

The Spike in Drug Costs: Rheumatoid Arthritis

Advancements in pharmaceuticals can result in drugs that offer fewer side effects, improve a patient's quality of life and save lives, but what if not everyone can afford them?

GENERAL STATISTICS



About 1.3 million Americans have rheumatoid arthritis (RA)¹ and this number is forecast to reach 1.68 million by 2020.²

RA can cause painful inflammation and swelling of joints that is sometimes severe, and can cause permanent disability.³



The cost of taking RA drugs can exceed \$1 million over the course of an individual's lifetime.⁴

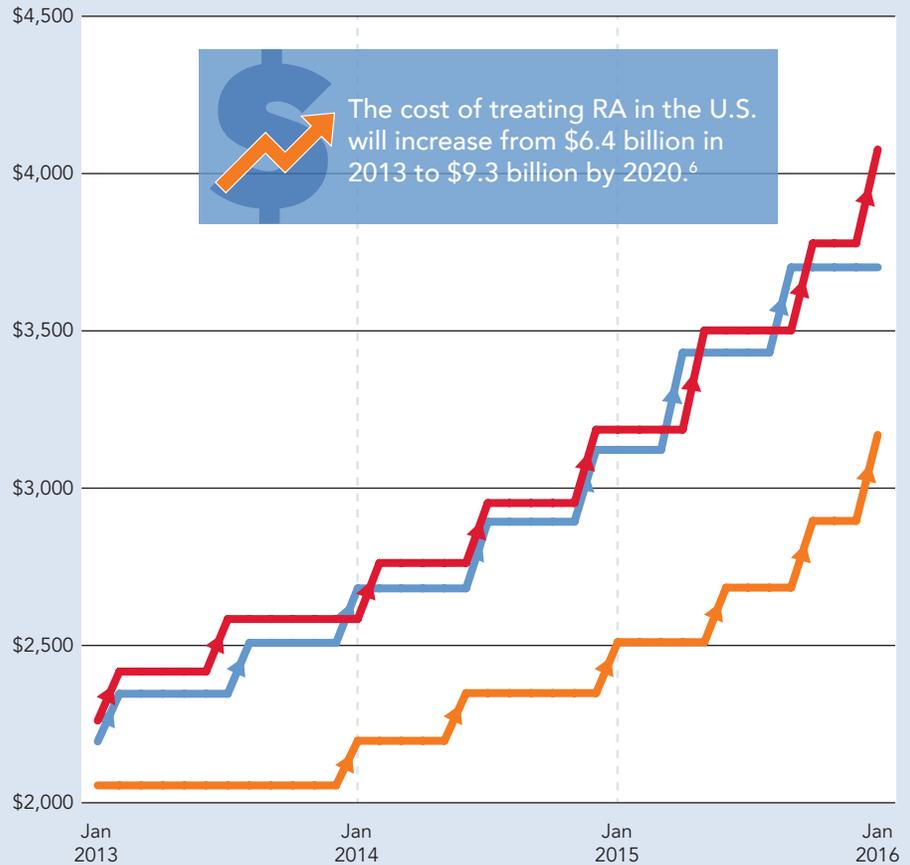
RA drugs can slow or modify the progression of the disease, but can be out of reach for many people because of their cost.



