

Blue Shield's Treatment Cost Estimator

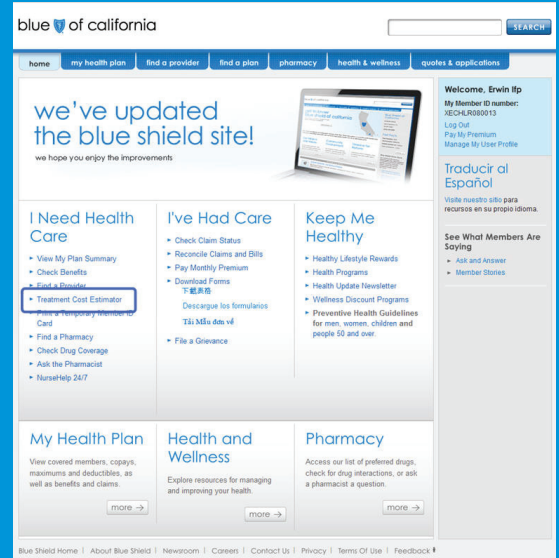
A new way to estimate your costs

Blue Shield's new **Treatment Cost Estimator tool** is now available for all PPO plan members at **blueshieldca.com**.

The Treatment Cost Estimator helps PPO members make informed treatment decisions by providing cost information that lets them:

- Compare costs received in different settings
- Compare costs from various providers and facilities
- Plan for high-cost services

The tool lets members save when choosing a provider for common medical tests, procedures, and other services. Treatment costs are normally bundled and include professional, inpatient, and related diagnostic services, excluding prescription drug costs.



Getting an estimate is as easy as 1-2-3:

1. What care do you need?

- Choose the category of care desired.
- Select a service from the drop-down list.

2. Where do you want to get care?

- Enter a ZIP code or city and state.
- Enter the maximum travel distance (1-100 miles).

3. How much will it cost?

- Click on *Estimate total costs*.

With 15 healthcare categories and care options, this tool offers members access to a variety of procedures and services.

Treatment Cost Estimator

easily estimate health care costs

Access to more information can help with making more informed decisions about health care. This **easy-to-use** tool can estimate total costs for common health care services performed at participating facilities in Blue Shield's network.



What kind of health care?

* Choose your category: * Choose your care: * required field

Where do you want to get your health care?

* Enter your ZIP code (or city and state): * Choose your preferred distance:

Find out how much it costs

Estimate total costs

Health Care - Category Options	Health Care - Care Options
back, spine & neck	• Back surgery - laminectomy • Back, spinal fusion (anterior) • Chiropactic treatment • CT Scan Head • CT Scan Pelvis • CT Scan Abdomen • CT Scan Pelvis
Brain, head	• CT Scan Head • MRI Brain
Children's health	• Tonsillectomy & adenoidectomy, > age 12 • Well child visit
Digestive system, liver, gallbladder	• Colonoscopy screening • Colonoscopy with biopsy • CT Scan abdomen • CT Scan pelvis
Ear, nose & throat	• Ears, Tympanostomy • Nasal/sinus - endoscopy - sinus surgery • Nasal/sinus - corrective surgery - septoplasty
Eyes	• Cataract removal
Heart & circulation	• Cardiac angioplasty with drug eluting stent • Left heart catheterization • Coronary bypass (CABG) without cardiac catheterization • Cardiac defibrillator implant without cardiac catheterization
Hips, legs, knees, feet	• CT Scan Pelvis • MRI Lower limb, with Joint • MRI Lower limb • Hip replacement • Hip replacement
Kidneys & bladder	• Bladder repair for incontinence (Sling) • Bladder, Urethra & Bladder Scope • CT Scan Abdomen
Lungs	• Bronchoscopy
Men's health	• Hernia, inguinal repair (age 5+)
Office visits	• Chiropactic treatment • Office Visit with Current Doctor • Office Visit with New Doctor • Well child visit
Shoulders, arms & hands	• MRI Upper Arm • Shoulder Arthroscopy • Wrist, Carpal Tunnel • Shoulder Arthroscopy with Rotator Cuff Repair
Weight loss	• Weight loss, bariatric surgery (lap band) • Weight loss, laparoscopic gastric bypass
Women's health	• Bladder repair for incontinence (Sling) • Breast Biopsy, percutaneous with Imaging • Breast Biopsy with device • Breast, Analog Mammography • Breast, Digital Mammography • Childbirth, C-Section Delivery • Childbirth, Vaginal Delivery • Dilation & Curettage (D&C) • Hysterectomy • Lumpectomy • Laparoscopic removal of ovaries and/or fallopian tubes • Laparoscopic tubal block or tubal ligation • Spine, bone marrow density of spine or pelvis • Women's Health - OB/GYN Exam

Using your search results

Once the Treatment Cost Estimator presents the search results, members can access:

- Contact and location information
- Geographical distance from the ZIP code entered
- Information on Blue Distinction Centers®* for excellence in quality when applicable
- Data on the frequency of procedures that are performed at the facility
- Average cost ranges for each provider listed

Finding deductible and copay information

At the top of the results page, members can select the link to find a current summary of deductible and out-of-pocket expenses specific to their plan. This can help members understand the maximum share of costs they might pay.

