

AMPLIFY

Parotitis Made Simple: Swollen Cheeks, Sharp Thinking

Braeden D Johnson, MD - The Pragmatic MD



Parotitis Made Simple: Swollen Cheeks, Sharp Thinking



Braeden D Johnson, MD

“The Pragmatic MD” for Urgent Care, Emergency, and
Addiction Medicine

Financial Disclosures

- No relevant disclosures for UCA
 - Employee of Salina Regional Health Center
 - Independent contractor for addiction medicine and medical education

Learning Objectives

- Recognize clinical features of parotitis in urgent care
- Differentiate viral, bacterial, and non-infectious causes of parotitis
- Manage suspected parotitis, including antibiotic selection
- Consider differential diagnoses of facial swelling
- Identify patients needing ENT or ED referral from urgent care

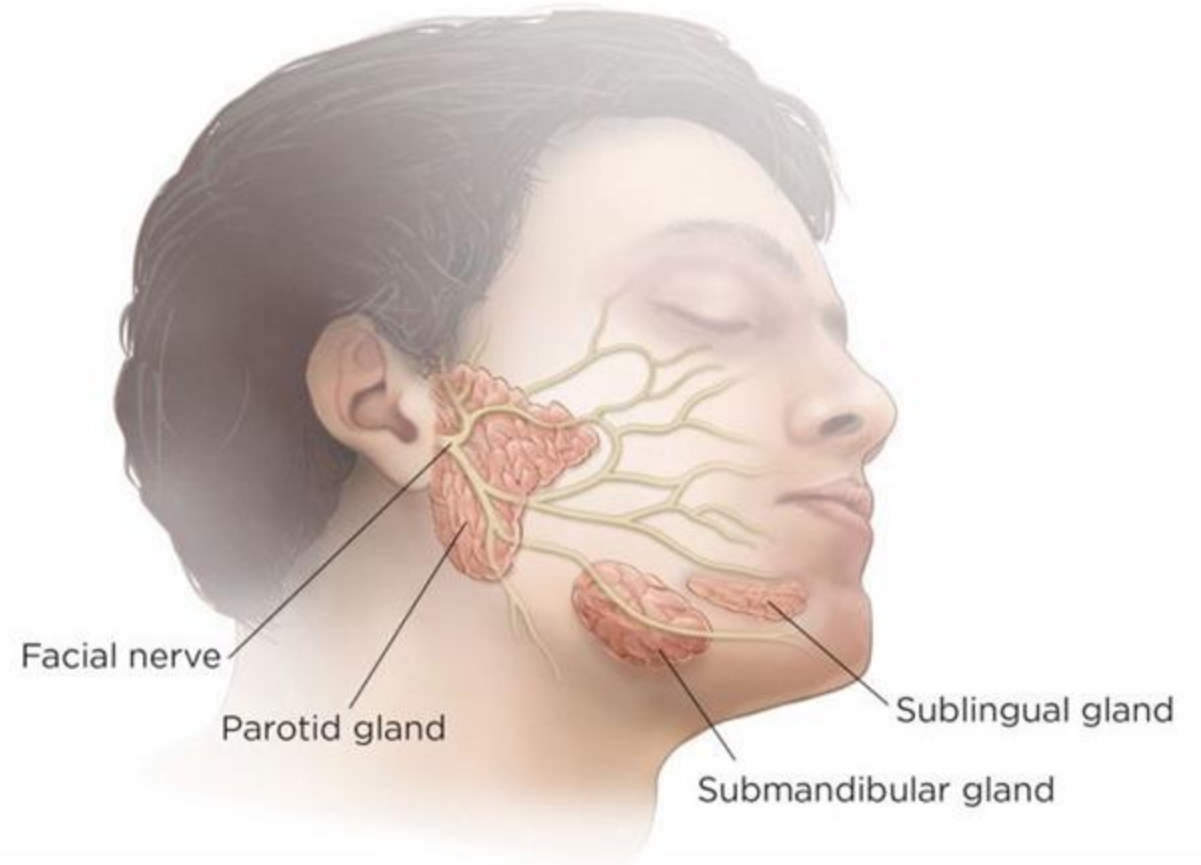
Clinical Case

- 33 year old pregnant woman presents to your UC with complaints of right sided jaw pain, swelling, and tenderness that is worse with chewing. She also thinks she may have had a fever but didn't check her temperature. She has recently been struggling with dry mouth during pregnancy.
- On exam she has facial asymmetry, redness to her cheek near her jaw that is indurated and tender, and visible purulence emanating from Stenson's duct.

What is Parotitis?

