

Infectious Disease: Things Have Not Gotten as Stupid as They Are Going to Get



By Alex Berezow, PhD — September 5, 2019



Credit: Public Domain/Wikipedia [1]

"Things have not gotten as stupid as they are going to get."

That was [tweeted](#) [2] by John Tabin, co-host of a podcast called "The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Friends," back in 2015. It's fair to say that his prophecy has been fulfilled several times over since then. Here are some of the infectious disease stories that are [trending on Google Search](#) [3] right now:

Don't kiss the chickens in your backyard. If you're one of those people who insist on eating eggs fresh from a bird's cloaca, there is something you need to know. Your feathered friend can carry *Salmonella*. This bacterium can be found [both outside and inside the egg](#) [4], which is why you should always cook eggs thoroughly.

Another pro-tip from the [CDC](#) [5]: Wash your hands and, "Don't kiss backyard poultry or snuggle them." Apparently, not enough people are following that advice because, according to the same CDC report, since January 1 of this year, multiple outbreaks of *Salmonella* have infected more than 1,000 people, hospitalized at least 175, and killed two.

Global outbreaks of measles and mumps are occurring. Thanks to the tireless efforts of [anti-vaccine crusaders like Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.](#) [6], entirely preventable infectious diseases are back, not only in the United States but in many other developed nations. In New Zealand, there are now more than 1,000 cases in an [outbreak of measles](#) [7] that is centered in Auckland. (In Europe, there are a whopping [90,000 cases this year](#) [8].) Furthermore, the state of New Mexico is reporting an [outbreak of mumps](#) [9]. That, of course, is entirely predictable because the measles vaccine (MMR) also protects against mumps and rubella.

Anti-vaxxers also aren't vaccinating their pets. If you thought that only humans were endangered by anti-vaxxers, you are wrong. According to [CNN](#) [10], a UK animal charity reports that only about 2/3 of pets (specifically, dogs, cats, and rabbits) are being fully vaccinated on time. That is down from 84% just three years ago. This leaves our pets vulnerable to diseases like "cat flu, rabbit viral hemorrhagic disease and parvovirus." (As we reported earlier, rabbit hemorrhagic disease is sort of like [Ebola for bunnies](#) [11]; it is highly infectious and lethal.)

How much more stupid can things get? With people turning down a shot that [literally helps prevent cancer](#) [12], we have a long way to go before we hit rock bottom.

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Source URL: <https://www.acsh.org/news/2019/09/05/infectious-disease-things-have-not-gotten-stupid-they-are-going-get-14272>

Links

[1] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stupidity#/media/File:Quentin_Massys_030.jpg

[2] <https://twitter.com/johntabin/status/630924233569370112?s=20>

[3] <https://trends.google.com/trends/trendingsearches/realtime?geo=US&category=m>

[4] <https://www.acsh.org/news/2017/07/27/backyard-chickens-are-fun-until-vomiting-and-diarrhea-begin-11623>

[5] <https://www.cdc.gov/salmonella/backyardpoultry-05-19/index.html>

[6] <https://www.acsh.org/news/2019/09/04/if-rfk-jr-likes-your-article-it-might-get-retracted-14271>

[7] <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-49589620>

[8] <https://www.acsh.org/news/2019/08/29/nyts-eric-lipton-defends-anti-vaxxers-measles-ravages-europe-14255>

[9] <https://kfoxtv.com/news/local/new-mexico-investigating-six-cases-of-mumps>

[10] <https://www.cnn.com/2019/09/05/health/anti-vax-pets-gbr-scli-intl/index.html>

[11] <https://www.acsh.org/news/2019/07/25/ebola-bunnies-rabbit-hemorrhagic-disease-strikes-washington-state-14179>

[12] <https://www.acsh.org/news/2019/08/27/vaccine-could-prevent-nearly-75-hpv-associated-cancers-14251>