

# The Cost of Low Back Pain -- How Does Your State Compare?

Editorial Staff

It may surprise you to learn the great variation in the average case cost for low back pain in each state

A study<sup>1</sup> of 1989 workers' compensation data from Liberty Mutual revealed Texas to be the most expensive place to file a low back case (average cost \$17,714), and Indiana to be the best bargain (average cost \$2,684). According to the data, a low back case in Texas has the dubious distinction of costing nearly seven times that of Indiana. It is this wide disparity in treatment protocols that makes one enthusiastic and appreciative of the clinical low back pain guidelines developed by the Agency for Health Care Policy and Research (AHCPR).

Compare your state with the national average of \$8,321 per case: .....\$

Alabama	\$5,098
Alaska	\$8,088
Arizona	\$4,729
Arkansas	\$6,902
California	\$7,761
Colorado	\$6,825
Connecticut	\$12,424
Delaware	\$3,870
Florida	\$10,945
Georgia	\$6,053
Hawaii	\$9,889
Idaho	\$4,342
Illinois	\$8,790
Indiana	\$2,684
Iowa	\$4,875
Kansas	\$5,091
Kentucky	\$6,158
Louisiana	\$12,928
Maine	\$7,048
Maryland	\$8,241
Massachusetts	\$14,516
Michigan	\$7,148
Minnesota	\$8,527
Mississippi	\$5,799
Missouri	\$4,710
Montana	\$5,536

Nebraska	\$3,848
New Hampshire	\$10,305
New Jersey	\$7,682
New Mexico	\$11,846
New York	\$7,564
North Carolina	\$4,689
Oklahoma	\$8,974
Oregon	\$5,734
Pennsylvania	\$10,590
Rhode Island	\$17,279
South Carolina	\$5,265
South Dakota	\$3,715
Tennessee	\$5,588
Texas	\$17,714
Utah	\$3,808
Vermont	\$5,241
Virginia	\$6,165
Washington, D.C.	\$12,126
Wisconsin	\$3,774

---

1. Webster BS. The cost of 1989 workers' compensation low back pain claims. *Spine*, 1994;19:1111-1116.

JANUARY 1995