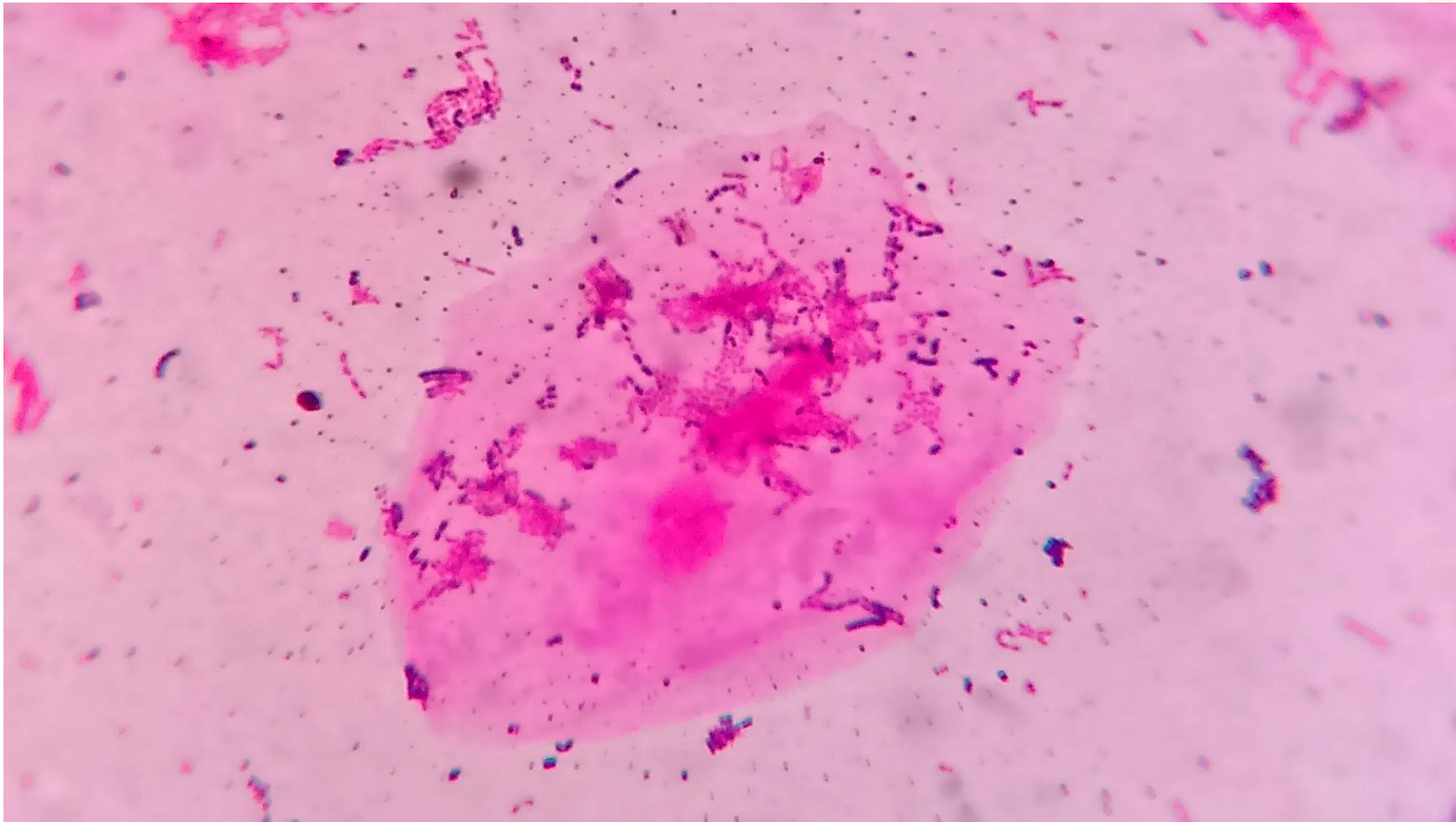


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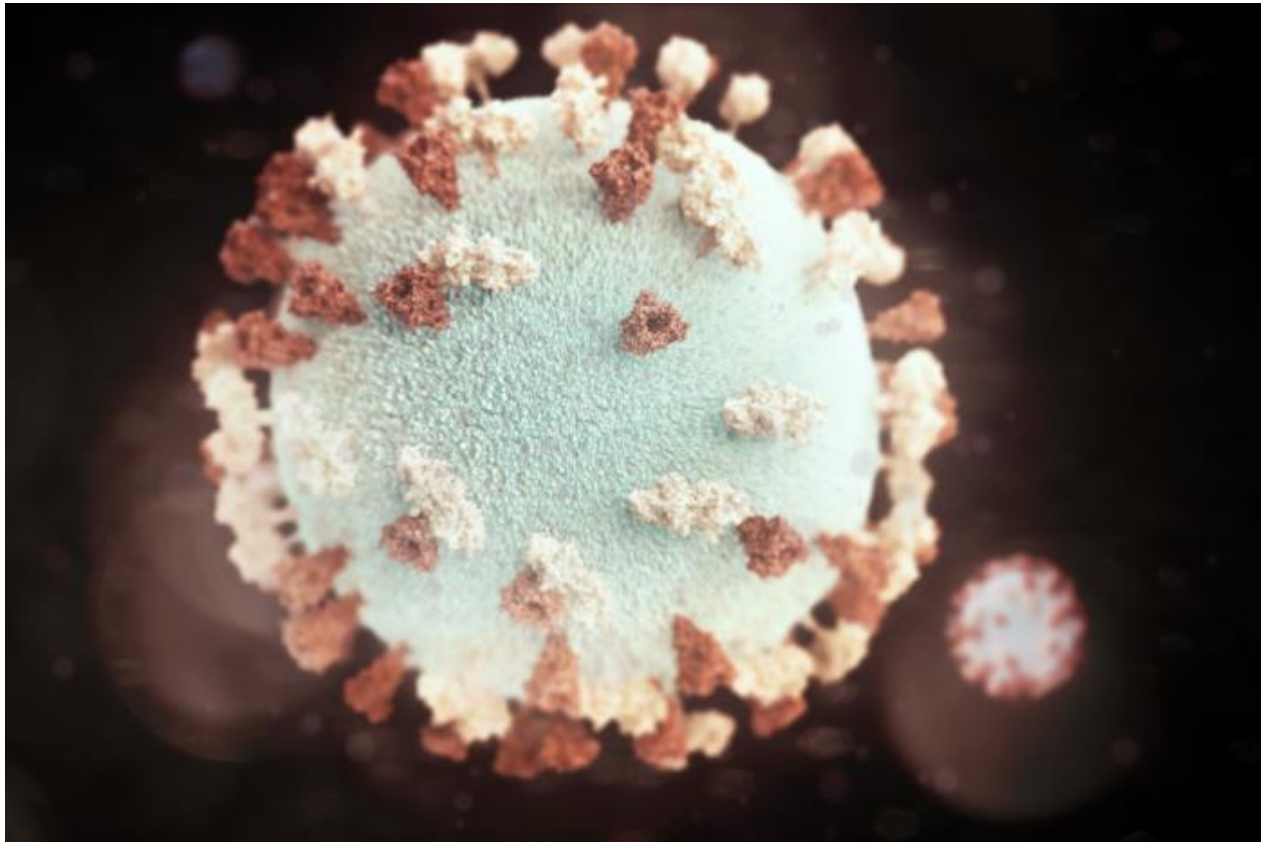
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Infectious Causes of Parotitis

