

## Couples in retirement face average health care costs of \$280,000, Fidelity estimates

April 23 2018, by Adam Shell, Usa Today

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Got a spare quarter-million bucks sitting around?

If you're a 65-year-old couple retiring this year you'll need even more

than that to cover [health care](#) and medical expenses throughout retirement, according to Fidelity Investments' annual cost estimate.

Fidelity estimates it will cost a couple \$280,000 to cover their [health care costs](#) in retirement, up 2% from last year and 75% since its 2002 estimate of \$160,000. The math assumes a couple retires at 65 and is eligible for Medicare. The cost for care for males in retirement is an estimated \$133,000, while the tab for women, who tend to live longer than men, is \$147,000.

"Covering health care costs remains one of the most significant, yet unpredictable, aspects of retirement planning," said Shams Talib, executive vice president and head of Fidelity Benefits Consulting. "It's important for individuals to educate themselves and ... take steps while working to ensure they are prepared to address these costs. Otherwise, people risk having to dip into more of their savings than originally anticipated."

The financial pain could be more acute for Americans who retire early, the study found. Fidelity recently polled 1,000 people between 50 and 64 who have retired in the past three years and found that while almost all had some form of health insurance, 36% were paying \$500 a month or more in health care premiums.

When early retirees were asked how they were paying for out-of-pocket premiums, co-pays and insurance plan deductibles, about half (49%) said they were "dipping into personal savings," 24% were relying on Social Security income and 15% used [retirement](#) savings.

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Citation: Couples in retirement face average health care costs of \$280,000, Fidelity estimates

(2018, April 23) retrieved 24 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2018-04-couples-average-health-fidelity.html>

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