

Mumps Outbreak 2024: Latest in Kerala

written by iasexam.com | 13/03/2024



Context

According to a Union Health Ministry official, Kerala is currently facing a mumps outbreak with over 2500 reported cases in a month. On March 10, the state recorded 190 new cases in a single day. As a result, the National Centre for Disease Control in Kerala has been notified about the situation.

Details on Mumps

About

- Nature of the Disease: Mumps is a contagious viral disease, detected by swollen salivary glands (largely the parotid glands) which give a puffy and swollen face.
- Transmission: The virus quickly spreads from droplets of an infected person's respiratory tract, normally when he coughs or sneezes.

Symptoms

- Initial symptoms of mumps include mild body weakness, headaches, muscle aches, fatigue, and loss of appetite.
- Characteristic swelling occurs in the first stage, with symptoms appearing 16-18 days after infection, or 12-25 days later.

Complications

While mumps is usually a mild disease in children, it can lead to more serious complications, particularly in adults, such as: While mumps is usually a mild disease in children, it can lead to more serious complications, particularly in adults, such as:

- Orchitis: In males, with accompanied puberty developing testical swelling on one testicle or both.
- Oophoritis: Damage of the ovaries in women, a phenomenon that exhibits abdominal pains.
- Meningitis and Encephalitis: Brainies of tissues inflammation.
- Pancreatitis: Inflammation of the pancreas.
- Deafness: Being a rare case, the hearing loss caused by mumps is usually permanent in nature.

Diagnosis

- Diagnosis is most commonly made with the help of symptomatic and the cognitive examination of variably enlarged lymph nodes. Laboratory examinations facilitate the detection of mumps virus specifically using blood tests.

Treatment

- Mumps is a viral illness with no specific medication, so supportive care is task-oriented. Hydration and rest are advised, and pain management with over-the-counter pain relievers is recommended. Listening to an audio can help manage discomfort.

Prevention

- The MMR vaccine, administered in two doses, prevents measles, mumps, and rubella. It is given at 12-15 months and 4-6 years old. Mumps patients should maintain distance to prevent virus spread.

Details on the news

About

In early 2024, Kerala witnessed a significant outbreak of mumps, primarily affecting children. Over 10,000 cases were reported within a period of 70 days, marking a rapid increase in the incidence of the disease.

Scale of the Outbreak

- Geographical Spread: The outbreak was most pronounced in Malappuram and neighbouring districts.
- Rate of Increase: The number of children seeking treatment escalated from 50 per day in January to 300 in March.

Causes of the Outbreak

Lack of Immunization

- **Vaccine Exclusion:** The mumps vaccination was not included in the World Health Organization's universal vaccination record.
- **Vaccine Efficacy:** The probable mumps vaccine effectiveness amounting to 70% remained a challenge in its mainstream presentation.

Waning Immunity

- **Vaccination Rates:** One of the factors that let the epidemic spread was the vaccine shortage that a substantial group of people accounted for.
- **Long-term Immunity:** With time, the vaccine's power in preventing people from getting sick fades away and people become more vulnerable to infection.

Challenges in Managing the Outbreak

- **Vaccine Efficacy and Cost:** The limited effectiveness and resultant costs of not incorporating the mumps vaccine into the National Vaccination Schedule were considered as impeding factors by the responsible authorities.
- **Variations in Healthcare Access:** Coverage variation at vaccination and health access contributed to the occurrence of disease to some areas being much more likely than others.

Public Health Response

- The treatment and prevention measures included providing hydration and rest, prescribing symptomatic relief with ice packs and anti-inflammatory drugs, considering steroids in severe cases, and emphasising the importance of herd immunity. Routine immunisation was also emphasised as a fundamental preventative measure for forestalling outbreaks and sustaining herd immunity.

Conclusion

The 2024 mumps outbreak in Kerala underscored the importance of vaccination programs and the need for ongoing public health vigilance. It also highlighted the challenges posed by vaccine efficacy and healthcare access inequalities. The outbreak serves as a reminder of the critical role of public health systems in disease prevention and management

Source: [livemint](#)

UPSC Prelims Practice Question

Q.Consider the following statements about this outbreak:

1. The outbreak was caused by the mumps virus, a contagious disease that shows

symptoms including fever, headache, and swollen jaws.

2. The rapid spread of the disease in Kerala was attributed to the absence of immunity among children, as the vaccine against this virus was not included in the state's regular vaccination schedule.
3. Despite the large number of cases, the strain of the virus in this outbreak was relatively mild, with fewer complications compared to more severe variants.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| a. 1 and 2 only | b. 2 and 3 only |
| c. 1 and 3 only | d. 1, 2, and 3 |