure you get your immunizations up to date.?

He added, ?We don't want to cause alarm or panic, it's just something to be aware of.?

Mumps is a vaccine preventable disease, according to public health. The most common symptoms of the disease are fever, headache, respiratory symptoms, swollen and tender salivary glands under the ears on one or both sides and muscle aches.

?Mumps spreads through direct contact with saliva from an infected person. Droplets can be spread through coughing or sneezing and enter the nose or mouth. Infection can also result from kissing, or by sharing food or beverages. The virus can also survive on surfaces. Touching a surface contaminated by the mumps virus and then touching your nose or mouth can cause infection,? stated the public health announcement.

Sherlock said the best way to protect yourself is to get the vaccine.

?You get the MMR vaccine, which is measles-mumps-rubella. That vaccine is given at 12 months of age and then again at three to four years of age as the MMRV ? which is varicella,? he said. ?The vaccine itself is anywhere from 70 to 90 per cent effective? There seems to be a cycle where every five years we'll see a spike in cases.?

Sherlock said there were more than 200 cases of mumps in Ontario in 2017. In 2016 there were under 20 cases.

?Mumps really is an infection that, depending on the individual, there's quite a variance between what your signs and symptoms are going to be. Some people? may feel a little unwell and another person may become quite ill,? he said.

According to public health, ?If you were born before 1970, you are considered to be naturally immune to mumps. People born between 1970 and 1992, have likely only received one dose and should receive a second dose of MMR vaccine.?

To update your vaccines you can talk to your health care provider or call public health. It's available through its Communicable Disease Program telephone number is 613-966-5500 x349, toll-free is 1-800-267-2803 x349, TTY dial 711 (1-800-267-6511) or online at www.hpepublichealth.ca.]