



Still have healthcare questions? Call the number on the back of your member card.

Why Does Healthcare Cost So Much?

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Healthcare spending in the United States is \$3 trillion a year, straining the budgets of families, businesses and taxpayers alike.

The price of medical care is the single biggest factor behind healthcare costs. These expenditures reflect the cost of caring for those with chronic or long-term medical conditions, an aging population and the increased cost of new medicines, procedures and technologies.

The new health reform law also has expanded access to insurance to millions of Americans. We've transitioned to a healthcare system in which everyone can obtain health insurance regardless of age or health status, and many individuals who are newly insured need ongoing medical attention.

Though medical costs are the main reason for the persistent growth in healthcare spending, too much of this money is not well spent. In fact, studies indicate that 30 cents of every healthcare dollar goes to care that is ineffective or redundant.

We can all play a part in helping to make America healthier--and curb healthcare costs. Our healthcare system itself must focus more on quality care for patients that helps them get healthy faster and stay healthy longer.



What Blue Cross Blue Shield Plans are Doing

[Learn how](#) BCBS' leadership in patient-centered care is driving better quality and affordability.

Tools And Resources For Healthy Living

Here are a few helpful resources to jumpstart your journey to a healthier you:

- Visit smokefree.gov for tools and tips to help you quit smoking.
- [Read about](#) the benefits of physical activity.
- [Learn more](#) about healthy eating and losing weight the healthy way.
- Use the USDA [SuperTracker](#) to plan, analyze and track your diet and physical activity.
- Visit ChooseMyPlate.gov for helpful information about healthy eating and nutrition, including recipes, daily food plans, videos, healthy eating on a budget, and more.

In the News

- **Washington Post, March 13, 2016**
[Rattled By Drug Price Increases, Hospitals Seek Ways To Stay On Guard](#)
- **USA Today, March 8, 2016**
[Feds Call Prescription Drug Price 2014 Increase 'Remarkable'](#)
- **The Washington Post, January 11, 2016**
[Prescription Drug Prices Jumped More Than 10 Percent in 2015, Analysis Finds](#)
- **The Washington Post, December 2, 2015**
[Obamacare and Drug Prices Push Healthcare Spending to](#)



Prescription drugs play a critical role in helping to prevent, manage and cure disease. A key factor pushing up healthcare costs is the price of new specialty drugs.

[Read More.](#)



Chronic diseases and conditions including [heart disease](#), stroke, cancer, diabetes, obesity and arthritis are among the most common, costly--and preventable--of all health problems.

[Read More.](#)



Avoiding the unhealthy behaviors that may lead to chronic diseases can help prevent chronic conditions and ultimately ease the cost burden on the healthcare system.

[Read More.](#)





Find out what Blue Cross and Blue Shield companies are doing to improve healthcare quality and rein in costs.

Pathway to Better Health »



Choose to be your own health advocate and take control of your health today. There are many steps you and your family can take to improve your own health, such as quitting smoking, losing weight, adhering and complying with your medication regimen as prescribed by your doctor, seeking appropriate preventive and follow-up care, and becoming an informed consumer when purchasing the care you need. All of these choices can lead to a healthier you, help to lower your healthcare costs and reduce overall healthcare spending.

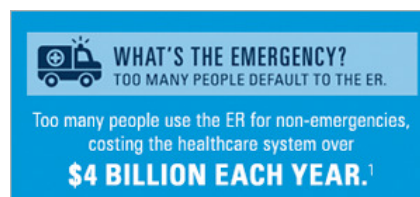
STEPS YOU CAN TAKE



Choose to be your own health advocate and take control of your health today. There are many steps you and your family can take to improve your own health, such as quitting smoking, losing weight and making good choices about how you purchase medical care. All of these choices can lead to a healthier you, help to lower your healthcare costs and reduce overall healthcare spending.

[Read More](#)

WHAT'S THE EMERGENCY?



Recognizing which health conditions aren't true emergencies and are best treated by going to a local urgent care facility rather than the emergency room can help you save your time and money, and reduce overall healthcare costs.

Learn more about urgent care and when you should use it and which medical conditions actually require [a trip to the ER](#).

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The Blue Cross and Blue Shield System consists of **36 independently operated Blue Cross and Blue Shield member companies**, a **Federal Employee Program**® and an **Association**, which serves the collective needs of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Plans.



[\\$3 Trillion](#)

- Associated Press, October 28, 2015
[Drug Prices Top Americans' List of Health Care Concerns](#)
- Reuters, October 6, 2015
[Express Scripts Sees \\$750 Million in Spending on New Cholesterol Drugs](#)
- Reuters, July 29, 2015
[Express Scripts Says Costly New Cholesterol Drugs Could 'Wreak Havoc'](#)
- Bloomberg, July 28, 2015
[Health Spending to Gobble Up More of U.S. Economy in Next Decade](#)
- USA Today, June 5, 2015
[Nation's Sickest Seniors Reshape Health Care](#)
- Reuters, May 13, 2015
[Number of Americans Using \\$100,000 in Medicines Triples: Express Scripts](#)
- Modern Healthcare, April 14, 2015
[Specialty Drugs, Medicaid Expansion Drive Jump in Prescription Spending](#)
- Bloomberg, February 18, 2015
[U.S. Health-Care Spending Is on the Rise Again](#)



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