

# CDC: Mumps cases spike in Oregon

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STATESMAN JOURNAL

Mumps cases in Oregon have spiked to their highest levels in a decade, part of a nationwide increase, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Oregon has 12 suspected mumps cases this year, the highest number since 22 cases in 2006, according to Oregon Health Authority statistics.

The spike in mumps cases can be explained by waning immunity from prior vaccinations and people being in close quarters with low vaccinated populations, said Dr. Paul Cieslak, medical director for communicable diseases and immunizations at the public health division of the Oregon Health Authority.

"The vaccine is not 100 percent protection, but it's the best protection from preventable diseases," Marion County health officer Karen Landers said.

As of 2015, Oregon has a 94 percent vaccination rate for measles, mumps and rubella for children between 24 and 35 months of age, which is higher than the national vaccination rate for mumps of roughly 91 percent.

Nationwide, the CDC reported 2,879 cases of mumps as of Nov. 5 in 45 states and Washington, D.C.

Cieslak said there was a time where mumps cases used to pervade communities, but vaccinations have helped reduce those numbers.

One explanation for the spike could be waning immunity among vaccinated people, paired with additional opportunities for exposure in crowded environ-

ments, Cieslak said.

The mumps vaccine, which consists of two doses that protect against measles, mumps, and rubella, is 88 percent effective.

One dose of the vaccine is 78 percent effective, according to the CDC.

"You go to college 13 or 14 years after your second dose, you're in close quarters and then add a little stress to the mixture, and pretty soon you have a lot of transmission," Cieslak said.

Mumps is commonly spread when people are in close quarters such as living in the same dormitory, working in the same office and exchanging saliva with someone while sharing utensils, cups or kissing, according to the CDC.

"We've had a cluster of cases in Marion County that we were trying to snuff out, which accounts for about half of the cases," Cieslak said.

Four cases of mumps have been confirmed in Marion County as of October, which is the highest recorded in the county during the past decade, said Dr. Karen Landers, Marion County Health Officer.

"We're monitoring to wait for a period of time for the last case to see if there was any further transmission," Landers said.

Landers said although vaccination is the best protection for preventable viruses like mumps, it is never 100 percent effective.

The higher the exposure setting, or amount of people in close quarters, the higher likelihood even vaccinated individuals could catch the virus.

Landers points to vaccination rates as

an additional factor to the number of mumps cases in the region.

As of 2015, 95 percent of 2-year-olds in Marion County were up to date on their MMR vaccines. In Polk County, roughly 93 percent of 2-year-olds were up to date on their MMR vaccines, according to the Oregon Health Authority.

During the 2015-2016 academic year, the parents of 3.5 percent of Marion County kindergarten students cited non-medical exemptions to vaccinations. Roughly 5.2 percent of Polk County kindergarten parents cited the nonmedical exemptions during the same time period, according to the Oregon Health Authority.

With last year's passage of Senate Bill 985, parents not wanting to vaccinate their children for nonmedical exemptions are now required to complete a Certificate of Immunization Status and Vaccine Education Certificate, according to the Oregon Health Authority.

What does that mean for parents? Cieslak said parents must complete required immunization education from a health care practitioner, or complete an online vaccine education module.

"It used to be like 'Johnny can't go to school today because he hasn't had shots' and parents would just sign an exemption," Cieslak said. "Now if parents have a religious objection, they have to listen to me talk about diseases and what they can do to prevent them."

Both certificates are provided to the child's school or child care, and each medical exemption is reviewed and approved by the health department. The bill also requires children's facilities

such as preschools, Head Start programs and certified child care programs to post their immunization rates at their main offices, on their websites and on paper for distribution to families.

Dr. James Lace, a member of the Oregon Medical Board, said parents who choose not to vaccinate their children put their children and other kids at risk of a preventable disease.

"Starting in January of this year they're going to have to seek care elsewhere," Lace said of families choosing not to vaccinate at his practice at Childhood Health Associates of Salem. "We give patients multiple opportunities to find care elsewhere and discharge them from our practice."

Lace said although the mumps causes minor side effects like swollen faces and throats for a few days, there can be serious complications like inflamed ovaries in girls, inflamed testicles in boys, and pancreatitis.

For most cases, though, Lace tells children to suck on something, put hot compresses on the jaw, and reminds them that it passes within a few days.

