

Chronic Conditions In Colorado

Trends and Costs Using the Colorado All Payer Claims Database

CIVHC Analysts in Collaboration with Human Services Research Institute



Access the Chronic Conditions analysis and explore additional Colorado APCD data resources at civhc.org



Background

Chronic conditions, like heart disease and diabetes, are more than just personal health challenges—they're among the leading causes of death and disability in the United States. They reduce quality of life, drive up health care costs, and place a heavy burden on health systems nationwide.

CIVHC's Chronic Conditions Analysis sheds light on costs, prevalence, and trends for 30 chronic diseases. Using data spanning from 2017 to 2023 in the Colorado All Payer Claims Database (CO APCD), this comprehensive analysis has the power to help communities, researchers, and health care leaders make informed decisions that improve care, reduce costs, and support healthier lives across Colorado.

Research Objectives

- 1 To measure chronic condition prevalence, including multiple conditions.
- 2 To analyze trends (2017-2023) in chronic disease burden.
- 3 To evaluate economic impact, including total and per-patient costs.
- 4 To assess how multimorbidity and demographic factors affect costs.

Study Design

Claims data from Commercial, Medicaid, Medicare Fee-for-Service, and Medicare Advantage populations in the CO APCD were used to assess prevalence, disease trends, and cost of care among individuals with chronic conditions. Chronic conditions were identified using standardized algorithm developed by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), ensuring consistent classification based on diagnosis codes. Outcomes, including total spending, cost of care per person per year (PPPY), and prevalence, were analyzed by year, payer type, urban or rural designation, and demographic characteristics. The analysis includes 30 chronic conditions, as well as aggregated results for individuals with at least one condition and those with two or more conditions.

! Costs reflect total annual health care spending for individuals with a chronic condition, not just expenses related to treating that condition.

Cohort

Cohort size: 908,570 individuals in 2023. Analysis includes data from 2017-2023. Share of members with ≥1 month eligibility in CO APCD who have a CMS-defined chronic condition.

Principle Findings

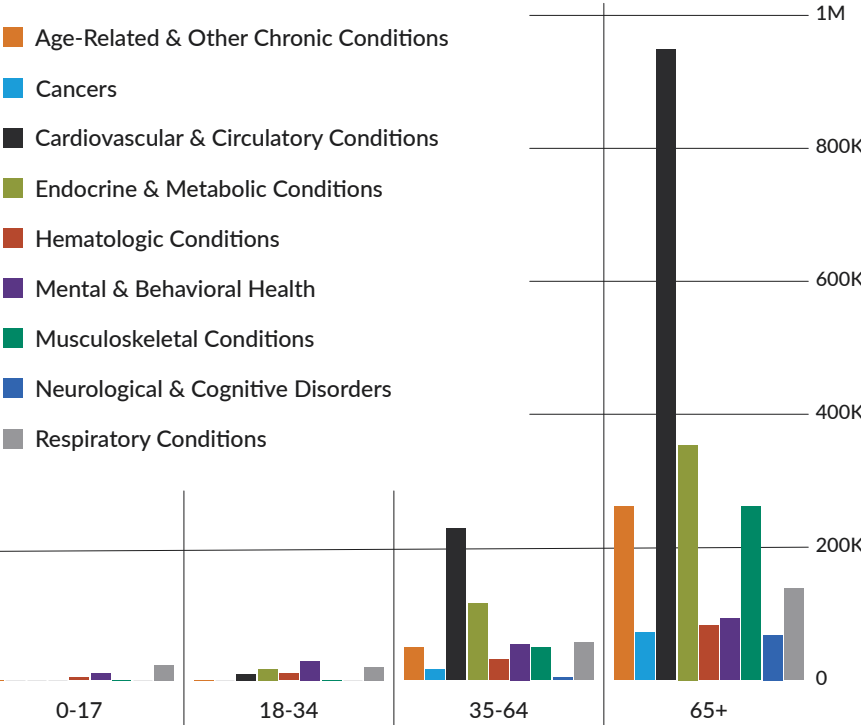
A significant share of Coloradans live with chronic conditions, and most of those affected are navigating multiple conditions at the same time.

22% of Coloradans have a chronic condition, and most of them — about **7 out of 10** have more than one.



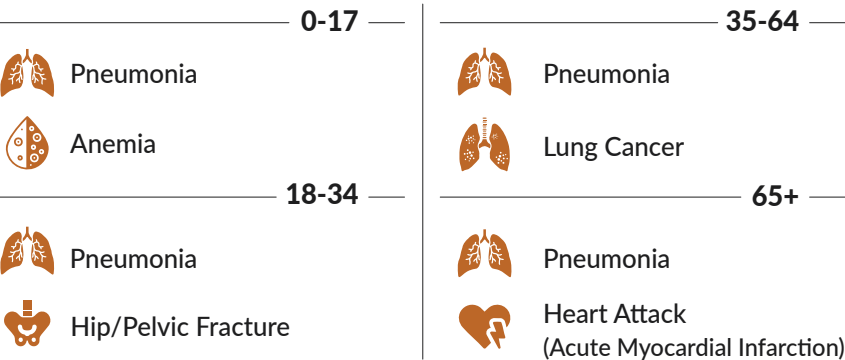
Prevalence of Chronic Conditions by Age Group

Older adults (65+) face the highest burden of chronic conditions.



