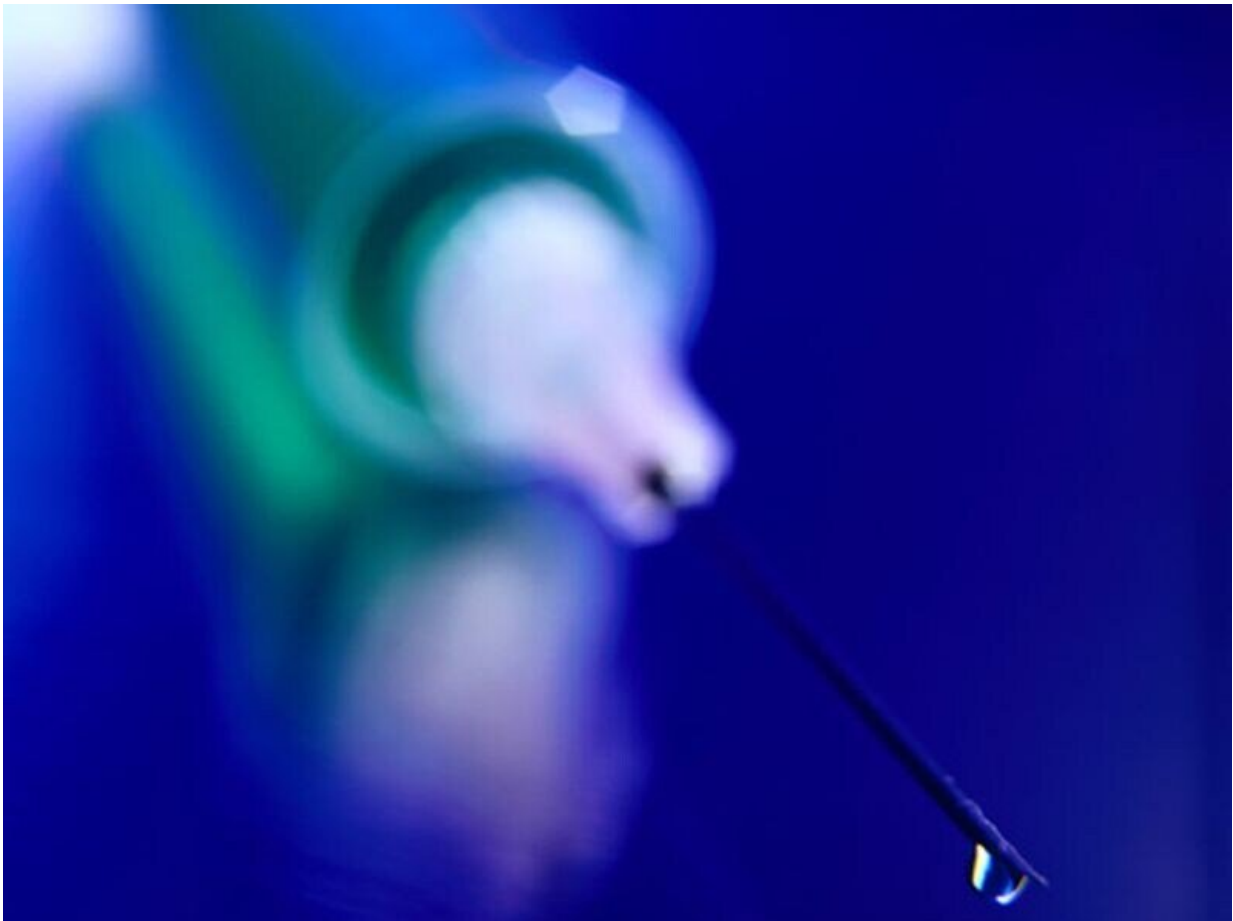


Lifesaving drug for infants costs \$2.1 million a dose

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(HealthDay)—Its extremely high price tag means that a lifesaving

medication to treat young children with spinal muscular atrophy is simply too expensive for most families.

A single dose of Zolgensma costs \$2.1 million, the highest per-dose price ever, *NBC News* reported. That puts the [drug](#)—approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration in May—out of reach for many parents of infants with [spinal muscular atrophy](#).

Sarah Stanger's son Duke has the illness. "I was pretty shocked" by the price, Stanger told *NBC News*. "You know, as a teacher we definitely don't have \$2.1 million, and I don't know anybody who does." Her family's [insurance](#) company refused to pay for the drug, which doctors said was the best option for Duke. "With no treatment, most children will pass away by age 2," Stanger said.

When Zolgensma was approved, maker Novartis said it expected [insurance companies](#) would cover the cost of the treatment. The company told *NBC News* that a "wide range of patients" have had the drug covered by insurance and added that it is not uncommon for patients to have to go through an appeals process for any new drug.

More information: [NBC News Article](#)

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