Cieslak said the best way to prevent getting what he refers to as "chipmunk cheeks" is to get vaccinated.

"Although immunity does wane, you're still better off with the vaccine than without it," Cieslak said.

To schedule an appointment with the Marion County Health Department to update your MMR vaccination, call 503-588-5342. For more information on mumps, visit <http://www.cdc.gov/mumps/outbreaks/outbreak-patient-qa.html>

## BRIEFS

### Chamber seeks nominations

Silverton Chamber of Commerce is seeking nominations for four local community service awards. Nomination forms can be found at the chamber office, 426 Water Street, or online at [www.silvertonchamber.org](http://www.silvertonchamber.org). They must be submitted by Dec. 23.

Members of the public can turn in nominations for First Citizen, Lifetime Achievement, Distinguished Service and Business of the Year awards. These winners will be honored at the 46th Annual Silverton First Citizen Banquet at the Festhalle in Mt. Angel on February 4, 2017. The chamber has also invited Silverton-area service clubs and community groups to recognize their outstanding volunteers at the banquet. Those interested should contact Jan Holowatti at 503-873-0405 to confirm their group's participation.

Additionally, Silver Falls School District will honor individual educators and classified staff at the banquet.

### Holiday music at the high school

Silverton High School's choirs will perform their annual Winter Concert at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, Dec. 13 in the auditorium. The bands' concert will be at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 15.

Both concerts are at the high school,

1456 Pine Street, and are opportunities for the public to hear Christmas and other holiday music in a local venue. Admission is free, but donations are accepted.

### Mt. Angel to start New Year with full council after write-in votes

Outgoing Mt. Angel City Councilor Darren Beyer has agreed to serve four more years, even though he didn't run for reelection.

Beyer received the most write-in votes from Mt. Angel voters on Nov. 8 after he declined to file to run for reelection. His current term expires this month.

Mayor Andy Otte and Council Chair Kelly Grassman reported that Beyer has committed to staying on the council after he heard the election. The council discussed plans to appoint him at the January meeting.

### Willamette Humane Society volunteer covers adoption fees for senior cats in December

A Secret Santa is dedicated to helping cats find homes this Christmas season. A longtime volunteer at the Willamette Humane Society has offered to cover adoption fees this month for all senior cats, special-needs cats and long-term resident cats at the shelter.



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Static is one of the cats hoping to benefit from a donation to cover adoption fees for senior cats at Willamette Humane Society this month.

Among the felines hoping to reap the benefits of the gift is Static, an 18-year-old black cat whose owner suffered health issues and had to go into a care home. He's been waiting at the shelter for a new home since October.

The adoption offer covers any cat age 6 or older, said Callie Gisler, communications manager for Willamette Humane

Society. The offer is extended through Dec. 31 at the shelter, 4246 Turner Road SE in Salem.

Go to [WHS4pets.org](http://WHS4pets.org) to review the more than 60 cats available for adoption. The cats eligible for the promotion include a 10-year-old calico, a 7-year-old Angora and a 13-year-old seal point Siamese.



PHOTOS BY LAUREN HERNANDEZ/STATESMAN JOURNAL

Mother and daughter Chelsia Straight, left, and Cathy Youngern sift through piles of boughs while creating Christmas wreaths at the Silver Falls State Park Christmas Festival on Saturday.

## Crafts

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ents and my nephew to enjoy another day at Silver Creek Falls."

As children banged away at wood in the white birdhouse tent just outside of the South Falls Lodge, one family representing three generations weaved leaves together for Christmas wreaths.

Chelsia Straight, of Salem, sifted through thick mountains of leaves with her mother Cathy Youngern at the wreath making tent, while one of her two daughters peered over a heavy-blanketed wagon.

"We came last year and she was a little bit too little so we came out this year and thought she would have some fun," Straight said of her 2-year-old daughter Hazel.

While Chelsia Straight and her mother wrapped up wreaths, her father Paul Youngern watched the babies.

"Spending time with family is the most important, and we love being able to spend time outdoors is fun," Straight said.

Nelson said the festival differs from other Christ-



Brothers Ryan, 4, and Logan Dieterle, 8, hammer nails into their homemade birdhouses on Saturday.

mas events because it's held in the state park, where families are surrounded by wildlife.

"They get to come out into the woods as opposed to merely seeing Santa in the mall," Nelson said.

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