



**Australian Government**

**Australian Institute of  
Health and Welfare**

# Mumps in Australia

## Quick facts

There have been no childhood deaths from mumps since vaccination was funded in 1983.

Although mumps is usually mild, it can cause complications affecting organs such as the testicles, ovaries, heart and brain.

## What is mumps?

Mumps is a contagious infection of the salivary glands, caused by the mumps virus. The virus spreads when an infected person coughs or sneezes, or through close contact.

The main symptoms of mumps are headache, aching muscles, fever, and swelling under the jaw. One third of people infected with mumps experience no symptoms, but may still infect other people.

Although mumps is usually a mild disease, occasionally it can cause other complications, including swelling and pain of the testicles (orchitis), ovaries, pancreas, liver, heart and brain, and hearing loss. Orchitis may rarely cause infertility in males. Infection during the first trimester of pregnancy may increase the risk of miscarriage.

## Vaccination against mumps

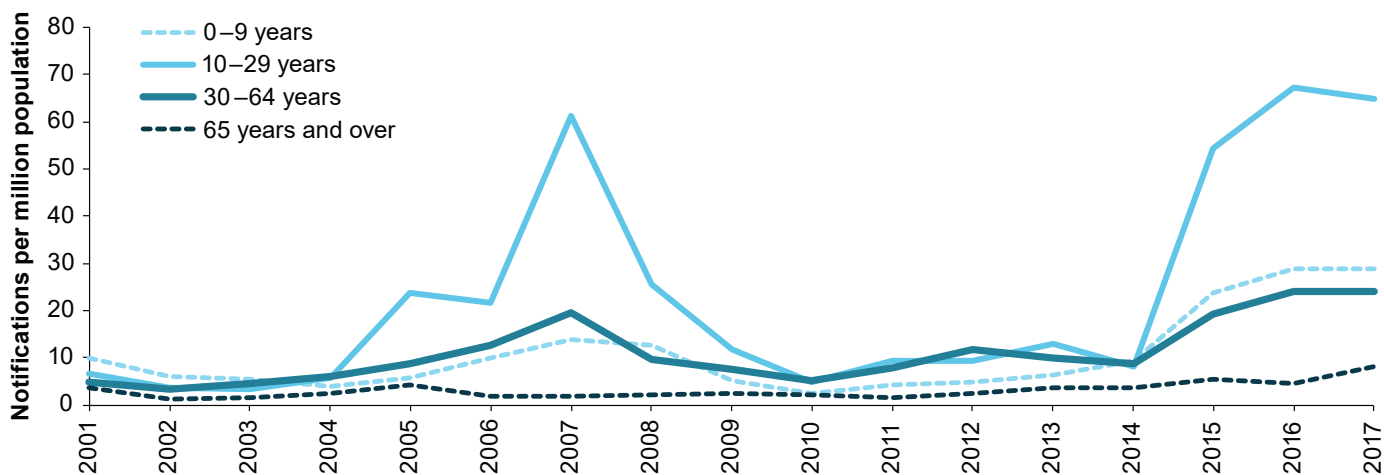
Mumps vaccination was introduced in Australia in the early 1980s. The Australian National Immunisation Program (NIP) first included measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccine in 1989. The NIP provides MMR vaccine for infants and a combined MMR-varicella (MMR-V) vaccine for young children.

In 2017, 93% of Australian 2 year olds were fully vaccinated against mumps; however, vaccination rates vary by where a child lives.

## Mumps notifications

Since 2001, mumps has been a nationally notifiable disease in Australia, which means that diagnosed cases of mumps are reported to state or territory health departments. This way, a public health response can be undertaken to try and prevent further cases.

There were 811 notifications of mumps in Australia in 2017. More than half (52%) of these were in people aged between 10 and 29 years. There have been two major outbreaks of mumps in recent years, one in 2007 and another beginning in 2015. In both outbreaks, rates were highest among people aged 10–29 years and in Indigenous Australians.

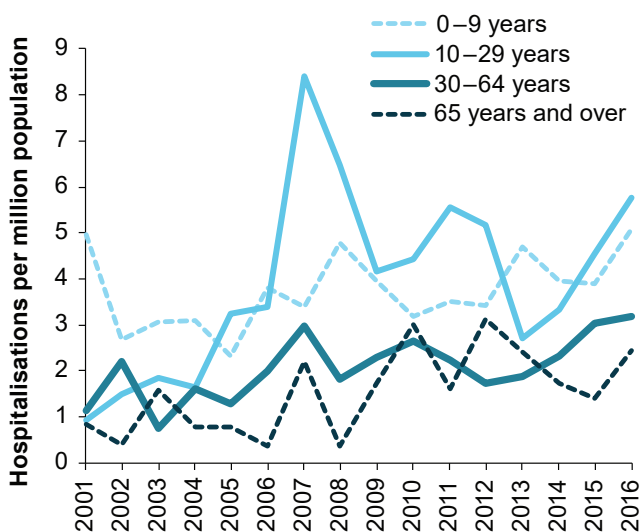


Source: AIHW analysis of NNDSS data extracted on 03 August 2018.

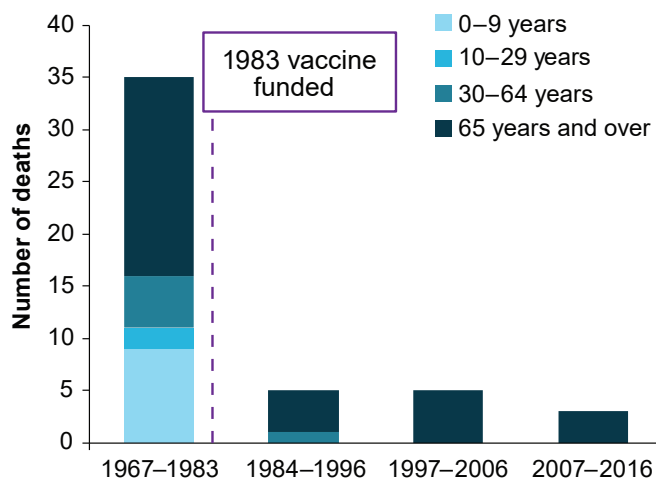
## Hospitalisations and deaths due to mumps

In 2016, there were 97 hospital admissions for mumps in Australia, with rates highest in people aged between 10 and 29 years (left figure). Around 1 in 6 hospital visits for mumps is for treatment of a complication, with the most common being inflammation of the testicles.

Between 1997 and 2016, mumps caused 8 deaths in Australia. Since 1967 mumps has caused 48 deaths, with two-thirds (65%) of deaths occurring in people aged 65 or older (right figure). There have been no childhood deaths since the mumps vaccination was funded in 1983.



Source: AIHW analysis of National Hospital Morbidity Database.



Source: AIHW analysis of National Mortality Database.

This fact sheet is part of the [Vaccine-preventable diseases](#) release. For more information see [Immunisation](#) on the AIHW website.

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