

The 20 Most Expensive Prescription Drugs in the U.S.A.

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In an effort to continue to shed light on drug prices and increase transparency, the GoodRx Research Team regularly tracks the most expensive drugs in the U.S. Typically, we see significant movement in drug prices and ranking from one quarter to the next. From March to July 2019, Oxervate was approved and made its way onto the list, Cuprimine received a more affordable (but still expensive) generic, and Firazyr increased in price, moving up on the most expensive list.

But this quarter, for better or worse, the most expensive drugs in the U.S. list remains almost identical to what it was in July.

The following are the 20 most expensive medications in the U.S., based on the list price—the price a manufacturer assigns as the official price of a drug. While few patients actually pay the list price, as they are typically shielded by their health insurance, the list price is still a good proxy for the price of a drug.

Drug name	Manufacturer	List price
Myalept	Aegerion Pharmaceuticals	$64,859
Ravicti	Horizon Therapeutics	$52,756
Actimmune	Horizon Therapeutics	$47,962
Oxervate	Dompé	$47,200
Daraprim	Vyera Pharmaceuticals	$45,000
Cinryze	Shire	$44,141
Takhzyro	Shire	$44,140
Chenodal	Retrophin, Inc	$42,570
Juxtapid	Aegerion Pharmaceuticals	$40,671
H.P. Acthar	Mallinckrodt Pharmaceuticals	$38,892
Tegsedi	Akcea Therapeutics	$34,600
Firazyr	Shire	$33,443
Vitrakvi	Bayer and Loxo Oncology, Inc	$32,800
Sovaldi	Gilead	$28,000
Viekira Pak	Abbvie	$27,773
Viekira XR	Abbvie	$27,773
Tibsovo	Agios Pharmaceuticals	$27,421
Orfadin	Apotek Produktion & Laboratorier AB	$27,247
Sabril	Lundbeck Pharmaceuticals	$26,301
Cerdelga	Sanofi Genzyme	$26,000

1) Myalept – $64,859

Myalept is an orphan drug—a drug that is intended to treat a rare disease. It is used to treat leptin deficiency in patients with generalized lipodystrophy, a condition of abnormal fat distribution in the body.

Myalept is self-administered once a day, and patients typically use 14 vials per month at a list price of $4,632.82 per vial. Since Myalept is the only option to control this rare condition, there are no other more affordable drugs available.

Aegerion Pharmaceuticals offers a copay card to help commercially insured patients afford Myalept.

2) Ravicti – $52,756

Ravicti is Horizon Therapeutics's second drug on this list, along with Actimmune. It is used to treat urea cycle disorders, which 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 can be used in children as young as two months of age, teens, and adults, and the typical patient uses 11 bottles in one month. The list price for one bottle of Ravicti is $4,796.00.

Just like Actimmune, patients can get Ravicti for free through the Horizon Cares Patient Assistance Program.

3) Actimmune – $47,962

Actimmune is manufactured by Horizon Therapeutics and is approved for osteopetrosis and chronic granulomatous disease, a rare disorder that causes the immune system to malfunction. Patients typically take Actimmune three times a week, and on average, go through about 11 single-use vials a month.

The list price for Actimmune is $4,360.15 per vial. Luckily, manufacturer Horizon Therapeutics offers a patient assistance program to help patients get Actimmune at no cost.

4) Oxervate – $47,200

Approved early this year, Oxervate is used to treat neurotrophic keratitis, a degenerative condition that leads to the reduction of sensitivity in the cornea. Patients typically use 28 vials per month, with a price of $1,685.71 per vial.

5) Daraprim – $45,000

You might recall that in 2015, Martin Shkreli sparked outrage for hiking the price of Daraprim from $13.50 per pill to about $750 per pill in a matter of days. While this caused a national conversation about drug prices and a class-action lawsuit, the price for Daraprim still remains high, with the list price for a one-month supply (60 tablets) coming out to $45,000.

Daraprim is commonly given to AIDS and transplant patients to prevent infection, and it is used to treat toxoplasmosis in otherwise healthy people. Unlike other drugs on this list, patients are rarely on Daraprim for more than a couple of months.

6) Cinryze – $44,141

Manufactured by Shire, Cinryze has a list price of $44,141 for a typical one-month supply (16 vials). Cinryze is used to treat hereditary angioedema, a rare, life-threatening genetic condition that causes swelling in various parts of the body including the hands, face, and throat. Fortunately, commercially insured patients can get Cinryze for as little as $0 with the Shire OnePath Co-Pay Assistance Program.

7) Takhzyro – $44,140

Just like Cinryze above, Takhzyro is manufactured by Shire and is used to treat hereditary angioedema. Approved just six months ago, patients typically need two vials per month. The list price for Takhzyro comes out to $22,070.00 per vial.

8) Chenodal – $42,570

Chenodal, used to dissolve gallstones, is manufactured by Retrophin, which was founded by Martin Shkreli, the same person responsible for Daraprim's price hike. Back in 2014, while Shkreli was still CEO of Retrophin, prices for Chenodal increased fivefold.

What's more, Chenodal is currently off patent, which usually means manufacturers can start making affordable generics of the brand-name drug. However, Chenodal is protected under what is referred to as a "closed distribution system," which prevents manufacturers from developing their own generic versions.

While many patients take 90 tablets per month, some can take as many as 210 at a whopping list price of $473.00 per tablet.