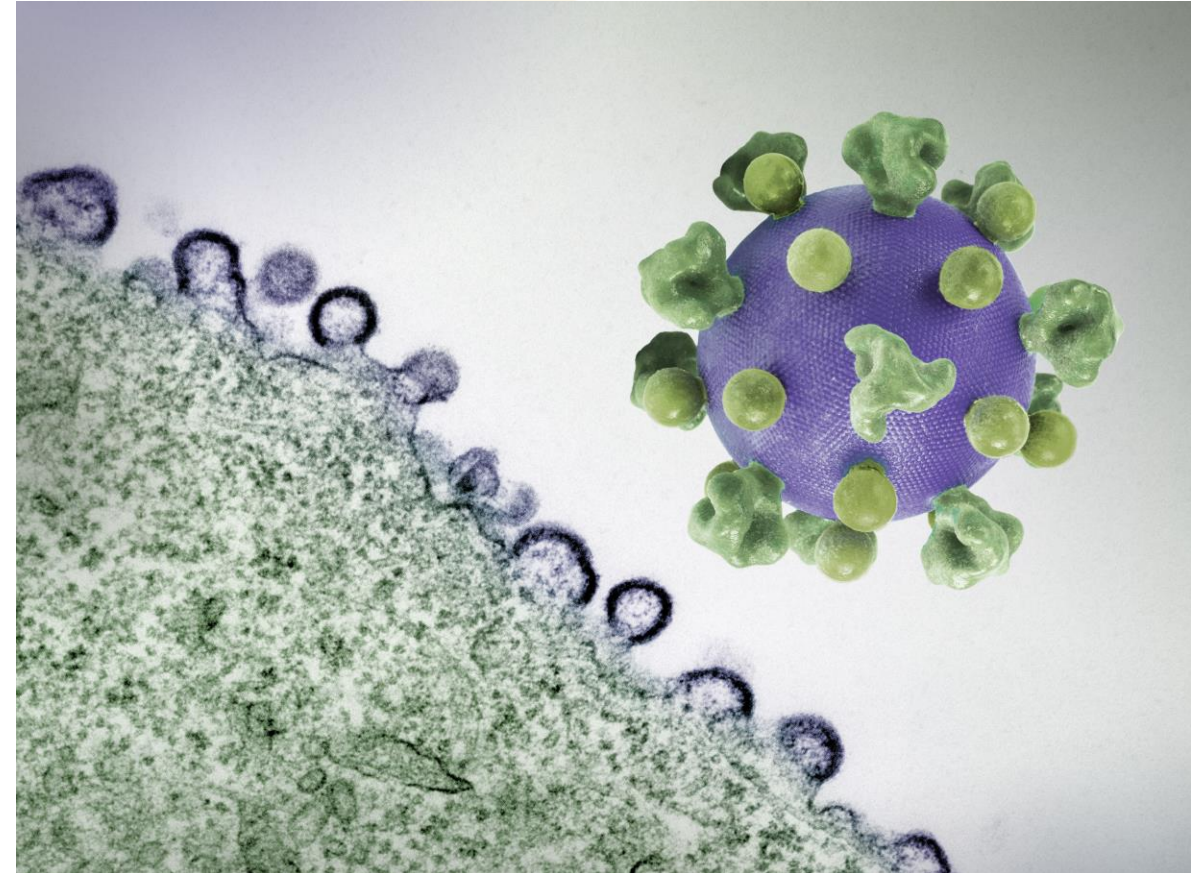


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Infectious Causes of Parotitis



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Infectious Causes of Parotitis

