



The 10 Most Expensive Drugs in the U.S., Period

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Many drugs are expensive — but some drugs are *crazy* expensive. That's what a new analysis by the GoodRx Research team reveals.

We put together a list of the 10 most expensive drugs in the U.S., period, taking into account both drugs you can get at a pharmacy and those only a healthcare practitioner can administer. Relatively few people take most of these drugs — but the drugs' outsized costs translate into higher premiums and more restrictive formularies for everyone.

How we created the list

Every quarter, the GoodRx Research team tracks the [most expensive medications](#) filled at local pharmacies in the United States, and the same drugs continue to make the top of the list. Actimmune, Myalept, and Daraprim all cost over \$40,000 for a typical monthly supply. However, these are the most expensive drugs filled at pharmacies, and patients self-administer them on a regular basis.

These days, with the million-dollar drugs in the headlines, we wanted to also track the most expensive drugs, period — including the expensive infusions, cancer treatments, and gene therapies that you can't get from a pharmacy. We call these drugs "healthcare practitioner administered drugs" because only a medical professional can administer them. It may not be surprising, but they aren't cheap.

Many of the most expensive drugs are taken for an extended period of time, and costs quickly add up. Our analysis ranks drugs by their annual cost for a typical course of therapy. Prices are based on the drug's list price, which is the price that the pharmaceutical company assigns as an official price to a drug, then adjusted for time to create a comparable benchmark.

Most Expensive Drugs, Period

February 2020

	Drug name	Manufacturer	Annual cost based on length of therapy
1	Zolgensma	AveXis, Inc	\$2,125,000
2	Myalept	Amryt Pharma	\$855,678
3	Luxturna	Spark Therapeutics	\$850,000
4	Folotyn	Acrotech Biopharma	\$779,067
5	Soliris	Alexion Pharmaceuticals, Inc.	\$678,392
6	Blinicyto	Amgen, Inc	\$672,968
7	Ravicti	Horizon Therapeutics	\$664,092
8	Lumizyme	Sanofi Genzyme	\$643,243
9	Actimmune	Horizon Therapeutics	\$633,325
10	Takhzyro	Takeda Pharmaceuticals	\$591,035

*This list includes prescription drugs and drugs only administered by a healthcare professional

Table: GoodRx

GoodRx

1) Zolgensma - \$2,125,000

[Zolgensma](#) is one of the newest drugs on the market, and the most expensive. With a list price of \$2.1 million for a course of treatment, Zolgensma has caused an uproar in the prescription drug community, with many blasting it for its astronomical price tag. However, many are [citing it](#) as a surprisingly cost-effective treatment because it can cure a once-incurable disease.

Zolgensma is approved to treat spinal muscular atrophy, a rare childhood disorder that causes muscular erosion that can lead to lung infections and muscle weakness. Zolgensma is a one-time curative therapy, and many children who have been treated with the drug now show no signs of the disease.

So, how can anyone afford this life-saving drug? Unfortunately, cash-paying patients may be on the hook for the full price of the drug. Luckily, some insured patients may be able to get coverage through their plan. The manufacturer has allowed certain insurers to pay for the drug in annual installments of \$425,000 over 5 years. Zolgensma's manufacturer, Novartis, also just

announced a lottery to give away free doses of the drug, but many have taken issue with this approach.

2) Myalept - \$855,678

[Myalept](#) is one of the only drugs on this list that is dispensed at the pharmacy. It is used to treat leptin deficiency in patients with generalized lipodystrophy, a condition of abnormal fat distribution in the body.

This [January](#), Myalept increased in price by 9.9%, bringing the price up from \$64,859.48 per month to \$71,306.48. Patients self-administer Myalept once a day and typically use 14 vials per month, bringing the yearly price tag to \$855,678. Because Myalept is the only treatment available to control this rare condition, there are no other affordable alternatives.

Aegerion Pharmaceuticals offers a [copay card](#) to help some patients afford Myalept.

3) Luxturna - \$850,000

At \$850,000 a year, [Luxturna](#) is the third most expensive drug on the list but is over \$1 million cheaper than Zolgensma. Luxturna is a gene therapy that treats an inherited form of retinal dystrophy, a condition that causes vision loss and even complete blindness.

