

# U.S. national health care spending increased 9.7 percent in 2020

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(HealthDay)—National health care spending in 2020 increased 9.7

percent in the United States, according to a study published online Dec. 15 in *Health Affairs*.

Micah Hartman, from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services in Baltimore, and colleagues examined [national health care](#) spending in 2020, focusing on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The researchers found a 9.7 percent increase in U.S. health care spending in 2020 to reach \$4.1 trillion; this rate was much higher than the 4.3 percent increase in 2019. The accelerated rate in 2020 was due to a 36.0 percent increase in federal expenditures for health care, which were mainly in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. At the same time, there was a 2.2 percent decrease in the [gross domestic product](#); the share of the economy devoted to health care spending spiked, peaking at 19.7 percent. There was a decrease in the number of uninsured people in 2020, while significant shifts in the type of coverage were seen.

"The substantial increase in national health expenditures, with a growth rate of 9.7 percent in 2020, was the result of an unprecedented government response to the global pandemic," the authors write.

"Although the specific impact of the pandemic on health expenditures in 2021 is still unknown because of incomplete data, there will likely be notable effects from the widespread vaccination efforts that began in the spring of 2021 and from the emergence of the Delta variant in the summer of 2021."

**More information:** [Abstract/Full Text \(subscription or payment may be required\)](#)

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