

Example: Cost of a Major Health Event

(Numbers are illustrative national averages — exact costs vary by region and provider.)

Scenario 1: Heart Attack & 3-Day Hospital Stay

Without Insurance

Item	Estimated Cost
ER visit + diagnostics	\$3,000–\$8,000
Cardiac catheterization (common)	\$20,000–\$40,000
Hospital stay (3 days)	\$30,000–\$75,000
Medications & follow-up	\$1,500–\$4,000
Total out-of-pocket: \$54,500–\$127,000	

With Insurance (Typical Employer or Marketplace Plan)

Item	Estimated Cost with Insurance
Deductible	\$1,500–\$3,000
Coinsurance (after deductible)	\$2,000–\$5,000
Out-of-pocket max	Usually \$4,500–\$9,000
Total out-of-pocket: Capped at \$4,500–\$9,000	

Financial Impact

- **Savings due to insurance:** \$45,000–\$120,000
 - **Insurance prevents catastrophic financial loss** and unexpected debt.
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Scenario 2: Car Accident (Broken Leg + Surgery)

Without Insurance

Item	Cost
Ambulance	\$1,000–\$2,500
ER visit + imaging	\$3,000–\$8,000
Surgery	\$20,000–\$35,000
Rehab + follow-ups	\$2,000–\$6,000
Total: \$26,000–\$51,500	

With Insurance

Item	Cost
Deductible	\$1,500–\$3,000
Coinsurance	\$1,000–\$3,000
Total: \$2,500–\$6,000	
<i>(Often stops at the out-of-pocket maximum.)</i>	

Scenario 3: Cancer Diagnosis (Chemo for 1 Year)

Without Insurance

Total cost can easily range **\$100,000–\$250,000+** depending on treatment and medications.

With Insurance

Out-of-pocket expenses typically stop at the **out-of-pocket maximum**:

- **\$4,500–\$9,000** per year depending on plan.
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Simple Chart for Advisers

You can present a one-look comparison like this:

Event	Without Insurance	With Insurance
Heart Attack	\$55k–\$127k	\$4.5k–\$9k
Broken Leg w/ Surgery	\$26k–\$51k	\$2.5k–\$6k
Cancer (Year 1)	\$100k–\$250k	\$4.5k–\$9k

Key Message for the Client

- Insurance **does not prevent bad health events**, but it **prevents financial catastrophe**.
- Just one medical event can wipe out savings equal to **years of income**.
- Insurance converts unpredictable huge bills into **predictable, capped costs**.