

Economic uncertainty heightens need for cost-effective online pharmacies like Amazon Pharmacy, CVS Caremark

Article

The trend: Consumers are turning to online pharmacies to avoid high prescription costs and long wait times at traditional pharmacies.

A newly released [study](#) from Software Advice shows just how much time and money patients save by using an online pharmacy like Amazon or CVS Caremark:

- **61% of respondents saved more than \$20** versus a traditional pharmacy.
- And nearly **1 in 3 said they saved over \$50**.
- **94% of patients saved time** by turning to online pharmacies—**62%** said they **saved between 6-30 minutes**.

Digging into the data: When asked about the biggest drawbacks of a traditional pharmacy, price and convenience were the top factors.

- **34%** said **having to leave the house** was the biggest drawback.
- **29%** said it's that medications are **more expensive** at a traditional pharmacy.
- And **23%** mentioned **long wait times**.

Meanwhile, pharmacy brands with a retail presence are getting plenty of business for their digital services.

- **67%** of respondents used **Amazon Pharmacy**, **50%** tried **Capsule**, and **43%** have used **CVS' Caremark**.

As consumers seek out price transparency, they're also turning to drug discount platforms like **GoodRx** and Mark Cuban's recently launched direct-to-consumer pharmacy (**MCCPDC**).

- **17%** of respondents had tried MCCPDC, per Software Advice.

The elephant in the room: Amazon Pharmacy looms over traditional pharmacy retailers.

That's unsurprising, considering **66%** of brick-and-mortar pharmacy customers also hold an Amazon Prime account and **48%** of pharmacy customers know that Amazon offers pharmacy services, [according to](#) the J.D. Power 2022 U.S. Pharmacy Study. Amazon Pharmacy also [offers](#) a prescription discount savings card to Prime members.

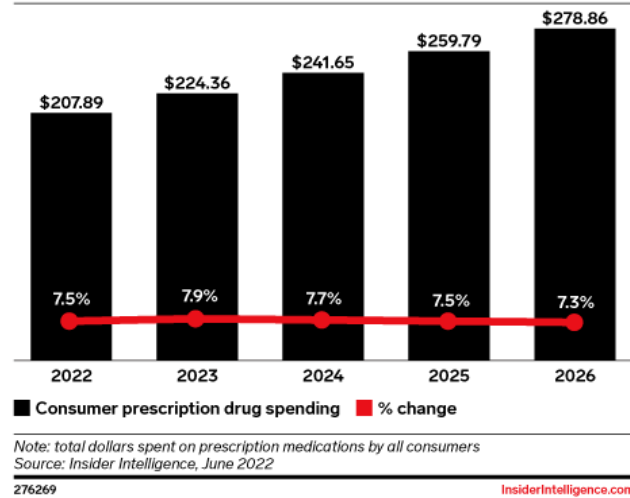
Key takeaway: As patients contend with out-of-control prescription costs, providers and pharmacies should educate consumers on price transparency, drug discounts, and how to

order and pay for online prescriptions seamlessly.

Average out-of-pocket prescription expenditures will reach nearly \$279 per person in 2026 and increase a little over 7% each year until then, [per](#) our June 2022 forecast “US Consumer Prescription Drug Spending per Year per Person, 2022-2026.”

Meanwhile, prescription drug use hit a new record of 194 billion daily doses in 2021 as delivery of healthcare services recovered from the early days of the pandemic in 2020, [according to](#) an April 2022 report by the IQVIA Institute for Human Data Science. Although IQVIA expects spending on medication to return to pre-pandemic levels by 2023, customers will likely continue their move to online pharmacies due to cost savings and convenience.

US Consumer Prescription Drug Spending Per Year, Per Person, 2022-2026
dollars and % change



Go deeper: Check out our [Digital Pharmacies 2022 report](#) to learn more about how consumers will buy their medication in the future.

This article originally appeared in Insider Intelligence's Digital Health Briefing—a daily recap of top stories reshaping the healthcare industry. Subscribe to have more hard-hitting takeaways delivered to your inbox daily.

- Are you a client? [Click here to subscribe.](#)
- Want to learn more about how you can benefit from our expert analysis? [Click here.](#)