



billion from 2015 through 2018, a new study says.

Unrealized lifetime earnings of people who died from the drugs accounted for the largest share of that total, followed by [health care costs](#), the *Associated Press* reported. Most of the financial impact of the opioid crisis affects individuals and the private sector, while governments bear less than one-third. But most of the health care costs of treating [opioid addiction](#) and overdoses were paid by Medicaid, Medicare, and other [government programs](#), according to the report.

The study, released Tuesday by the Society of Actuaries, also said that the cost of the opioid epidemic this year is likely to be between \$171 billion and \$214 billion. Even the lower figure is higher than the 2017 total, the *AP* reported.

The report comes as jury selection starts in the first federal trial on the opioid crisis, where a jury in Cleveland will hear claims from Ohio's Cuyahoga and Summit counties against six companies that make and market opioids. The U.S. opioid crisis has claimed more than 400,000 lives since 2000, according to the federal government.

**More information:** [AP News Article](#)  
[Society of Actuaries](#)

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Citation: Opioid crisis cost US \$631 billion over four years (2019, October 17) retrieved 6 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2019-10-opioid-crisis-billion-years.html>

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