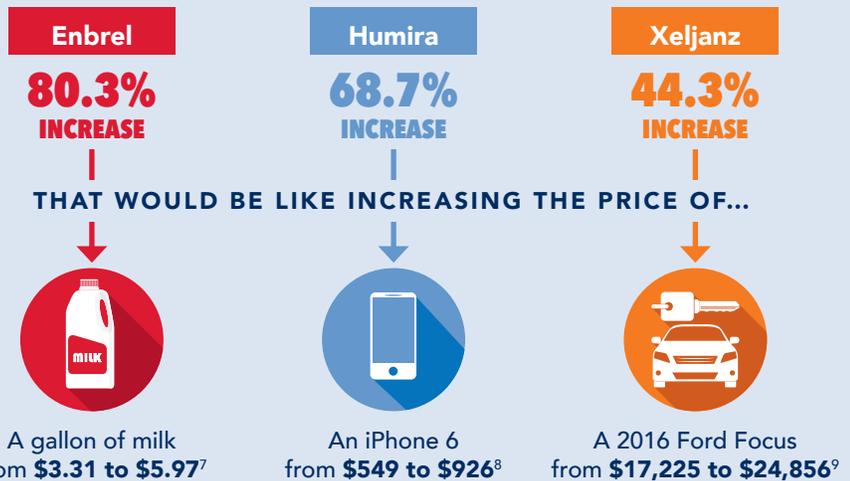
Sixty percent of people with inadequately treated RA are unable to work 10 years after onset.⁵

DRUG PRICES ARE RISING AT AN UNSUSTAINABLE AND IRRATIONAL RATE.

RA Drug Prices for 30-Day Supply, 2013–2016



Note: Price modifications will alter the values reflected above.
Source: Medi-Span® Price Rx®. Figures reflect wholesale acquisition cost.



ACHP promotes greater transparency on prescription drug research, development and pricing.

SOURCES

- ¹ Vandever, L. (2014). Rheumatoid Arthritis by the Numbers: Facts, Statistics, and You. Retrieved from <http://www.healthline.com/health/rheumatoid-arthritis/facts-statistics-infographic>
- ² Yazdany, J., Dudley, R.A., Chen, R., Lin, G.A., & Tseng, C. (2015). Coverage for High-Cost Specialty Drugs for Rheumatoid Arthritis in Medicare Part D. *Arthritis & Rheumatology*, volume 67 (6), 1474-1480. Retrieved from <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/art.39079/abstract>
- ³ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2015). *Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA)* [Fact sheet]. Retrieved from <http://www.cdc.gov/arthritis/basics/rheumatoid.htm>
- ⁴ The \$1 million dollar estimate is based on the wholesale acquisition cost for a 30-day supply of Enbrel, Humira or Xeljanz in Medi-Span® Price Rx®, multiplied by treatment duration. Treatment duration is standardized to 30-day increments after subtracting the average age of diagnosis (45 years) from the average life expectancy of people with RA (Male: 69.4 years, Female: 78.2 years), which is based on data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Johns Hopkins Arthritis Center. This estimate does not take into account any rebates, discounts or insurance arrangements.
- ⁵ Vandever, L. (2014). Rheumatoid Arthritis by the Numbers: Facts, Statistics, and You. Retrieved from <http://www.healthline.com/health/rheumatoid-arthritis/facts-statistics-infographic>
- ⁶ Yazdany, J., Dudley, R.A., Chen, R., Lin, G.A., & Tseng, C. (2015). Coverage for High-Cost Specialty Drugs for Rheumatoid Arthritis in Medicare Part D. *Arthritis & Rheumatology*, volume 67 (6), 1474-1480. Retrieved from <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/art.39079/abstract>
- ⁷ Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2016). CPI Detailed Report: Data for January 2016, pp 127. Retrieved from <http://www.bls.gov/cpi/cpid1601.pdf>
- ⁸ Buy iPhone 6. (n.d.) Retrieved from <http://www.apple.com/shop/buy-iphone/iphone6>
- ⁹ Starting MSRP for 2016 Ford Focus. (n.d.) Retrieved from <http://www.ford.com/cars/focus/>



About ACHP

The Alliance of Community Health Plans (ACHP) is a national leadership organization bringing together innovative health plans and provider groups that are among America's best at delivering affordable, high-quality coverage and care. The community-based and regional health plans and provider organizations from across the country that make up ACHP's membership provide coverage and care for approximately 18 million Americans. These 22 organizations focus on improving the health of the communities they serve and are on the leading edge of innovations in affordability and quality of care, including primary care redesign, payment reforms, accountable health care delivery and use of information technology.