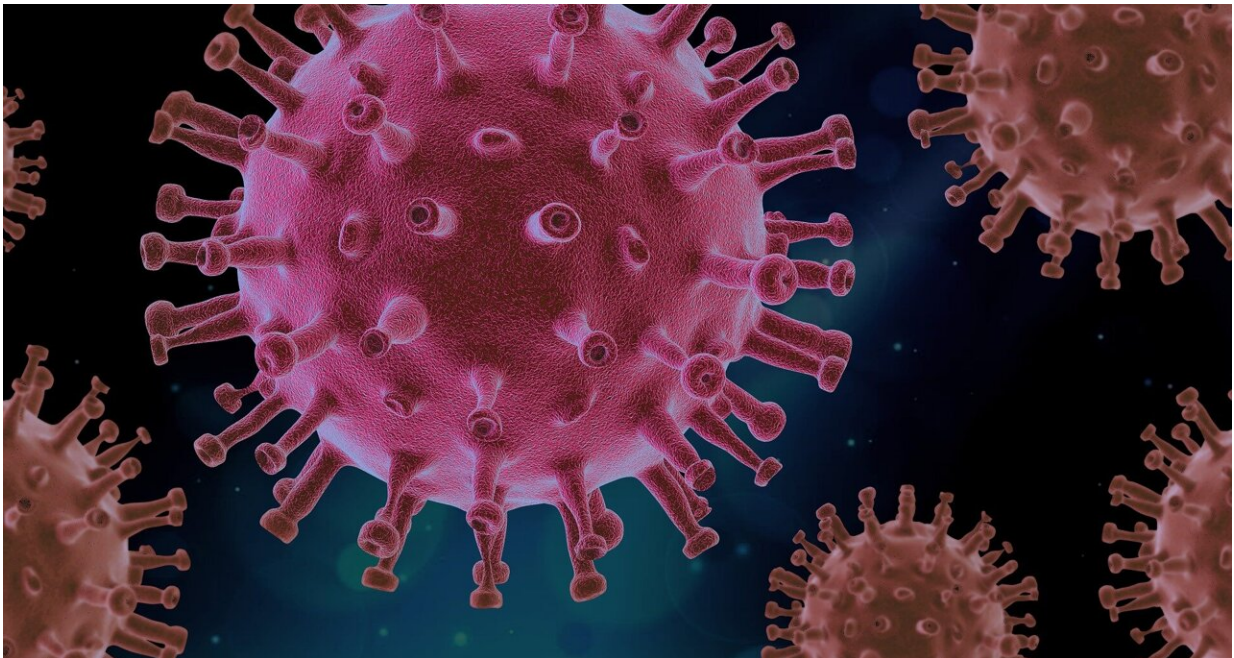


NY bill would force insurers to cover copays for Paxlovid

January 23 2024, by Tim Balk, New York Daily News



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With the life-saving, COVID-fighting drug Paxlovid no longer covered by the federal government, a push is underway in Albany to ensure New Yorkers seeking the medication do not get gouged by pricey co-payments.

State Sen. Brad Hoylman-Sigal plans to introduce a bill that would

require health insurers to cover the costs of Paxlovid for COVID-stricken New Yorkers, according to his office.

The [legislation](#), which would take effect at the start of 2025, comes in response to co-payments that can run as high as \$140, the senator's office said. Coverage by the U.S. government expired this winter.

Though COVID deaths have dropped dramatically since the grisly winters of 2020, 2021 and 2022, the virus continues to kill upward of 100 New Yorkers a week, according to state health data.

Hoylman-Sigal said "no one should be on the hook" for the costs of Paxlovid. "Particularly given the fact that by taking Paxlovid, you're actually helping protect other people," said the Manhattan Democrat.

"There's needless sickness and possibly even death due to the restrictions around the drug," he added.

Use of Paxlovid can reduce the risk of death from COVID by 73%, according to a study posted by the National Institutes of Health last year.

The sunseting of federal coverage for the drug came as the pill moved from the public market to the private market. People with Medicare and Medicaid coverage can still access the drug for free through the end of the year.

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Citation: NY bill would force insurers to cover copays for Paxlovid (2024, January 23) retrieved 21 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2024-01-ny-bill-copays-paxlovid.html>

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