Your health care estimates

[*Click here to view the amounts paid toward your annual deductible and copay maximum.](#)

Back, Back Surgery - Laminectomy

Laminectomy is surgery to remove pieces of bone that press on a nerve in the spine. The goal is to help reduce back and neck pain. For the purposes of this estimate, this is an outpatient procedure, without a hospital stay.

We expanded your chosen distance to include facilities designated as Blue Distinction Centers®.

				Things you should know!	
In-Network Facility	City, State, ZIP	Distance	Blue Distinction	Services Performed	Typical Cost
Valleycare Medical Center 5555 W Las Positas Blvd 925-847-3000	Pleasanton, CA 94588	30.4 mi	Blue Distinction® Spine Surgery	7	\$6,980 \$8,376 Low High
St Agnes Medical Center 1303 E Herndon Ave 559-450-3000	Fresno, CA 93720	160.4 mi	Blue Distinction® Spine Surgery	8	\$9,772 \$11,168 Low High
Medical Ctr at UCSF 505 Parnassus Ave 415-476-1000	San Francisco, CA 94143	3.0 mi		11	\$13,960 \$15,356 Low High
Mercy Medical Ctr 2175 Rosaline Ave 530-225-6000	Redding, CA 96001	192.3 mi	Blue Distinction® Spine Surgery	9	\$15,356 \$16,752 Low High
St. Jude Medical Center 101 E Valencia Mesa Dr 714-871-3280	Fullerton, CA 92835	368.9 mi	Blue Distinction® Spine Surgery	5	\$16,752 \$18,148 Low High
John Muir Medical Center 1601 Ygnacio Valley Rd 925-947-3336	Walnut Creek, CA 94598	22.3 mi		8	\$20,940 \$22,336 Low High
Stanford Medical Center 300 Pasteur Dr 650-723-4000	Stanford, CA 94305	28.7 mi	Blue Distinction® Spine Surgery	13	\$27,920 \$29,316 Low High

low

high

Disclaimer:

Individual hospitals may disagree with the methodology used to define the cost ranges, the cost data or quality measures. Many factors may influence cost or quality, including, but not limited to, the cost of uninsured and charity care, the type and severity of procedures, the case mix of a hospital, special services such as trauma centers, burn units, medical and other educational programs, research, transplant services, technology, payer mix, and other factors affecting individual hospitals.

A note about costs

Estimates are based on average costs per treatment by facility over 12 months of claims data. Surgery estimates include facility, professional, and anesthesia services. There may be additional costs for related services that are not reflected in the estimates provided (for example, lab or imaging services).

- Estimates are not exact; they represent typical costs for each facility and service.
- Costs for medications, lab, or additional services received at other facilities may not be included.
- Results are not provided for facilities with insufficient data.
- Cost estimates are updated every six months.
- Certain claims are excluded:
 - Medicare claims
 - Emergency/trauma
 - Secondary claims
 - Complex cases
 - Transplants

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Disclaimers and things you should know

Typical Costs

Costs for the same health care service can vary a great deal by location and health care provider; the Treatment Cost Estimator can help you stretch your health care dollars by allowing you to compare what it may cost to have your desired service performed at various facilities.

The information available within this tool is developed using 12 months of PPO health benefit claims data, and provides members with an estimate of the range of costs for a specific health care service at a specific facility before your benefits are applied. For example, the typical cost for a knee replacement may range from around \$11,000 to \$13,000 at one facility, and may range from around \$36,000 to \$40,000 at another facility.

The range of costs reported by the tool represents only the typical costs for services supplied by facilities and professional health care providers (e.g., physicians) that are related to the primary health care service you selected. In addition, there may be costs for other services provided in addition to the primary medical treatment that are not reflected in the cost estimate, such as medications, lab tests, x-rays, etc., as well as additional costs for related services received at other facilities. In some cases these additional costs can be high, and you could be responsible for those costs depending on your benefit plan. Your actual costs will vary based on the specific services you receive, your benefits for that health care service and your progress towards meeting your annual deductible and copay maximum.

What's not included in the Typical Costs estimate

Estimates do not take into account certain types of claims and services, such as:

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* Blue Distinction® is a designation awarded by the Blue Cross and Blue Shield companies to medical facilities that have demonstrated expertise in delivering quality health care.