

Medical Expenses That Are Deductible and Nondeductible

The medical expense deduction is permitted only for households in which the head or spouse is at least 62 or disabled (elderly or disabled households). If the household is eligible for a medical expense deduction, the medical expenses of all family members may be counted (e.g., orthodontist expenses for a child's braces may be deducted if the household is an elderly or disabled household). Medical expenses are expenses anticipated to be incurred during the 12 months following certification or reexamination which are not covered by an outside source such as insurance. The medical allowance is not intended to give a family an allowance equal to last year's expenses, but to anticipate regular ongoing and anticipated expenses during the coming year.

If a family has medical expenses and no disability assistance expenses, the allowable medical expense is that portion of total medical expenses that exceeds three percent of annual income.

Below are examples of eligible items for medical expense deductions. This list is not exhaustive.

Type of Medical Expenses	May Include*
Services of recognized health care professionals	Services of physicians, nurses, dentists, opticians, mental health practitioners, osteopaths, chiropractors, Christian Science practitioners, and acupuncture practitioners
Services of health care facilities; laboratory fees, X-rays and diagnostic tests, blood, oxygen	Hospitals, health maintenance organizations (HMOs), laser eye surgery, out-patient medical facilities, and clinics
Alcoholism and drug addiction treatment	
Medical insurance premiums	Expenses paid to an HMO; Medicaid insurance payments that have not been reimbursed; long-term care premiums (not prorated)
Prescription and nonprescription medicines	Aspirin, antihistamine only if prescribed by a physician for a particular medical condition
Transportation to/from treatment and lodging	Actual cost (e.g., bus fare) or, if driving in a car, a mileage rate based on IRS rules. *If the individual is receiving reimbursement for the cost of transportation to/from treatment or the lodging from another source, the cost or mileage is not eligible for the medical expense deduction*.
Medical care of permanently institutionalized family member IF his/her income is included in Annual Income	
Dental treatment	Fees paid to the dentist; x-rays; fillings, braces, extractions, dentures
Eyeglasses, contact lenses	
Hearing aid and batteries, wheelchair, walker, artificial limbs, Braille books and magazines, oxygen and oxygen equipment	Purchase and upkeep (e.g., additional utility costs to tenant because of oxygen machine [in properties with tenant paid utilities only])
Attendant care or periodic medical care	Nursing services, assistance animal and its upkeep
Payments on accumulated medical bills	Scheduled payments

* Or any other medically necessary service, apparatus, or medication, as documented by third-party verification.

Some items that **may not** be included in medical expense deductions are listed below.

Medical Expenses	May Not Include
Cosmetic surgery	<p>Do not include in medical expenses amounts paid for unnecessary cosmetic surgery. This applies to any procedure that is directed at improving the patient's appearance and does not meaningfully promote the proper function of the body or prevent or treat illness or disease. Procedures such as face-lifts, hair transplants, hair removal (electrolysis), and liposuction generally are not deductible. However, if medical complications, e.g., infections, etc., occur as a result of the procedure that requires medical treatment, the medical treatment expenses would be treated as a medical expense deduction.</p> <p>Amounts paid for cosmetic surgery may be deducted if necessary to improve a deformity arising from, or directly related to, a congenital abnormality, a personal injury resulting from an accident or trauma, or a disfiguring disease.</p>
Health club dues	<p>Do not include in medical expenses the cost of membership in any club organized for business, pleasure, recreation, or other social purpose, such as health club dues, YMCA dues, or amounts paid for steam baths for general health or to relieve physical or mental discomfort not related to a particular medical condition.</p>
Household help	<p>Do not include in medical expenses the cost of household help, even if such help is recommended by a doctor.</p> <p>However, certain expenses paid to a person providing nursing-type services may be deductible as medical costs.</p>
Medical savings account (MSA)	<p>Do not deduct as a qualified medical expense amounts contributed to an Archer MSA.</p>
Nutritional supplements, vitamins, herbal supplements, "natural medicines"	<p>Do not include in medical expenses the cost of nutritional supplements, vitamins, herbal supplements, "natural medicines," etc., unless they are recommended in writing by a medical practitioner licensed in the locality where practicing. These items must be recommended as treatment for a specific medical condition diagnosed by a physician or other health care provider licensed to make a diagnosis in the locality where practicing. Otherwise, these items are taken to maintain ordinary good health, and are not for medical care.</p>
Personal use items	<p>Do not include in medical expenses an item ordinarily used for personal, living, or family purposes unless it is used primarily to prevent or alleviate a physical or mental defect or illness. For example, the cost of a wig purchased upon the advice of a physician for the mental health of a patient who has lost all of his or her hair from disease or incontinence supplies can be included with medical expenses</p>
Nonprescription medicines	<p>Do not include in medical expenses nonprescription medicines unless they are recommended in writing by a medical practitioner licensed in the locality where practicing. These items must be recommended as treatment for a specific medical condition diagnosed by a physician or other health care provider licensed to make a diagnosis in the locality where practicing.</p>