

Cost Rollercoaster in Medicare Part D Plans: Tracking sample finds continual cost increases in Medicare prescription drug plans

The following table outlines Consumers Union's findings from the [Medicare.gov](http://www.Medicare.gov) Web site from February 2007 to September 2007 for zip codes in California, Florida, Illinois, New York and Texas.

The five drugs are monthly dosages (30 days) of Altace 10 mg (for high blood pressure); Celebrex 200 mg (for arthritis pain, etc.); Lipitor 10 mg (for cholesterol control); Nifedipine ER (a generic drug to treat angina and high blood pressure) 20 mg; and Zoloft 100 mg (for depression, etc.).

Averages: Number of Plans and Drug Costs in Five States Tracked

State	# Of Plans	# Raised Prices	Avg. Price Increase	# Lowered Prices	# Raising Prices More Than 5%
CA	55	51	\$128	4	13
FL	57	55	\$123	2	14
IL	56	53	\$149	3	14
NY	61	58	\$140	3	16
TX	60	56	\$158	4	15

Largest Price Increase per State

State	Largest Price Increase
CA	\$225; Blue Shield Medicare Plan
FL	\$227; Sterling Rx Plus
IL	\$679; Blue Medicare Rx Standard
NY	\$505; Rx2
TX	\$676; Blue Medicare Rx Standard

Best/Worst Plans of the Five States

The following findings use the [Medicare.gov](http://www.Medicare.gov) website. The “worst” five plans are those that increased estimated annual costs the most on the five drugs in each of the five state zip codes between Feb-Sept 2007. The “best” plans are those which were in the lowest-cost half of all plans that also increased the least in price between Feb-Sept 2007.

CALIFORNIA

Five Best Plans: Prescription Pathway Bronze Plan Reg 32, UA Medicare part D Rx Covg-Silver Plan, Health Net Orange Option 2, Prescription Pathway Gold Plan Reg 32, Health Net Orange Option 3

Five Worst Plans: Advantage Star Plan, EnvisionRxPlus Standard, Bravo Rx II, Blue Shield Medicare Rx Enhanced Plan, Blue Shield Medicare Rx Plan

FLORIDA

Five Best Plans: UA Medicare Part D Rx Covg-Silver Plan, Prescription Pathway Bronze Plan Reg 11, Sterling Rx, Health Net Orange Option 2, Health Net Orange Option 3

Five Worst Plans: EnvisionRxPlus Standard, Advantage Star Plan, Bravo Rx II, HealthSpring Prescription Drug Plan-Reg 11, Silver Script Complete, Sterling Rx Plus

ILLINOIS

Five Best Plans: MedicareRx Rewards Plus, Prescription Pathway Bronze Plan Reg 17, UA Medicare Part D Rx Covg-Silver Plan, First Health Premier, MedicareRx Rewards Value, Prescription Pathway Gold Plan Reg 17

Five Worst Plans: Sterling Rx Plus, Blue Medicare Rx-Standard, Blue Medicare Rx-Plus, Blue Medicare Rx-Value, EnvisionRxPlus Standard

NEW YORK

Five Best Plans: HIP Standard Part D New York, SAMAscript, Humana PDP Enhanced, HIP Enhanced Part D New York, First UA Medicare Part D Rx Covg-Silver

Five Worst Plans: Rx 1, EnvisionRxPlus Standard, Rx 2, Sterling Rx Plus, Rx 3

TEXAS

Five Best Plans: Medicare Rx Rewards Plus, Prescription Pathway Bronze Plan Reg 22, UA Medicare Part D Rx Covg-Silver Plan, Prescription Pathway Gold Plan Reg 22, Sterling Rx

Five Worst Plans: Blue Medicare Rx-Standard, EnvisionRxPlus Standard, Blue Medicare Rx-Plus, Sterling Rx Plus, Blue Medicare Rx-Value