

Here are this week's healthcare news highlights from AskaPatient:

- Hospital industry to lose \$566 in readmission penalties, but Medicare plans on easing penalties for safety-net hospitals. <http://ow.ly/mZR130mdZeW> (10-15-18)
- Unapproved pharmaceutical ingredients found in 776 over-the-counter dietary supplements. <http://ow.ly/62Oc30mdZln> (10-15-18)
- Antibiotic resistance develops up to 100,000 times faster in bacteria exposed to the most common herbicides. <http://ow.ly/5YxP30mdZrb> (10-15-18)
- A season of sub-concussive impacts in youth football shows no negative effects in neurocognitive measures. <http://ow.ly/iTOJ30mfgcp> (10-16-18)
- Scientists speculate that, like in other animals, human sensory cells could be coaxed into regrowing to restore hearing loss. <http://ow.ly/8NHZ30mfgdB> (10-16-18)
- U.S. to propose rule that TV drug ads include pricing, but drug companies try to settle for directions to pricing information. <http://ow.ly/mwqM30mfgdV> (10-16-18) *see related article and new opinion poll below*
- Environmental factors may be involved in the onset of multiple sclerosis by changing neural membranes. <http://ow.ly/aEV330mg9DM> (10-17-18)
- UK will join the US in fortifying flour with folic acid to reduce birth defects. <http://ow.ly/P8NZ30mg9Kk> (10-17-18)
- Single-use electronic stickers can help patients and athletes monitor their health in real time. <http://ow.ly/FwSr30mg9YF> (10-17-18)
- Minnesota accuses insulin makers of fraudulent pricing practices that especially affect patients with high deductible plans. <http://ow.ly/Mav930mga4r> (10-18-18)
- Mouse study suggests that nutrition has a greater impact on bone health than exercise does. <http://ow.ly/Hyqe30mh9S2> (10-18-18)
- New study challenges the axiom that pets should not be allowed in the bedroom - chronic pain sufferers may benefit from sharing their bed. <http://ow.ly/5Lhv30mh9XX> (10-18-18)
- Infertility is a possible side effect of cancer treatments, but insurance is not required to cover fertility preservation in most states. <http://ow.ly/oqUB30mha6T> (10-19-18)
- Brain disorder or immaturity? The youngest children in the classroom are more likely to be diagnosed with ADHD. <http://ow.ly/5J0U30mi1VQ> (10-19-18)
- Allowing sunlight into the house can kill dust-dwelling bacteria associated with respiratory illness. <http://ow.ly/mua630mi24a> (10-19-18)
- Raw chicken to blame for salmonella outbreak across 29 states, CDC unable to single out a supplier. <http://ow.ly/GDjW30mi2fn> (10-20-18)
- Not exercising is worse for your health than smoking, diabetes, and heart disease, researchers are surprised to learn. <http://ow.ly/TQRP30mjbej> (10-20-18)

Askapatient Opinion Poll Results: Which drugs are so unsafe that they should be withdrawn from the market?

Our last poll asked, "Are there any currently approved prescription drugs that should be removed from the market because of safety reasons?"

86% of respondents indicated that there is **at least one** FDA-approved drug that should be removed from the market for safety reasons. Drug categories most frequently identified were [fluoroquinolone antibiotics](#) such as Levaquin and Cipro, [bisphosphonates](#), some

[antihypertensives](#), and [statins](#). Some drugs mentioned by name included [Prolia](#), Boniva, Bystolic, Brilinta, Lupron, Flagyl, Advair, and Crestor.

New Poll: Would you like to know list prices for drugs?

While a list or sticker price for a car is not likely to be the price that a buyer will actually pay, the list price can be helpful to the consumer because it gives a frame of reference of how expensive the car is relative to others on the market. Also, the consumer can use the information to determine how much less they are paying than the "dealer cost." Similarly, average drug wholesale prices (or "list prices") for brand name drugs most likely won't match what a consumer will end up paying, but can give one an idea about how expensive the drug might be to the pharmacy or the health care plan that is covering the drug. In some situations, if you know that a particular drug is a "non-preferred" brand in your plan and it is covered at 50% of list price, then the list price helps you determine how much you might have to pay out-of-pocket.

As part of the government's new drug price transparency initiatives, the Health and Human Services Department is considering requiring pharmaceutical companies to include pricing information in their advertising. The details still have to be worked out, but could this be a good thing for consumers, or would they suffer from "sticker shock" and be wary about trying new drugs?

In June, Kaiser Health News compiled a list of the top 10 prescription drugs with the highest expenditures on ad spending, along with the estimated monthly cost of treatment for each drug. You may have seen the TV commercial with singer Cyndi Lauper's "See Me" campaign promoting Cosentyx for plaque psoriasis. What you don't learn from that commercial, however, is that Cosentyx is **very expensive**: more than **\$11,000** for a month of treatment.

Here is the Kaiser Health News list of **top drugs advertised along with the monthly treatment costs**, based on average wholesale costs:

TREATMENT COSTS AND AD SPENDING

Drug	Company	Monthly Cost of Treatment	2017 Spending on Ads*
Cosentyx	Novartis	\$ 11,310	\$ 174
<i>plaque psoriasis</i>			
Keytruda	Merck	\$ 8,369	\$ 209
<i>non-small lung cancer</i>			
Taltz	Lilly	\$ 6,193	\$ 207
<i>plaque psoriasis</i>			
Humira	Abbvie	\$ 5,846	\$ 429
<i>rheumatoid arthritis</i>			
Xeljanz	Pfizer	\$ 4,915	\$ 273
<i>rheumatoid arthritis</i>			
Lyrica	Pfizer	\$ 1,070	\$ 350
<i>fibromyalgia</i>			
Trulicity	Lilly	\$ 876	\$ 195
<i>type 2 diabetes</i>			
Entresto	Novartis	\$ 556	\$ 556
<i>heart failure</i>			
Chantix	Pfizer	\$ 520	\$ 207
<i>quit smoking</i>			
Eliquis	Bristol	\$ 503	\$ 227
<i>stroke/blood clot prevention</i>			

*Monthly cost of treatment is in dollars. Advertisement spending is in millions of dollars for 2017. Source: [Kaiser Health News](#), June 6, 2018

Vote in our new poll:

Should television commercials for drugs include list price information along with advice for consumers on how to find out their

out-of-pocket costs?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

[VOTE in quick poll!](#)

Sources and More Reading:

- Price Check On Drug Ads: Would Revealing Costs Help Patients Control Spending? by Julie Appleby, Kaiser Health News and Sydney Lupkin, [Kaiser Health News](#), June 6, 2018
- TV Ads Must Trumpet Drug Prices, Trump Administration Says. Pharma Tries a Plan B. [Kaiser Health News](#). October 15, 2018
- Trump Administration Proposes Rule Requiring Pharma to Include Prices in Ads. [Kaiser Health News](#). Tuesday, October 16, 2018

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