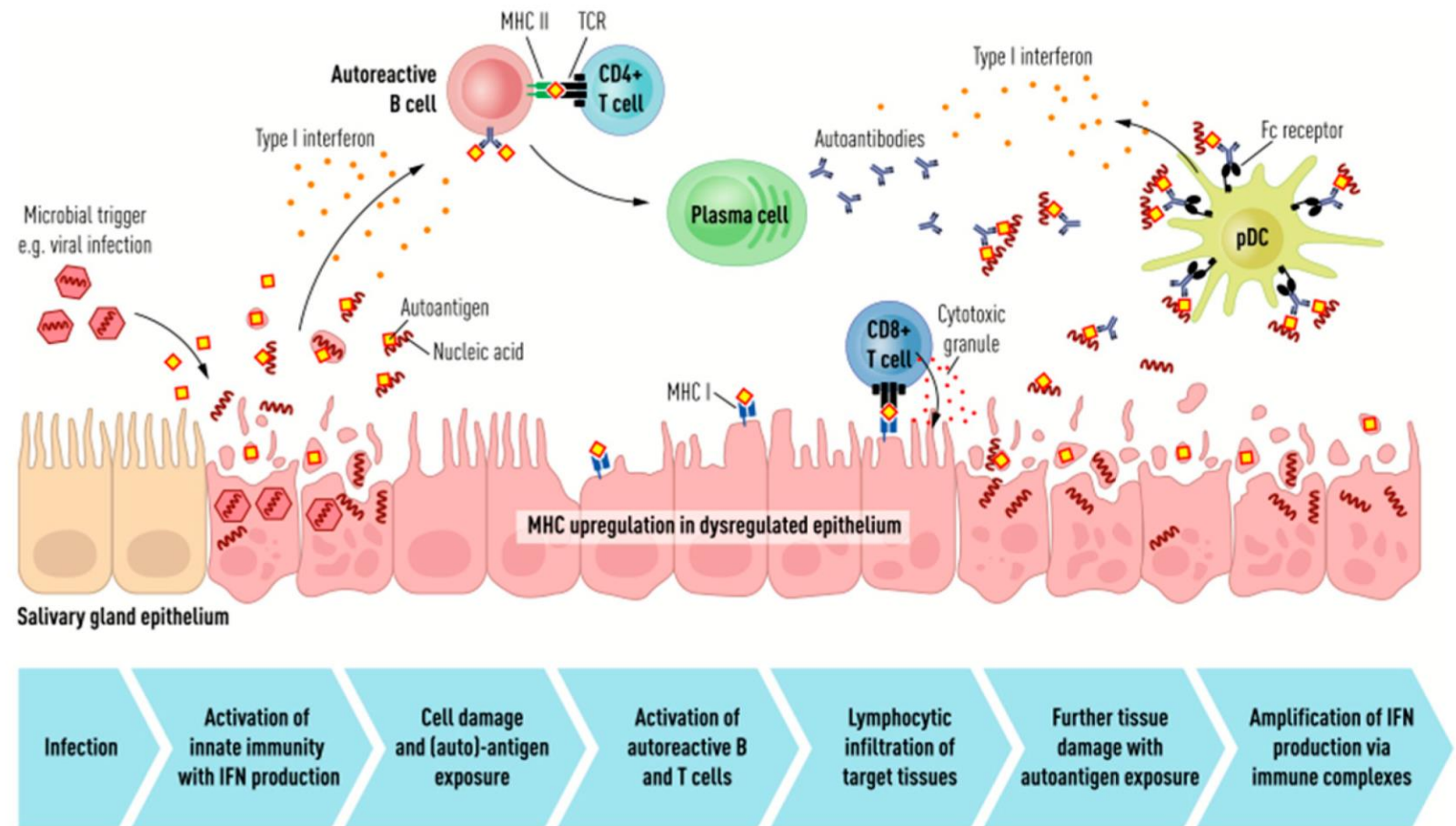


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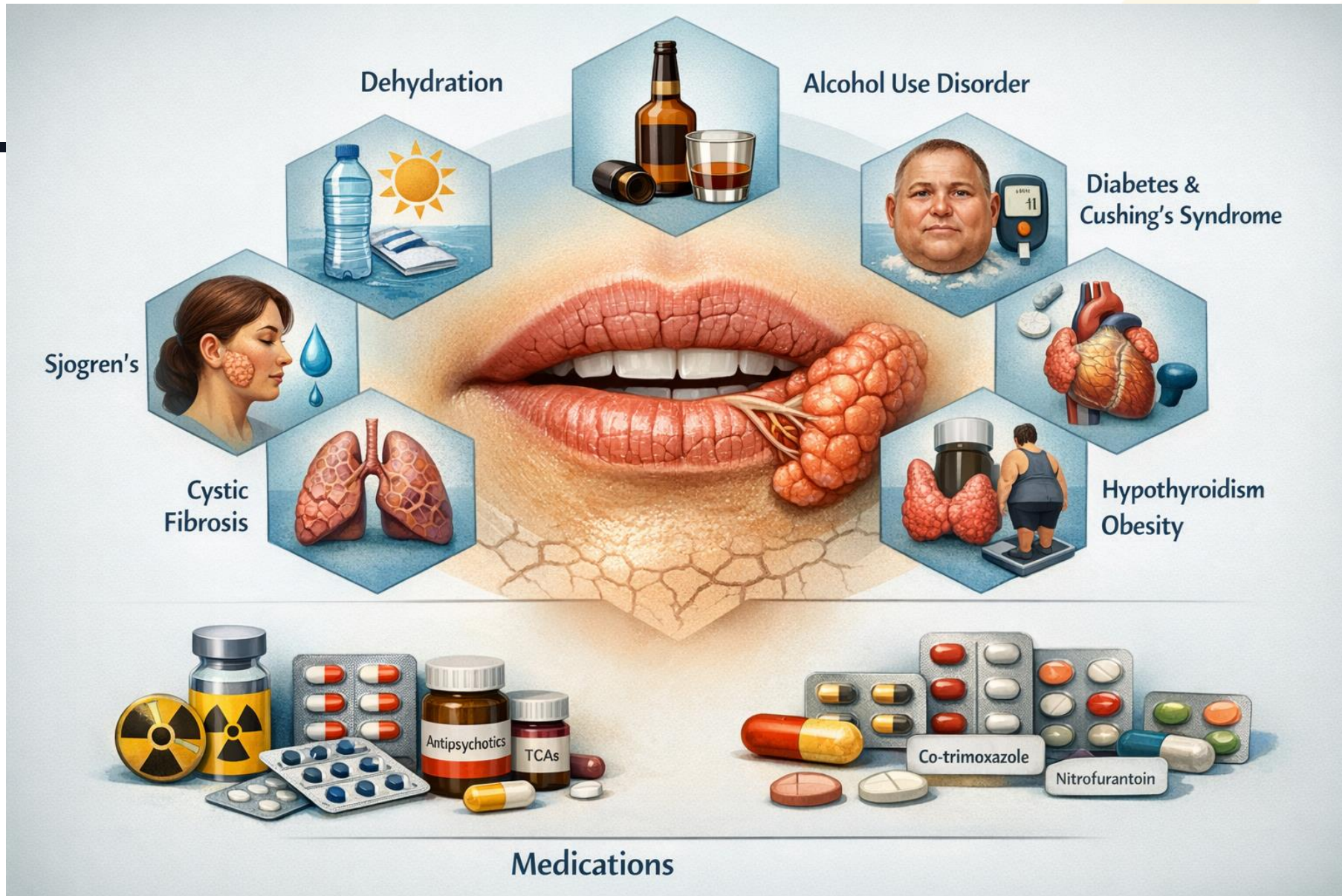
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Non-Infectious Causes of Parotitis



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Parotitis Diagnosis Made Easy!

