



5 WAYS TO SAVE ON HEALTH CARE COSTS IN RETIREMENT

Determining how much to set aside for health care costs in retirement is complicated and will differ from one person to the next. That's because many variables must be considered from your personal and family medical history to an unforeseen illness or injury, and the likelihood that your health will decline as you age. However, what you can rely on with some certainty is that the decades-long trend in rising medical costs will continue well into the future.¹

The Employee Benefit Research Institute's (EBRI) most recent estimates for health care cost in retirement support this upward cost trajectory. In 2017, the EBRI estimated that a 65-year-old couple with median prescription drug expenses would need to have \$273,000 set aside for health expenses (not including long-term care expenses) to be 90% certain that they'd have enough to pay for their health care costs in retirement.² That's an increase of \$8,000 from EBRI's 2016 estimate.³ And for a couple with prescription drug expenses at the top percentile throughout retirement who want a 90% chance of having enough money saved for health care expenses in retirement by age 65, targeted savings would be \$368,000, up from \$349,000 in 2016.^{2,3}

While there's little you can do to stem the rise in medical costs, there are ways to help curb the amount you pay out-of-pocket. Below are five ways to help save money on medical expenses in retirement:

1. Do your homework before selecting the Medicare options that are right for you. For example, Medicare Advantage Plans can charge different out-of-pocket costs. They can also have different rules for how you get services, including whether you need a referral to see a specialist or if you must go to doctors, facilities, or suppliers that belong to the plan for non-emergency or non-urgent care services.
2. If you have Medicare Supplement Insurance (Medigap) or a Medicare Advantage Plan, use your insurance company's online tools to find in-network providers.
3. Compare prices. Some medical facilities charge hundreds more than others for tests and procedures, including X-rays, MRIs and lab work. [Healthcare Bluebook®](#) shows the price range by zip code for thousands of procedures and the "fair price," which is a reasonable amount you can expect to pay for the procedure in your area.
4. Ask your pharmacist about the lowest price available for each prescription. Many people are surprised to find that their "cash" out-of-pocket cost is the least expensive option for certain drugs.
5. Consider joining [GoodRx](#) or a similar program offering free drug cost-comparison tools and cost-saving coupons for certain medications.

If you have concerns about how you'll pay for healthcare costs in retirement, including long-term care expenses, call the office today to schedule time to talk about your retirement income needs.

¹ <https://www.aarp.org/health/health-insurance/info-2017/retiree-health-care-costs-rise-fd.html>

² https://www.ebri.org/publications/notes/index.cfm?fa=notesDisp&content_id=3525

³ https://www.ebri.org/publications/notes/index.cfm?fa=notesDisp&content_id=5527

TIPS FOR TRAVELING SOLO IN RETIREMENT

Traveling solo means you can go where you want, when you want at your own pace. You can enjoy the freedom of planning and following your own itinerary or deviating from it on a whim. But traveling solo doesn't have to mean going it alone – there are plenty of tours, cruises, excursions and even travel clubs that cater to parties of one. So, if you're concerned about safety, seclusion or boredom, joining a group is a great way to explore the destinations you choose while meeting new people along the way. And if planning isn't your thing, any number of travel companies would be happy to do it for you, from planning your itinerary, booking flights, reserving hotel rooms, and even arranging for meals and sightseeing tours.

According to guidebook author and travel TV host, Rick Steves, safety concerns and loneliness top the list of reasons many people shy away from traveling alone.¹ The following are among his top tips for combatting both while enjoying the experience – or experiences – of a lifetime.

- Whether you're traveling in the U.S. or abroad, if you're looking to venture beyond a hotel, consider staying in a bed-and-breakfast. These are often family-run and may give you a chance to converse with the owners to get a feel for the local life, as well as possibly meet fellow travelers.
- At most tourist sites, you'll meet more people in an hour than you would at home in a day. If you're feeling shy, cameras are good icebreakers; offer to take someone's picture with his or her camera.
- As an alternative to formal dining, visit a local market or deli and get a picnic to eat in the square or a park. Local food trucks are another great option. Or dine at restaurants that seat multiple groups at the same table.
- While exploring off the beaten trail during the day may be fine, if you don't know the area it's best to stick to well-lit streets and districts known for their nightlife after dark.
- Pack light. Backpacks and small, lightweight suitcases with wheels can be a lone travelers best friend. The last thing you want to do when traveling is throw your back out hauling heavy bags.

Another important tip for those traveling solo: make sure that a relative, friend, or neighbor knows your itinerary and when to expect you back home. If you're traveling for weeks or months at a time, you may want to consider providing a trusted relative or friend with limited powers of attorney to take care of any unexpected matters in your absence; wire money from your account if you need it; or assist in getting you home in the event of an accident or injury.

To learn more about pursuing your goals in retirement with confidence, contact the office today.

¹ <https://www.ricksteves.com/travel-tips/trip-planning/tips-for-traveling-solo>

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