

ConsumerReports[®]Health

What's fair?

Fair healthcare pricing from Healthcare Blue Book

Healthcare Blue Book is a free consumer guide to help you determine fair prices in your area for healthcare services

Breast reduction

(CPT code 19318)

Fair price:

Includes: Physician fee, facility fee, anesthesia fee

National fair price: **\$6,970**

National range: **\$6,000 - \$12,540**

Local fair prices:

Boston, Massachusetts 02102 **\$7,651**

Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53202 **\$6,681**

Minneapolis, Minnesota 55402 **\$6,722**

Jacksonville, Florida 32202 **\$6,895**

Los Angeles, California 90006 **\$7,361**

Houston, Texas 77010 **\$7,118**

New York, NY 10003 **\$7,934**

Check the fair price in your region at healthcarebluebook.com

Details:

How were these prices calculated and what are they based on?

This is Healthcare Blue Book's recommended price for breast reduction surgery.

Breast reduction is an elective cosmetic surgery and is therefore not covered by most health insurance.

The Blue Book fair price recommendation is based on the typical payment amount that providers accept from cash paying patients.

Patients should be able to find providers in their area that accept prices at or below the Blue Book fair price, although many providers may charge more.

How should consumers use this information?

You can use the Blue Book fair price as a guide to help you compare prices when you shop for care and to make sure that you receive treatment at a fair price.

Because breast reduction is typically paid for by the patient, patients should call several cosmetic surgery practices and ask about price. Patients can search for cosmetic surgeons at the American Medical Association website (www.ama-assn.org) or the American Association of Plastic Surgeons (www.plasticsurgery.org)

Different providers often charge different prices. Prices for breast reduction may range from \$5,000 to over \$10,000 in many areas. We recommend that patients call several providers to find one that charges a fair price.

Alternatively, patients may ask if a provider accepts the Blue Book fair price. The provider may accept the fair price amount or offer some discount from the original price.

Key points to consider when shopping for breast reduction surgery.

- Prices for this service frequently vary by over 200% in many locations. Patients should call several providers to ask about the price before you have your procedure.
- Make sure to ask what is included in the price. Specifically, ask if the price estimate includes the physician fee, facility fee, anesthesia and one or more follow-up visits.
- Ask about other typical costs you may have to pay, such as pre-operative lab tests or post-operative medications.

Breast reduction does not qualify as a reimbursable expense for your Health Savings Account (HSA) or Health Reimbursement Account (HRA).

What's fair? Breast reduction

Is breast reduction surgery typically covered by health insurance plans?

No. Breast reduction surgery is considered an elective cosmetic procedure and is not covered by most health insurance policies.

Is breast reduction surgery typically covered by Medicare or Medicaid plans?

No. Breast reduction is considered an elective cosmetic procedure and is not covered by Medicare or Medicaid.

What kind of out-of-pocket costs should I expect to pay?

Patients should expect to pay 100% of the cost out of pocket.

Patients may want to ask their provider if they can have an additional discount for paying the full bill at the time of treatment. If you cannot pay the full cost of the procedure at the time of treatment, some cosmetic surgery practices offer financing and payment plans.

Do the costs for this service vary depending on which provider I use?

The price variation in most locations varies by 200% or more depending on where you get your care.

Since this procedure is paid directly by the patient, most provider practices can be flexible in terms of offering discounts. If you are not satisfied with a provider's price, you can consider other providers that may offer you a more reasonable price.

What other trends or variations in cost should I be aware of?

There may be additional costs, such as post-operative medications (antibiotics, ointment or pain medications) that the patient may have to pay out of pocket.

What other tips can help me ensure I get the best price?

- If the quoted price is not initially in the range of the fair price, don't be afraid to ask for a discount.
- Always be courteous and respectful when asking about price or when interacting with office staff.
- If you are offered a discount based on payment at the time of treatment, make sure to pay your bill promptly.

What's fair Breast reduction

Qualifications

Cosmetic surgeons should be board certified by the American Board of Plastic Surgeons.

Other concerns

Like any invasive surgery, breast reduction has its own risks, including infection, complication and scarring. Patients may also feel dissatisfied with the aesthetic results, which may lead to additional surgery.

Patients should discuss their expectations, the surgical risks and the long term clinical and financial implications with their doctor before electing to have this procedure.

The pricing and benefits information reflected in this report is based upon the common pricing and practices found in most markets and may not reflect the specific pricing or health benefits available to you. Some providers charge amounts well in excess of the Blue Book fair price. Some insurance plans cover services differently. If possible, you should check with your medical provider and health insurance company to confirm pricing and benefit coverage for services before you get care. In addition, you will want to check on your providers' quality information.

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