- Bilateral = Viral



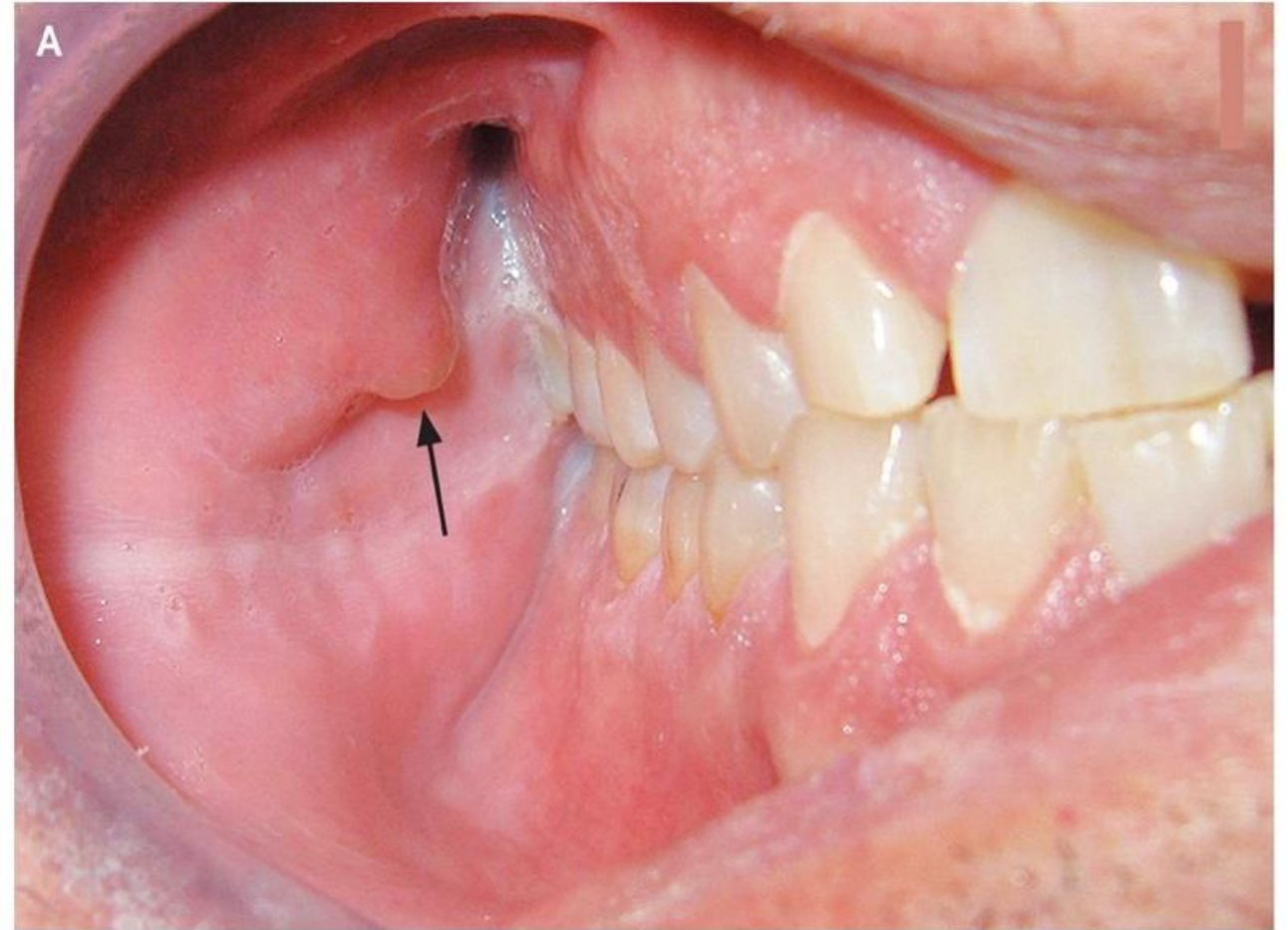
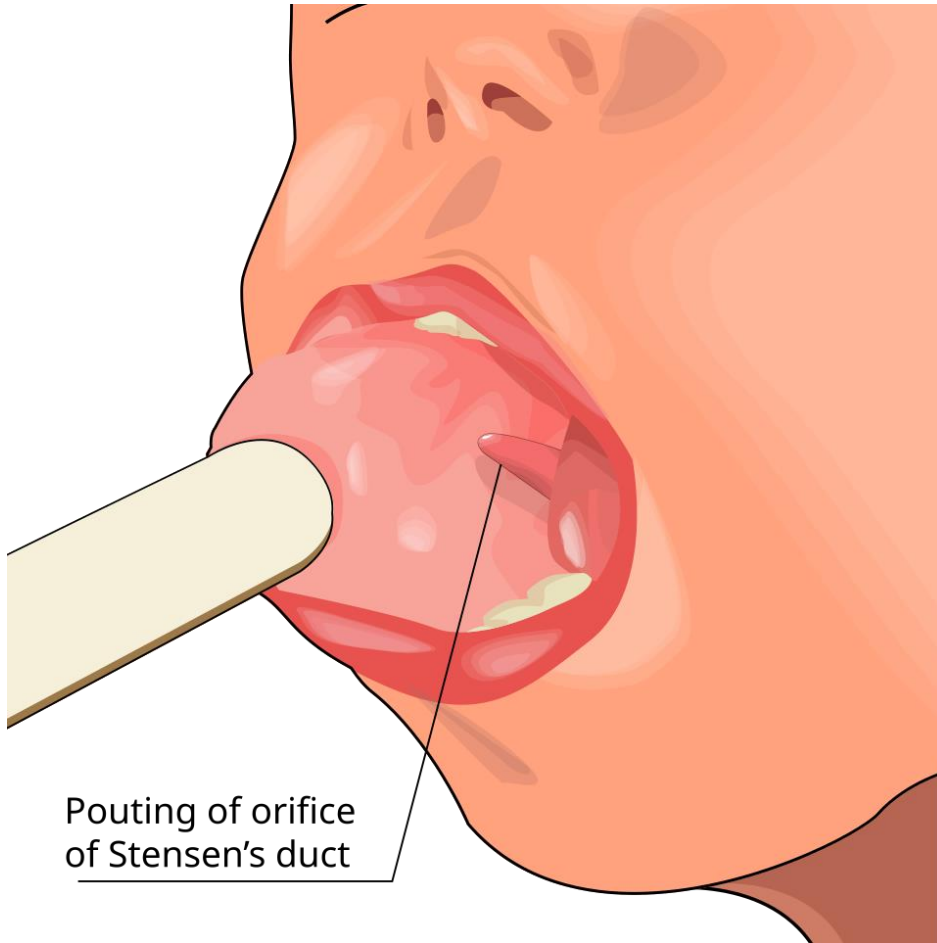
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- Unilateral = Bacterial or Stone



