health net News Now

OCTOBER, 2026

INDUSTRY NEWS

Surging Measles Outbreaks May Fuel Mumps and Other Infections

Mumps Outbreak Highlights Importance of Vaccination



Forbes (10/6, Stone) A recent mumps outbreak at San Diego State University has sidelined 17 football players since mid-September, despite the university requiring students to provide proof of two doses of the measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine.

Mumps outbreaks can still occur in highly vaccinated populations because immunity may decrease over time. Two doses of the MMR vaccine are highly effective against measles and provide substantial protection against mumps, but protection against mumps can wane years after vaccination.

Mumps is a contagious viral illness spread through respiratory droplets and saliva. It can spread quickly in close-contact settings such as college campuses, dormitories and other shared living environments. Symptoms may include fever, fatigue, muscle aches and swelling of the salivary glands. Some people may have mild symptoms or none at all, making transmission harder to detect.

Although most people recover, mumps can occasionally cause serious complications, including meningitis, hearing loss and inflammation of the testicles or ovaries. In rare cases, reproductive complications can occur.

The outbreak comes amid renewed attention to vaccination rates and vaccine-preventable diseases nationwide. Public-health experts continue to emphasize that maintaining high vaccination rates helps protect individuals as well as people who cannot be vaccinated because of age or medical conditions.

Measles is another growing concern. In addition to causing serious illness, research shows measles can weaken the immune system's memory of previous infections, potentially leaving people more vulnerable to other diseases for years afterward.

Vaccination remains one of the most effective tools for preventing serious illness and limiting outbreaks of measles, mumps and other vaccine-preventable diseases.

TALKING TREND

Agentic AI: The Next Step in Health Plan Automation



Agentic AI is emerging as a way to coordinate information and tasks across multiple systems.

Health plans have invested heavily in digital tools designed to improve efficiency and the member experience. Yet according to a recent J.D. Power study, only 30% of commercial health plan members view their insurer as a trusted partner in their health and wellness.

One challenge is that many automated systems operate independently. Member services, claims, prior authorization and compliance teams may each use different tools, creating gaps when information needs to move from one function to another.

The impact can be significant. An American Medical Association survey found that prior authorization consumes an average of 13 hours of physician and staff time each week, while 95% of physicians said it can delay access to necessary care.

Connecting the Workflow

Agentic AI is emerging as a way to coordinate information and tasks across multiple systems. Unlike traditional automation, which typically performs a single predefined task, AI agents can gather information from different sources, identify missing documentation and route cases for follow-up.

For member services, this could mean assembling eligibility, claims history and prior interactions before a representative receives a call. In prior authorization, AI could help identify missing information and prepare straightforward requests while escalating complex cases for clinical review.

The potential extends to claims and compliance as well. The American Hospital Association reported that hospitals spent approximately $43 billion in 2025 pursuing payment from insurers for care already delivered. Better coordination and documentation could help reduce some of the administrative friction that contributes to denials and payment delays.

Human Oversight Still Matters

Health plans adopting agentic AI will also need strong governance. Clinical and coverage decisions must remain subject to appropriate human clinical review, while AI-supported processes should include clear escalation procedures, monitoring and audit trails.

Early adoption is likely to focus on well-defined processes such as gathering prior authorization documentation or performing an initial claims review. If implemented responsibly, agentic AI could help health plans connect existing technologies, reduce administrative burden and create a more seamless experience for members, providers and health plan teams.

WELLNESS

November 14 is World Diabetes Day



Did you know that more than 40% of people living with diabetes across the globe are undiagnosed?

From the World Health Organization (WHO), without a diagnosis, people living with diabetes may not be able to access the care, treatment and support they need to manage their diabetes and live healthy lives.

Knowing the symptoms of diabetes can help people recognize when to seek support. Common symptoms of diabetes include increased thirst, frequent urination, tiredness and blurred vision.

Type 1 diabetes often develops rapidly, while type 2 diabetes typically develops gradually and may cause few or no noticeable symptoms.

The 2026 World Diabetes Day theme, "Early action on diabetes," highlights the importance of earlier diagnosis, access to comprehensive care and reducing diabetes stigma.

Managing diabetes is a lifelong journey, and Health Net is here to help. Members can explore our Diabetes Resources Page for educational tools, healthy living tips, and support resources, and download our Diabetes Pocket Guide for easy-to-reference care information.

JUST FOR FUN

This Thanksgiving, Play Thanksgiving Parade Bingo!

Add some extra fun to your Thanksgiving celebration by playing Thanksgiving Parade Bingo.

Follow along during the parade, mark off the sights you spot, and see who gets bingo first.

Download and print your free bingo cards here, or create your own!

All of us here at Health Net wish you and yours a happy and yummy Thanksgiving!



© Pearson Education, Inc. All Rights Reserved.