Luxturna cannot be dispensed at a pharmacy as it requires a doctor to administer 1 vial of Luxturna into each eye. Patients should only need one dose of Luxturna ever, but the list price is steep — ringing up at \$425,000 per vial.

4) Folutyn - \$779,067

[Folutyn](#) is approved to treat peripheral T-cell lymphoma, a rare blood cancer that can cause death. A healthcare professional must administer Folutyn, and patients are typically given 45 vials of the drug annually. With a list price of \$5,770.87 per vial, the annual cost is \$745,785.

Despite its high price tag, Folutyn's effectiveness has been called into question. In fact, the European Union has [not yet approved it](#) due to insufficient evidence of health gains.

5) Soliris - \$678,392

Priced at \$678,392 per year, [Soliris](#) is used to treat paroxysmal nocturnal hemoglobinuria and atypical hemolytic uremic syndrome, blood disorders that result in the destruction of red blood cells.

The dosing for Soliris can differ depending on the age of the patient and the condition being treated. But most patients need a maintenance dose of 1200 mg every 2 weeks, which only a healthcare practitioner can administer .

Because Soliris comes with a high risk of infection, the drug is part of a [Risk Evaluation Mitigation Strategy](#) (REMS) program. Medications with serious safety concerns require a REMS program, and healthcare providers who prescribe these drugs often need to undergo specific training to administer them.

6) Blincyto - \$672,968

The sixth most expensive drug, [Blincyto](#), has an annual list price of \$672,968. Manufactured by Amgen, Blincyto is used to treat a rare form of acute lymphoblastic leukemia, a cancer of the blood and bone marrow.

Blincyto can only be given by a healthcare practitioner, and dosing is done in cycles. The first cycle, known as the induction phase, is aimed at reducing the number of cancer cells, whereas cycles two through four, known as consolidation phases, help new healthy cells grow. Patients need different amounts of the medication during each phase, but will typically use about 168 vials per year. The current list price per vial is \$4,005.76, up 4.9% from 2019.

7) Ravicti - \$664,092

Used to treat urea cycle disorders, [Ravicti](#) has an annual list price of \$664,092. Urea cycle disorders are genetic conditions that result in high levels of ammonia in the blood. If left untreated, urea cycle disorders can lead to confusion, coma, or even death.

Ravicti is dispensed in a pharmacy and doesn't require administration from a healthcare practitioner. Patients are typically given 132 bottles annually, each bottle with a list price of \$5,031.

Ravicti increased in price by 4% this January, but manufacturer Horizon Therapeutics offers a way for some patients to save on Ravicti through the [Horizon Cares Patient Assistance Program](#).

8) Lumizyme - \$643,243

[Lumizyme](#) is used to treat Pompe disease, an inherited disorder that causes a buildup of complex sugars in the body. It affects the liver, heart, and muscles, and leads to muscle weakness and trouble breathing. Lumizyme has an annual list price of \$643,243, up 2% from last year.

Patients must get Lumizyme from their doctor, and the drug is not available in pharmacies. Dosing for Lumizyme is based on a patient's weight; patients are given 20 mg of Lumizyme per kg of body weight through an IV infusion. For example, a person weighing 75 kg (165 pounds) will likely use 60 vials a month of Lumizyme, each vial with a list price of \$824.67.

Like many drugs on this list, manufacturer Sanofi also has a copay assistance [program](#) to help patients save on their prescription.

9) Actimmune - \$633,325

[Actimmune](#) is approved to treat osteopetrosis and chronic granulomatous disease, rare disorders that cause the immune system to malfunction. Patients can get Actimmune in a pharmacy and typically use about 132 vials in a year. Each vial has a list price of \$4,797.92.

Horizon Therapeutics offers a [patient assistance program](#) to help some patients get Actimmune at no cost.

10) Takhzyro - \$591,035

The 10th most expensive drug in the U.S., [Takhzyro](#), is used to treat hereditary angioedema, a condition that causes swelling in the limbs, face, intestinal tract, and airways. Patients typically need 2 vials of Takhzyro per month. With a list price of \$22,732.10 per vial, Takhzyro's annual list price comes out to \$591,035.