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Workup



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Treatment



Antibiotics



Or



Or



+

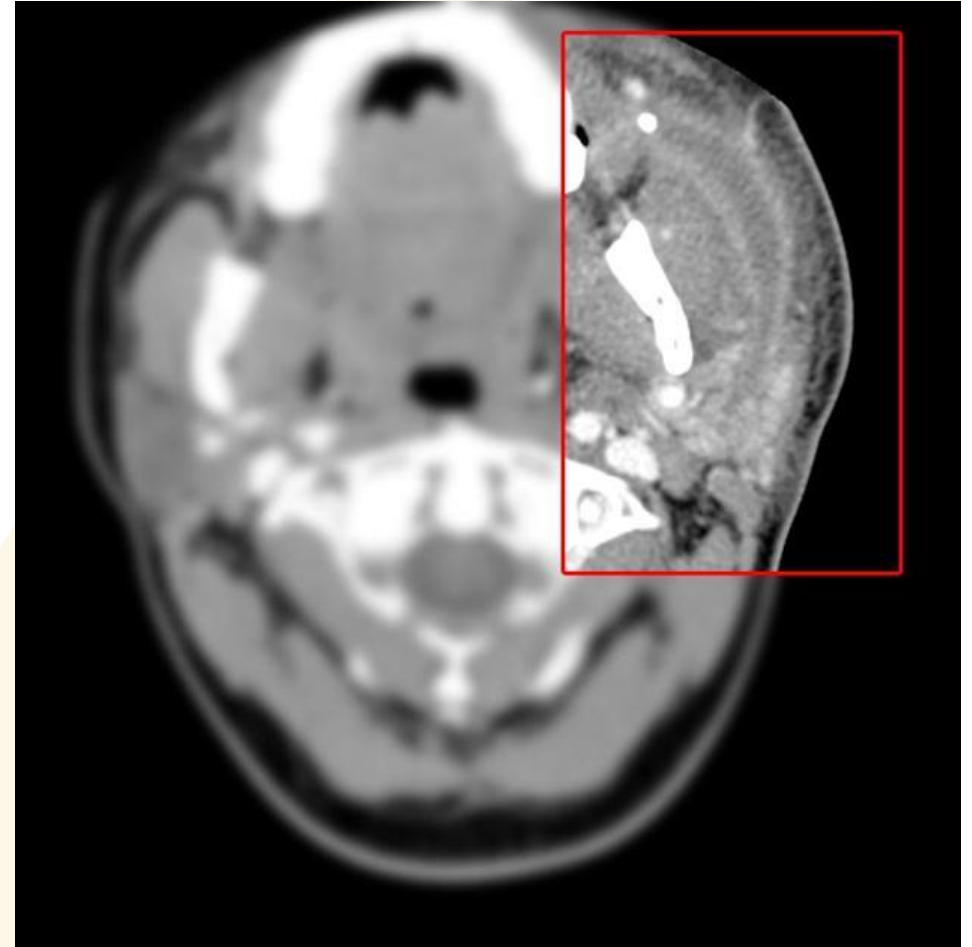


MRSA Specific Antibiotics



Disposition

- Mild to moderate cases managed outpatient
- Refer systemically ill patients to the ED
- Confirm suspected salivary stone diagnosis with imaging if not improving after 48 hours



Radswiki T, Sialolithiasis. Case study, Radiopaedia.org (Accessed on 18 Mar 2026) <https://doi.org/10.53347/rID-11927>

Differential Diagnosis for Parotitis



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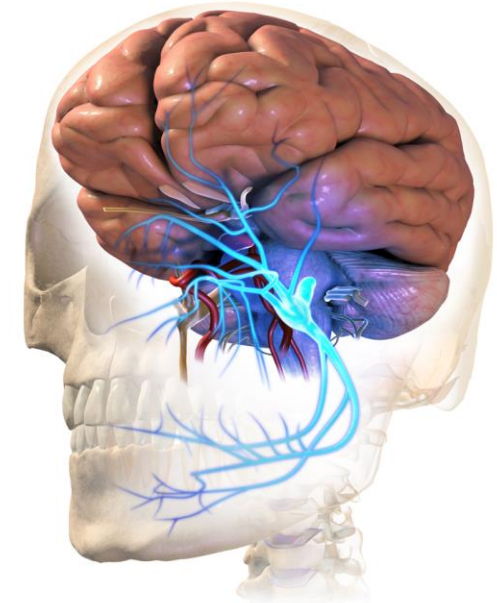
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Differential Diagnosis for Parotitis

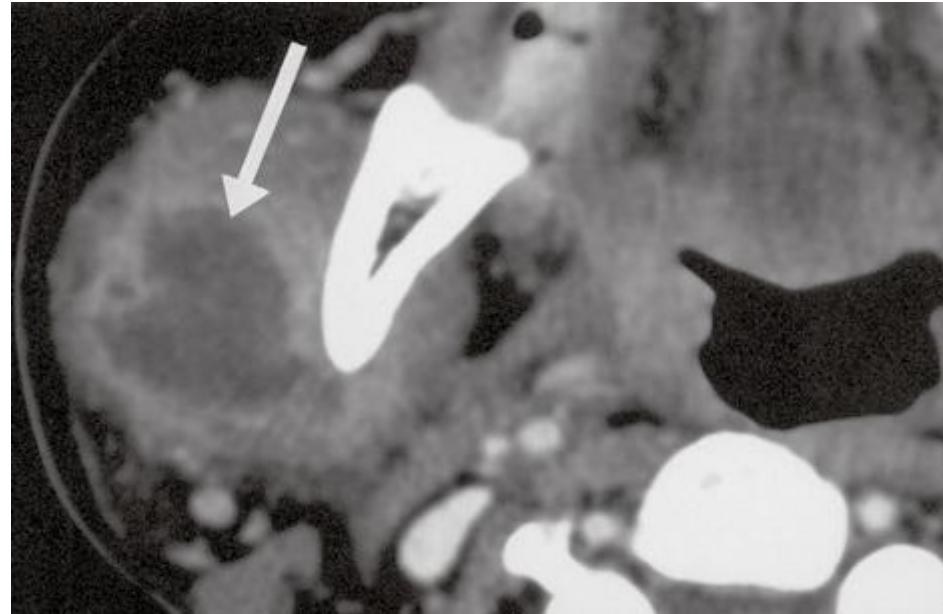


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Red Flag ENT Infections



Abscess over the left parotid gland area. (Dr. Noorali Bharwani)



Ramalingam, Ganesh & Leese, T. (2005). Parotid abscess in Singapore. Singapore medical journal. 46. 553-6.