9) Juxtapid – $40,671

Juxtapid is manufactured by Aegerion Pharmaceuticals to treat people with homozygous familial hypercholesterolemia, a gene mutation that leads to cardiovascular disease. Patients typically take 28 capsules of Juxtapid per month, and each capsule has a list price of $1,452.53.

10) H.P. Acthar – $38,892

H.P. Acthar, also referred to as Acthar, is used to treat multiple conditions like lupus, rheumatoid arthritis, multiple sclerosis, infantile spasms, ophthalmic conditions, and psoriatic arthritis. It is manufactured by Mallinckrodt Pharmaceuticals and was approved back in 2010.

Just like many drugs on this list, Acthar has also seen its fair share of price hikes. Back in 2001, when the drug was still manufactured by Sanofi, the list price for one vial ran at about $40. Seventeen years and one new manufacturer later, the list price for one vial of Acthar (a typical monthly supply) now runs at $38,892.00.

11) Tegsedi – $34,600

Tegsedi is used to treat nerve damage caused by hereditary transthyretin amyloidosis, a rare and slow-progressing disease caused by a buildup of proteins in organs and tissue. After patients are trained on the proper administration techniques, they typically use four syringes per month. Each syringe has a list price of $8,650.

12) Firazyr – $33,443

Just like Cinryze above, Firazyr is manufactured by Shire for hereditary angioedema. However, unlike Cinryze, which is used to prevent swelling before an attack, Firazyr is used after an attack. Since patients suffer an average of two to four attacks per month, most fill one carton (three syringes) of Firazyr every month. One carton of Firazyr has a list price of $33,442.49.

13) Vitrakvi – $32,800

Vitrakvi is a cancer drug used to treat patients with a specific gene mutation. Patients typically take 60 capsules a month; each capsule has a list price of $546.67.

Patients with commercial insurance can get Vitrakvi for as little as $0 with the TRAK Assist $0 Co-Pay Program.

14) Sovaldi – $28,000

Manufactured by Gilead, Sovaldi is a popular medication used to treat hepatitis C. Treatments for hepatitis C are notoriously expensive, and the cost for Sovaldi is no different. Patients take Sovaldi for 12 weeks; the list price for a one-month supply runs at $28,000, or $1,000 per tablet.

15) Viekira Pak – $27,773

Viekira Pak is one of three drugs on this list used to treat hepatitis C. Approved in 2015, Viekira Pak is used to treat hepatitis C genotype 1, the most common hepatitis C genotype (strain) in the U.S.

Viekira Pak is a package of two different kinds of tablets. Patients are instructed to take two of the tablets containing ombitasvir, paritaprevir, and ritonavir once per day and one tablet containing dasabuvir twice per day.

Since its approval, multiple hepatitis drugs have been released that treat all hepatitis C genotypes and don't require as many pills per day, so Viekira is no longer a first-line treatment.

16) Viekira XR – $27,773

Viekira XR is the extended-release version of Viekira Pak, and it is also used to treat patients with hepatitis C genotype 1. Just like Viekira Pak, Viekira XR contains the active ingredients dasabuvir, ombitasvir, paritaprevir, and ritonavir. Patients take three tablets once per day.

17) Tibsovo – $27,421

Approved in July 2018, Tibsovo is the first treatment for acute myeloid leukemia in patients with a specific genetic mutation. While it is an orphan drug that fills an unmet need, Tibsovo has a list price of $27,421 for a one-month supply, making it unaffordable for most.

18) Orfadin – $27,247

Orfadin is used to treat hereditary tyrosinemia type 1, a rare genetic disorder that prevents the body from breaking down the amino acid tyrosine, causing insufficient weight gain, jaundice, and liver and kidney failure. Type 1 is the most severe form of tyrosinemia, with symptoms generally beginning in the first few months of life. While the dosage depends on each patient, most take 30 capsules of 20 mg each month. The list price per capsule is $908.23.

19) Sabril – $26,301

Manufactured by Lundbeck, Sabril is used to treat seizures and infantile spasms. Sabril has the potential to cause vision loss, so it is part of a Risk Evaluation and Mitigation Strategy (REMS) Program by the FDA. This means that patients need to go through certified prescribers to access the medication. Patients typically take 180 tablets per month at $146.12 per tablet.

20) Cerdelga – $26,000

Cerdelga is an enzyme replacement therapy used for the long-term treatment of Gaucher disease type 1, a disease that can result in an enlarged spleen, low blood cell counts, and bone disease. Patients typically take 56 capsules a month; each capsule has a list price of $464.29.

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Methodology: We created a list of the most expensive drugs by list price, excluded drugs that are administered under the supervision of a healthcare provider, and obtained typical fill quantities using our data and information from the drug manufacturer websites to compare the monthly price of these drugs. Using the official manufacturer list price, we calculated the total cost of a one-month supply of a typical fill quantity. For drugs where there is a large effective dosing range, or where patient weight determines dosing, we selected a dosing quantity based on claim volume.

Prices in this analysis are the list price, which is the price the pharmaceutical company assigns as an official price for a drug. While few people actually pay the full price of a drug out of pocket, as they are typically shielded by their health insurance, more and more people are on the hook for the price of their drugs every year due to high-deductible insurance plans and formulary changes. What's more, high-priced drugs end up raising insurance rates and overall healthcare spending, which trickles down to patients in the end.

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See previous GoodRx reports on the 20 most expensive drugs in the U.S. below:

- July 2019
- March 2019