



## **DOSE OF REALITY: BIG PHARMA'S EGREGIOUS PRICING AND ANTI-COMPETITIVE PRACTICES ARE DRIVING RISING HEALTH CARE COSTS**

*Making Health Care Affordable for the American People Means Holding Big Pharma Accountable to Lower Drug Prices*

Big Pharma's egregious pricing practices and anti-competitive tactics are the root cause of high prescription drug prices in the United States and a major driver of rising health care costs for millions of hardworking Americans.

Brand name drug companies set ever higher prices on the products they market, repeatedly hike prices at rates outpacing inflation and block competition from more affordable alternatives to keep prices high. Then they spend millions of dollars pointing fingers at others to evade accountability and rehash debunked innovation rhetoric to undermine market-based solutions to lower drug prices for American patients and taxpayers.

Making health care more affordable for the American people means holding Big Pharma accountable to lower prescription drug prices. Get a Dose of Reality on how Big Pharma is responsible for high prescription drug prices and health care inflation in the United States here:

### **BIG PHARMA'S EGREGIOUS PRICING PRACTICES**

#### **Price Hikes Outpacing Inflation**

- **Big Pharma Kicked Off 2026 With 872 Price Hikes On Brand Name Drugs:** Brand name pharmaceutical companies increased prices on [872](#) prescription drugs to start the year, with a median increase [outpacing](#) the rate of inflation.
- **Drug Prices Have Outpaced Inflation For Nearly Two Decades:** A January 2024 [report](#) from AARP's Public Policy Institute found that manufacturers raised prices faster than inflation on 943 top-selling brand name drugs in all but one year between 2006 and 2020.
- **Brand Name Drug Companies Nearly Double Prices On Medications Most Often Needed By America's Seniors Since They First Entered Market:** A 2025 [report](#) from AARP's Public Policy Institute found that the list prices of Medicare Part D's top 25 best-selling prescription drugs increased by an average of 98 percent – or nearly double – since entering the market. The report found that “20 of the top 25 drugs' lifetime price increases greatly exceeded the corresponding rate of general inflation.”

#### **Out-of-Control Launch Prices on New Drugs**

- **Median List Price of Newly Launched Drugs Exceeded \$370,000 In 2024:** A May 2025 Reuters [analysis](#) found that the median list price of newly launched prescription drugs in the United States topped \$370,000 in 2024, more than double the median price in 2021.
- **Launch Prices For New Drugs Rose 24 Percent Between 2022 And 2024:** An October 2025 [analysis](#) from the Institute for Clinical and Economic Review (ICER) found that the inflation-adjusted median annual list price for newly launched drugs increased 24 percent between 2022 and 2024.
- **Median Launch Prices Tripled from 2011 to 2022:** A March 2023 [report](#) from The Wall Street Journal found that the median monthly price for a newly approved drug nearly tripled from 2011 to 2022



## the campaign for **SUSTAINABLE Rx PRICING**

### **BIG PHARMA'S ANTI-COMPETITIVE TACTICS THAT KEEP PRICES HIGH**

- **Patent Abuse On Just Four Blockbuster Drugs Cost \$3.5 Billion in Two Years:** In August 2025, a [study](#) published in JAMA Health Forum found that lost competition due to Big Pharma's patent thickets on just four widely prescribed brand name drugs cost patients, taxpayers and the U.S. health care system more than \$3.5 billion in excess spending over two years.
- **Big Pharma's Patent Thickets On Just Five Drugs Cost Over \$16 Billion In a Single Year:** A January 2023 [report](#) from Matrix Global Advisors, "Patent Thickets and Lost Drug Savings," quantified the one-year cost of lost savings on five brand name drugs around which Big Pharma has built especially egregious patent thickets. The five drugs were AbbVie's autoimmune drug Humira and oncology drug Imbruvica, Regeneron's ophthalmology drug Eylea, Amgen's autoimmune drug Enbrel and Bristol Myers Squibb's oncology drug Opdivo.
- **Targeting Blockbuster Products for Patent Abuse:** A May 2022 [study](#) published in the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) Health Forum revealed how brand name drug companies target their most profitable products for reformulation to extend monopolies and prohibit generic competition from entering the market.
- **Big Pharma Increasingly Utilizing Secondary Patents to Extend Monopoly Pricing:** A January 2026 [study](#) published in JAMA Health Forum highlights how Big Pharma has been increasingly relying on secondary and tertiary patents that are unconnected to the active pharmaceutical ingredients (API) in top-selling drugs to extend monopoly pricing. Among 331 analyzed drugs, manufacturers "listed 3,241 patents in the FDA's Orange Book...more than half – 54 percent – were tertiary patents covering devices or device-related features, while only 4.2 percent were primary patents on the active pharmaceutical ingredient."
- **Delayed Generic And Biosimilar Competition Costs U.S. Health System Hundreds Of Billions In Excess Spending:** An [analysis](#) from the Association for Accessible Medicines estimated that accelerating access to generic and biosimilar drugs could generate \$422.9 billion in savings by reducing prices through competition.

