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Economic Impact of Cancer

The financial costs of cancer are high for both the person with cancer and for society as a whole.

The Agency for Healthcare research and Quality (AHRQ) estimates that the direct medical costs (total of all health care costs) for cancer in the US in 2015 were **\$80.2 billion**.

- 52% of this cost is for hospital outpatient or doctor office visits
- 38% of this cost is for inpatient hospital stays

PLEASE NOTE: These estimates are based on a set of large-scale surveys of individuals and their medical providers called the Medical Expenditure Panel Survey (MEPS). Estimates were accessed directly from the MEPS website, www.meps.ahrq.gov/mepsweb/.

One of the major costs of cancer is cancer treatment. But lack of health insurance and other barriers to health care prevent many Americans from getting optimal health care.

- According to the US Census Bureau, about 28 million people (9%) in the US were uninsured in 2016.
- The percentage of uninsured ranged from 3% in Massachusetts to 17% in Texas.

And according to [Cancer Facts & Figures 2018](#)², “Uninsured patients and those from many ethnic minority groups are substantially more likely to be diagnosed with cancer at a later stage, when treatment can be more extensive, costlier, and less successful.”

This year, about 609,640 Americans are expected to die of cancer – that’s more than 1,670 people a day. Cancer is the second most common cause of death in the US,

exceeded only by heart disease.

Cancer costs us billions of dollars. It also costs us the people we love. Reducing barriers to cancer care is critical in the fight to eliminate suffering and death due to cancer.

Hyperlinks

1. <http://www.meps.ahrq.gov/mepsweb/>
2. www.cancer.org/research/cancer-facts-statistics/all-cancer-facts-figures/cancer-facts-figures-2018.html

References

American Cancer Society. *Cancer Facts & Figures 2018*. Atlanta, GA, 2018.

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Written by

The American Cancer Society medical and editorial content team
(www.cancer.org/cancer/acs-medical-content-and-news-staff.html)

Our team is made up of doctors and oncology certified nurses with deep knowledge of cancer care as well as journalists, editors, and translators with extensive experience in medical writing.

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