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Red Flag ENT Infections



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Red Flag ENT Infections



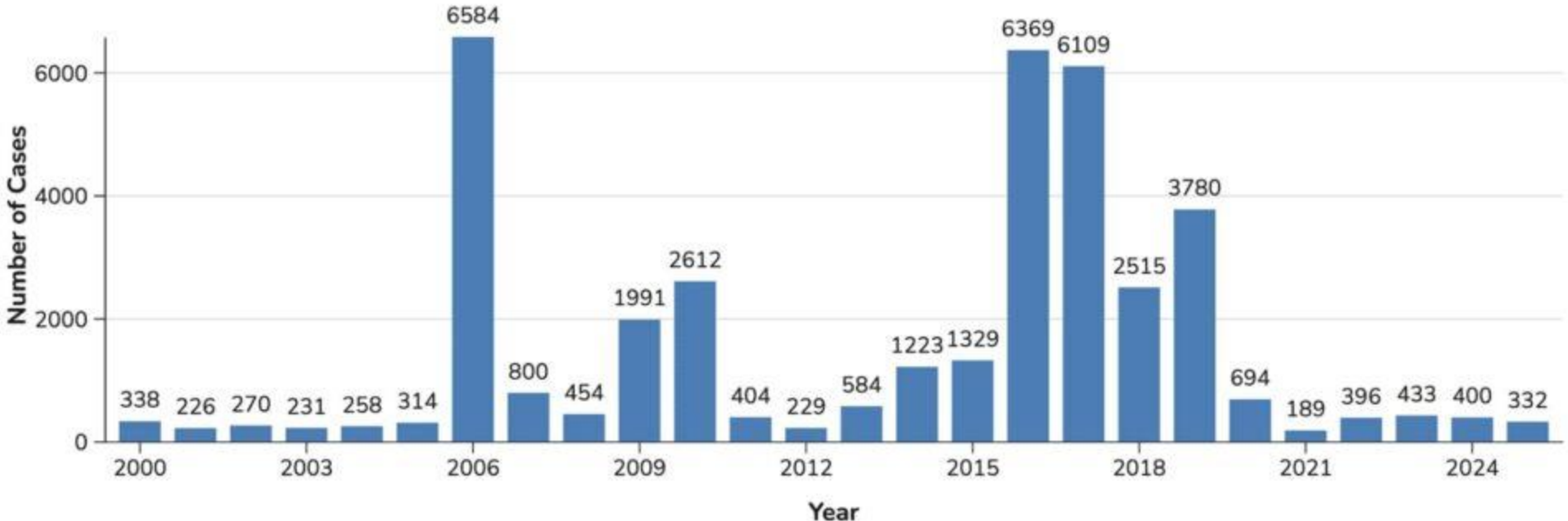
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<https://doi.org/10.53347/rID-19938>

Viral Parotitis and Mumps Update

Reported U.S. mumps cases by year (2000–2025)



<https://www.cdc.gov/mumps/outbreaks/index.html>

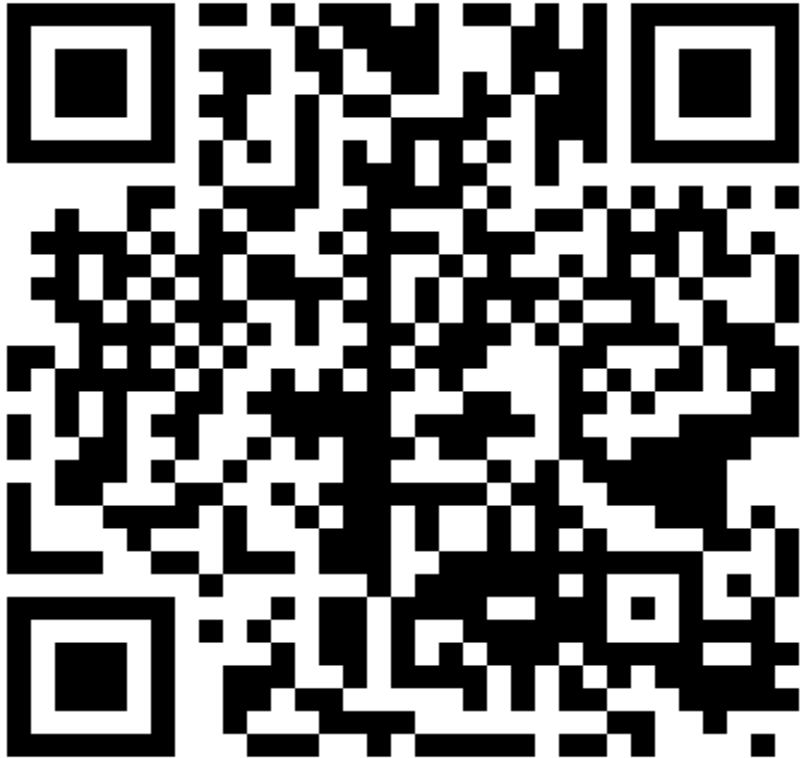
Take Home Points

- Parotitis is primarily a clinical diagnosis
- Bilateral parotitis is likely viral
- Unilateral parotitis is likely bacterial or stone related
- Treat with sialagogues and antibiotics that cover oral flora
- Follow-up with ENT if not improving after 48-72 hours of treatment

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