

COVID meds like Paxlovid will soon have big price tags

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Americans have been getting COVID treatments such as Paxlovid for free, but that's about to end.

The medications will enter the private market this week, the *Associated Press* reported.

The price for a five-day course of Paxlovid, made by Pfizer, will be \$1,390.

Merck has not confirmed a price for its COVID treatment, Lagevrio, but told the *AP* that it will offer the treatment free to patients "who, without assistance, could not otherwise afford the product."

The pills will still be available at no cost until those bought earlier by the [federal government](#) run out at pharmacies, hospitals and doctor's offices, according to U.S. Health and Human Services officials. The government paid Pfizer \$5 billion for 10 million courses of Paxlovid in 2021.

Once those are gone, those with [private insurance](#) may notice a co-pay charge, the *AP* reported.

People on Medicaid, Medicare or without [medical insurance](#) will not pay any out-of-pocket costs for these treatments through 2024, and Pfizer will offer co-pay assistance for Paxlovid through 2028.

The Department of Veterans Affairs, the Department of Defense and Indian Health Service will still have access to government stores of Paxlovid, the *AP* reported.

The federal government will also keep 1 million treatment courses in its stockpile.

"Pfizer is committed to a smooth commercial transition and is working collaboratively with the U.S. government and health care stakeholders to ensure broad and equitable access to this important medicine for all eligible patients," the company told the *AP*.

Medical suppliers can begin ordering the treatment from the drug companies starting this week.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration [granted full approval to Paxlovid](#) earlier this year. It's meant for adults with COVID who have a high risk of hospitalization or death, including [older adults](#) and those with chronic conditions such as obesity, diabetes or asthma.

More information: The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has more on [COVID-19 treatments](#).

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