

It's been a big year on college and university campuses across the country, and we're not necessarily talking about sports or academics. It's been a big year for the mumps virus.

Mumps is a contagious viral illness spread through close contact with a person who has it. It has been circulating on many college campuses and in 42 states nationwide.

\*\*\*SOT\*\*\*

Lori Grooms, OSF HealthCare Director of Infection and Prevention Control

"You have the whole grouping of college kids all together, and mom is not there, so you know, we share glasses, we share utensils, and that tends to be prime for spreading the mumps because it is spread through saliva and droplet secretions."

As campuses clear out and students come home, it's important for people to be aware of the signs and symptoms of the mumps.

Those include fever, muscle aches and swollen saliva glands. In rare cases, the disease can cause serious health problems.

\*\*\*SOT\*\*\*

JoAnne Guymon, OSF HealthCare Infection Control

3:08 "It would be good to know if they had been exposed while they were at school so you can be more vigilant, but mostly just watch for those signs and symptoms. And they are contagious a few days before they develop those symptoms and contagious for about five days after that."

If you start to develop symptoms call your primary care physician, but be sure to disclose that your suspicions first.

\*\*\*SOT\*\*\*

JoAnne Guymon, OSF HealthCare Infection Control

2:46 "You should contact your healthcare provider and be seen, but you want to make sure that they know ahead of time that you think you may have the mumps or been exposed to the mumps, because you want to make sure they take proper precautions when you arrive so that you don't expose other people in the waiting room."

The best way to protect against mumps is to get the measles-mumps-rubella vaccination (MMR). It is recommended that all children 12 months of age or older receive two doses of MMR vaccine, separated by at least 28 days.

Teenagers and adults without evidence of immunity should also get both doses of the vaccine.

You can also lower the risk of catching mumps (and many other viruses) by washing your hands often and covering your mouth when you cough or sneeze.