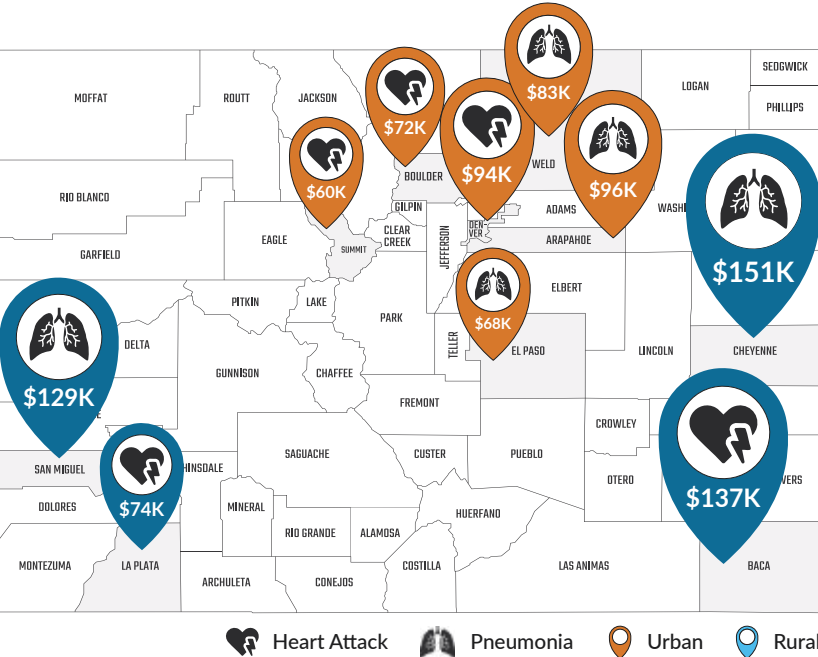
Most Costly by Age Group | Cost Per Person Per Year (PPPY)

Pneumonia might seem like a one-time illness—but for many, especially those with other health issues, it can lead to high-intensity care and significant costs.

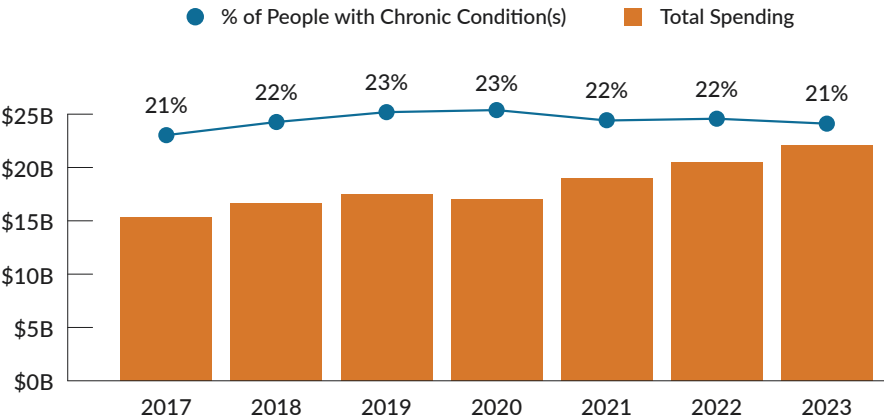


Cost Variation for High-Expense Conditions Across the State | PPPY

Health care costs for chronic conditions vary across Colorado. Urban areas can often have higher costs due to access to specialty care, while rural areas may see cost differences tied to provider access and how care is delivered.

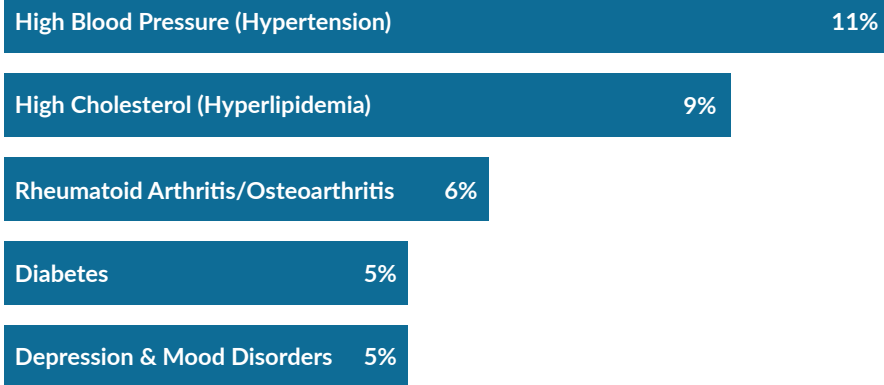


While the rate of individuals with one or more chronic condition(s) remained stable from 2017 to 2023, treatment costs increased from \$15B to \$22B, a 44% increase.



Most Common Chronic Conditions | Statewide

Colorado's five most common chronic conditions:



Conclusion

Chronic conditions affect a substantial proportion of Coloradans, with many individuals experiencing multiple conditions that drive higher health care utilization and costs. While common conditions account for the largest share of total spending, less prevalent conditions often incur higher costs per person. Disease burden also varies across age groups, reflecting evolving care needs over time. These findings underscore the importance of prevention, early intervention, and effective management to improve outcomes and reduce overall health care costs.