

Name-brand medications driving spike in U.S. drug spending

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(HealthDay)—Rising drug spending in the United States is being fueled

by expensive name-brand prescription medicines, a new study shows.

"Total prescription drug spending increased 10 percent annually since 2010," and 82 percent of [prescriptions](#) were for cheaper, [generic drugs](#), according to the Blue Cross Blue Shield study, *NBC News* reported. But the study also showed that expensive "branded prescription drugs accounted for only 17 percent of total prescriptions filled, but 79 percent of total prescription drug spending [\$79.5 billion]."

"More expensive branded prescription drug spending is up 4 percent since 2016," and costs "for single-source drugs with no generic alternatives increased at more than double the rate of average annual drug spending," according to the study.

The biggest costs were from three rheumatoid arthritis drugs—Humira, Remicade, and Enbrel—a quick-acting insulin called Novolog, and Neulasta, an immune system-strengthening treatment for cancer patients, *NBC News* reported.

More information: [NBC News Article](#)
[Blue Cross Blue Shield Report](#)

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