### **BIG PHARMA'S PRICES ARE DRIVING HEALTH CARE INFLATION**

- **CSRxP Analysis Finds Big Pharma Profit Margins 10 Times Higher Than Others in Supply Chain:** Recently released findings from a CSRxP analysis reveal that the pharmaceutical industry continues to post profit margins 10 times higher than other sectors of the prescription drug supply chain.
- **High Launch Prices and GLP-1 Prices Driving Inflation:** A July 2025 [analysis](#) from PwC identified new prescription drugs entering the market as one of the main inflationary drivers for medical costs heading into 2026, pointing in particular to the high cost of new GLP-1 drugs, cell and gene therapies and treatments for rare diseases.
- **Prescription Drug Spending Grew 11.4 Percent In 2024:** A 2024 IQVIA [analysis](#) of national drug spending found total prescription drug expenditures increased 11.4 percent in 2024, driven largely by high-priced brand name drugs, including GLP-1 medications, oncology therapies and immunology treatments.
- **Prescription Drug Price Inflation Rising Even as Other Health Care Prices Fall:** An August 2024 Peterson-KFF Health System Tracker [analysis](#) found the annual Consumer Price Index (CPI) for prescription drugs rose 2.4 percent from June 2023 to June 2024, while the CPI for health insurance decreased 4.2 percent over the same period.
- **Brand Name Specialty Drugs And Biologics Account For More Than Half of All Drug Spending Despite Being Just Five Percent Of Prescriptions:** According to [federal health spending data](#), brand name specialty drugs and biologics represent more than 51 percent of total prescription drug spending, even though they account for only five percent of prescriptions filled in the United States.
- **Retail Prescription Drug Spending Reached \$467 Billion In 2024:** According to a January 2026 [research article](#) in Health Affairs, national retail prescription drug spending totaled \$467 billion in 2024, up 7.9 percent. The number of new active substances in medications launched by drug companies decreased from sixty-five in 2023 to forty-eight in 2024—the lowest number of new active substances since 2019.



## **AMERICANS RIGHTLY RECOGNIZE BIG PHARMA AS RESPONSIBLE FOR HIGH PRICES AND SUPPORT BIPARTISAN MARKET-BASED SOLUTIONS**

- **Clear Majority of U.S. Voters View Big Pharma as Responsible for High Drug Costs:** According to a February 2025 Fabrizio Ward [survey](#), 62 percent of voters view drug companies as the most responsible for high drug costs out of eight options.
- **Three in Five Voters Identify Drug Company Profits as Main Driver of High Prices:** 59 percent of voters blame drug company profits as the main driver of high prescription drug prices.
- **Nine in 10 Voters Concerned With Price Hikes Disconnected from Innovation:** 91 percent of voters are concerned that in 2023, brand name drugmakers increased prices on five widely used prescription medications without any accompanying true innovation, costing U.S. patients and the health care system an additional \$815 million.
- **Nine in 10 Voters Concerned with Big Pharma's Price Gouging and Anti-Competitive Tactics:** 89 percent of voters are concerned Big Pharma has a long history of price-gouging patients through tactics designed to game the U.S. patent system and block competition from more affordable alternatives, including patent thickets made up of hundreds of patents on blockbuster drugs.

Read more on Big Pharma's egregious pricing practices from last year [HERE](#).

Read more on the cost of Big Pharma's unjustified price hikes [HERE](#).

Read more on bipartisan, market-based solutions to hold Big Pharma accountable [HERE](#).

**About CSRxP:** The [Campaign for Sustainable Rx Pricing](#) is a broad-based coalition of physicians, nurses, hospitals, consumers, health plans, pharmacy benefit managers, pharmacists and businesses promoting bipartisan, market-based solutions to lower drug prices. Learn more: [www.csrxp.org](http://www.csrxp.org)

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