

Health costs forcing more Americans to skip care: survey

June 12 2012

One quarter of Americans report problems paying for medical bills, and more than half say they have skipped or cut back on health care due to the cost, according to a survey released Monday.

Ahead of an expected Supreme Court ruling on the constitutionality of the Obama administration's health care reforms, the [Kaiser Family Foundation](#) survey also said that 64 percent of people worry about the rising cost of health care and health insurance.

Some 45 million Americans do not have health insurance, and the United States does not have universal health care.

According to the survey, 26 percent of people said they or a family member ran into problems paying their medical bills over the past year. And 58 percent reported skipping or putting off medical care since a year ago due to the cost.

Around one quarter say they skipped tests to avoid costs; the same percentage said they did not fill a drug prescription for the same reason.

And 16 percent of people said they cut pills in half, or skipped scheduled doses, to save money.

Most of those surveyed reported the cost of health care, whether from insurance, co-payments and deductibles, or health services, is rising, despite the government's efforts to drive down costs.

The biggest amount of care-skipping comes from people without insurance, Kaiser said.

"Fully eight in ten of the uninsured (81 percent) report delaying or foregoing care due to cost in the past year."

The survey comes out with the country's highest court expected to rule, by the end of the month, on lawsuits challenging President Barack Obama's signature [health care reform](#) package pushed through Congress three years ago.

The ruling could halt key parts or all of the package, which aimed at requiring all citizens to have [health care coverage](#) and at creating cheaper coverage options.

"While [economic challenges](#) facing the country continue and the Supreme Court is deciding the fate of the [Affordable Care](#) Act, the survey finds that the problems and concerns related to health care costs and access are widespread."

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Citation: Health costs forcing more Americans to skip care: survey (2012, June 12) retrieved 3 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2012-06-health-americans-survey.html>

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