

Oct. 2, 2006

News media calls to David Hass at (630) 682-7979, ext. 7374.

## **Mumps case reported at Elmhurst College; Health department, university alerting campus community**

*Prevention, control information distributed to students, faculty, staff*

An individual at Elmhurst College has recently been diagnosed with mumps; several more cases have been reported at Wheaton College, and one case at Benedictine University in the past month as well. Elmhurst College Health Service staff and administration are working closely with the DuPage County Health Department toward informing and advising affected persons and the surrounding community toward appropriate prevention and control measures. In the past three weeks, there have also been three unrelated cases reported with no apparent college/university campus connection.

Mumps information is available at [www.protectdupage.org](http://www.protectdupage.org) and [www.dupagehealth.org](http://www.dupagehealth.org), as well as the websites of all three schools.

A total of 72 cases of mumps has been reported in DuPage County so far this year. Wheaton College has reported 47 cases with five under investigation. Benedictine University in Lisle has reported one case and one under investigation. Thirty-one of the Wheaton College students with mumps have returned to classes.

It has not been determined if the DuPage County cases have a connection to an outbreak in Iowa that began in December, 2005. Illinois has reported more than 600 cases so far this year. Prior to 2006, Illinois averaged about 10 mumps cases per year. DuPage County averages from zero to three mumps cases per year over the past five years.

If a person is vaccinated against mumps, his or her risk of getting mumps is very low. It is important, however, to be aware of the signs and symptoms of mumps, because a person can still get mumps, regardless of age or vaccination status.

Mumps symptoms include swollen glands close to the jaw and/or fever, headache or muscle aches. Anyone who exhibits any of the symptoms of mumps should contact their family physician for further evaluation. In Illinois, patients with mumps must be isolated from day care, school, work, and public gatherings until at least nine days after the onset of symptoms.

Complications of mumps infection are rare, and can include deafness, meningitis/encephalitis, or inflammation of the testicles, ovaries, or breasts. With the exception of deafness, these complications are more common among adults than children.

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Since mumps is primarily spread by direct contact with respiratory droplets, persons may prevent contracting mumps with a few simple actions:

- Children and adults should be up to date with their immunizations. Please discuss your family's vaccination history with your physician.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze, and throw the tissue away after use.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. If water is not near, use an alcohol-based hand cleaner.
- Do not share eating utensils or drinking containers.
- Refrain from close contact with individuals who are sick/experiencing symptoms.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. (Germs are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches his or her eyes, nose, or mouth.)

Persons experiencing symptoms should contact their school health services or their family physicians for further evaluation. For questions or to report cases of mumps, please the DuPage County Health Department at (630) 682-7979, ext. 7553.