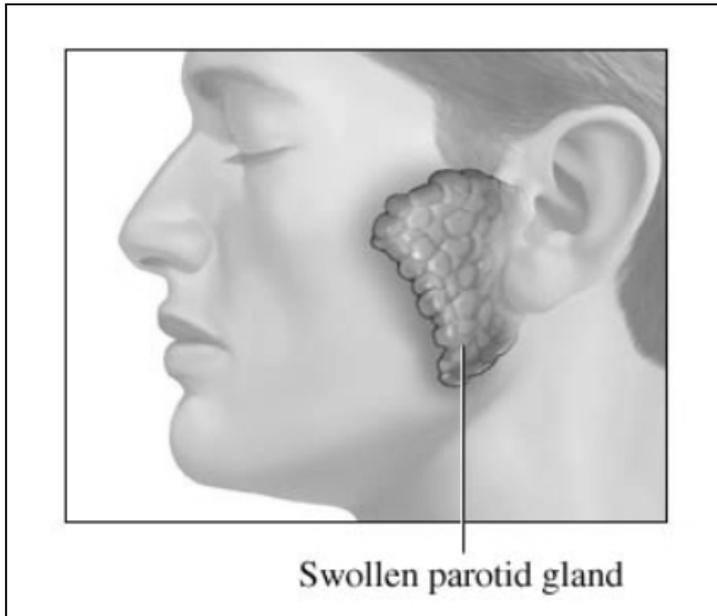


Parotitis



Parotitis is an inflammation of one or both parotid glands. This is the main salivary gland. It lies behind the angle of the jaw and below the ear lobe. The saliva produced comes out of a tiny opening (*duct*) inside the cheek on either side. It is usually at the level of the upper back teeth. Because mumps has mostly disappeared since immunization, the most common cause is *bacterial* (germ) infection

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ACUTE (SUDDEN ONSET) BACTERIAL PAROTITIS

There is redness, pain, swelling, and tenderness over the gland on the side of the cheek. Dr Iseli will also look for pus from the opening of the duct on the inside of the mouth. Historically, it was common in dehydrated and debilitated patients, and often following surgery. It is now more commonly seen after radiotherapy or in patients with a weak immune system eg diabetes. Scans with an ultrasound or CT will rule out a rare cause (stone or tumor) and exclude an abscess that requires drainage. Treatment is stimulating saliva flow (sugar free chewing gum or candy), drinking plenty of water, *antibiotics* (medications which kill germs), massage and pain relief.

CHRONIC RECURRENT PAROTITIS

If episodes are occurring repeatedly, there may be a long term decrease in saliva flow. Decreased saliva may be caused by Sjogren's syndrome (an autoimmune condition affecting the saliva glands). Again, treatment is conservative. Surgery to remove the gland is possible but only used in the most severe cases.

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- Drink plenty of water and suck sugar free candy or chewing gum to stimulate saliva flow.
- Massage the gland after eating from under the ear forward toward the nose.
- Apply ice bags (ice in a plastic bag with a towel around it to prevent frostbite to skin) about every 2 hours, for 20 to 30 minutes, while awake, to the sore gland. Continue for 24 hours and then as directed by your caregiver.
- You may take paracetamol (panadol or panadein) regularly and, if pain persists, add ibuprofen every 3 to 4 hours for pain or discomfort. You may take stronger pain medicine as prescribed by your caregiver.
- Take antibiotics as directed. Do not stop antibiotics before recommended as this may increase the risk of difficult infection if the condition occurs again.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL ATTENTION IF :

- Pain or swelling in your gland increases despite medication.
- An oral temperature above 38.5 develops, not controlled by medication.
- You develop a rash or reaction to antibiotics.