

## TALKING TREND

### New Weight Loss Drugs Surge in Popularity

Obesity affects [roughly 42% of U.S. adults](#), according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). And about two-thirds of Americans (65%) say [willpower alone usually isn't enough](#) for most people who are trying to lose weight and keep it off, according to a new [Pew Research Center survey](#).

Put those two facts together, and it should come as no surprise that a new class of drugs to help people lose weight – including Ozempic, Wegovy and similar medications – has [soared in popularity](#). In the Center survey, about three-quarters of Americans say they have heard or read at least a little about these drugs.



Unfortunately, supply has not kept up with the soaring popularity. Some people have resorted to [ordering the drugs online](#) or through [compounding pharmacies](#), both of which can be a gamble. In other countries, fake versions have [led to hospitalizations](#)<sup>1</sup>.

CNN Medical Correspondent Meg Tirrell advises, “It’s important to consult with a trusted health-care provider if you’re considering these medicines — like all prescription drugs, they have powerful effects,” Tirrell said. “A trusted health-care provider can work with you to assess which options are best for you and to monitor safety, efficacy and how well you tolerate the medicines.”

For questions about Health Net’s policy regarding weight loss prescription drugs, please contact your Health Net Account Representative.

<sup>1</sup> CNN Health

## INDUSTRY NEWS

### States Imposing Tighter Prior Authorization Rules On Health Insurance Companies



[Modern Healthcare](#) (8/27, McAuliff) reports, “While Congress appears stalled with its legislative proposals to streamline prior authorizations, many states have surged ahead and imposed tighter rules on health insurance companies.” A National Conference of State Legislatures database shows that “23 states enacted more than 43 bills related to prior authorization in the last few years, with 18 enacted so far in 2024 alone.”

While insurers including UnitedHealth Group and Cigna Healthcare “have eased prior authorization requirements for certain services, complaints from providers and patients continue.”

The American Medical Association, “which opposes restrictive prior authorization policies, reported last week that 10 states – Colorado, Illinois, Maine, Maryland, Minnesota, Mississippi, Oklahoma, Vermont, Virginia and Wyoming – have approved broad prior authorization bills it supports.”

Although Oregon has no current legislation pending, Trillium New Prior Authorization requirements became effective May 1, 2024. For prior authorization requirements effective May 1, 2024, please review this notification: [PA Notice & NIA Partnership \(Trillium, Health Net and Wellcare\)](#), (PDF).

## HEALTH NET NEWS

### Small Business Group Updates

#### Big news for small business groups!

We will no embed pediatric dental benefits into all of our small group plans.

Also, a reminder that we have relaxed our underwriting guidelines.

- We now only require a Form 132 for groups with 2 or fewer enrollees.
- We do not need a cancelled check for the first month’s EFT premium.



#### Commissions will change for our small group plans in 2025

We will offer a promotional commission of 4.5% for new, small business groups with a January 1, 2025 – March 31, 2025 effective date. The 4.5% will remain in effect for the first year of the case. Commissions will return to 3.5% after one year. 3.5% will be small group commissions for April 1, 2025 and beyond.

For more information, contact your Health Net Account Representative.

## WELLNESS October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month



According to the [National Breast Cancer Foundation](#):

1 in 8 women in the United States will be diagnosed with breast cancer in her lifetime.

In 2024, an estimated 310,720 women and 2,800 men will be diagnosed with invasive breast cancer.

Chances are, you know at least one person who has been personally affected by breast cancer.

But there is hope. When caught in its earliest, localized stages, the 5-year relative survival rate is 99%. Advances in [early detection](#) and [treatment](#) methods have significantly increased breast cancer survival rates in recent years, and there are currently over 4 million breast cancer survivors in the United States.

Awareness of the facts and statistics surrounding breast cancer in the United States is key in empowering individuals to make informed decisions about their health.

To learn more about Breast Cancer awareness, Health Net members have access to wellness tools and resources through [Health Net Sharecare](#).

## JUST FOR FUN

### Healthy Halloween Treats That Won’t Disappoint

While indulging in the occasional candy treat is okay, according to [Northwest Family Clinics](#), the average American child consumes a startling amount of sugar annually. Excessive sugar intake can lead to various health issues, including obesity, tooth decay, and an increased risk of chronic diseases like diabetes. Therefore, it’s essential to strike a balance between enjoying the festivities and maintaining a healthy lifestyle. (Ask if any of the children have dairy or nut allergies if your treats include these ingredients.)



#### Halloween Treat Alternatives

##### 1. Fruit Snacks and Fruit Leather

Instead of sugary candy, opt for fruit snacks and fruit leather made from real fruit without added sugars. These treats offer a natural sweet taste without the added sugars and artificial flavors found in many candies.

##### 2. Dark Chocolate

If you want to satisfy a chocolate craving, choose dark chocolate with a high cocoa content (70% or more). Dark chocolate contains less sugar than milk chocolate and provides antioxidants that can benefit overall health.

##### 3. Trail Mix

Buy small pre-made sealed packs of trail mix with a variety of nuts, seeds, dried fruits, and a hint of dark chocolate chips. It’s a balanced and energy-packed snack that can keep kids fueled during their Halloween adventures.

##### 4. Mini Popcorn Bags

Small, individually portioned and sealed bags of air-popped or lightly seasoned popcorn make for a tasty and satisfying treat without excessive calories or sugar.

##### 5. Non-Food Treats

Consider handing out non-food items like stickers, temporary tattoos, mini toys, or glow sticks. These alternatives can be just as exciting for kids and are free from added sugars.

##### 6. Yogurt-Covered Raisins or Pretzels

These snacks offer a combination of sweet and salty flavors while containing less sugar than traditional candy-coated treats.

##### 7. Sugar-Free Gum

Sugar-free gum can be an excellent alternative, as it can help satisfy the desire for something sweet without the harmful effects of sugar.

##### 8. Fruit Cups

Individual servings of fresh fruit cups with no added sugars are a healthier option for Halloween treats.

##### 9. Mini Cheese Packs

Cheese sticks or small cheese portions can be a unique and satisfying option that provides protein and calcium.