

# Health care FSA easy reference list

## Accupuncture, Braces, Chiropractors ...

**Abdominal disorders:** Medical expenses, including prescription drugs, associated with healing or relieving of abdominal disorders are reimbursable. Over-the-counter remedies are reimbursable.

**Abortion:** Medical expenses associated with a legal abortion are reimbursable. **See Family planning, Pregnancy termination.**

**Acupuncturist's fees:** are reimbursable expenses.

**Airplane fare:** **See Transplants and Transportation.**

**Air purifier, humidifier, and home window air conditioner,** prescribed by physician for allergy sufferer, are reimbursable. (Refer to Capital expenses.) Physician's note required with claim. See page 4.

**Alcoholism and drug abuse:** Medical expenses paid to a treatment center for alcohol or drug abuse are reimbursable. This includes meals and lodging provided by the center during treatment. Also reimbursable are transportation costs to attend AA meetings if attendance is based on medical advice as necessary for the treatment of the disease.

**Alternative healers, dietary substitutes, and drugs and medicines:** Maybe. Non-traditional healing treatments provided by professionals may be eligible if provided to treat a specific medical condition, but the IRS carefully examines these expenses. The treatments must be legal. And the expenses do not qualify if the remedy is a food or substitute for food that the person would normally consume in order to meet nutritional requirements. **See Medicines; Christian Science Practitioners; Special Foods; Vitamins.**

**Anesthesiologist's fees:** Costs incurred by anesthesiology for eligible medical procedures are reimbursable.

**Artificial limb:** Expenses paid for an artificial limb are reimbursable.

**Attendant:** **See Nursing services.**

**Automobile:** **See Car.**

**Birth control pills and devices:** Medical expenses paid for birth control pills and devices are reimbursable. This includes over-the-counter items. Medical expenses associated with a legal abortion are reimbursable. **See Family planning, Pregnancy termination.**

**Braces:** **See Orthodontics.**

**Braille books and magazines:** The amount by which the cost of Braille books and magazines for use by a person who is visually impaired exceeds the price for regular books and magazines is reimbursable.

**Breast reconstruction surgery following mastectomy:** Yes, to the extent that surgery was done following a mastectomy for cancer. This is an exception to the general rules regarding cosmetic procedures. **See Cosmetic surgery.**

**Cancellation fee:** does not qualify.

**Capital expenses:** If their main purpose is medical care, capital expenses paid for special equipment installed in a participant's home or for improvements to the home are reimbursable. For further details see discussion under the heading Capital expenses, on the last page of booklet. Physicians note is required with claim.

**Car:** Medical expenses are reimbursable for special hand controls and other special equipment installed in a car for the use of a person with disabilities. Also, the amount by which the cost of a car specially designed to hold a wheelchair exceeds the cost of a regular car is reimbursable. However, the cost of operating a specially equipped car is not reimbursable. **See Transportation.**

**Child care:** **See Dependent daycare.**

**Childbirth classes:** Expenses for childbirth classes are reimbursable, but are limited to expenses incurred by the mother-to-be. Expenses incurred by a "coach"—even if that is the father-to-be—are not reimbursable. To qualify as medical care, the classes must address specific medical issues, such as labor, delivery and breathing techniques.

**Chiropodist's fees:** are reimbursable expenses.

**Chiropractor's fees** are reimbursable expenses as services are being rendered.

**Christian Science practitioner's** fees for medical care are reimbursable expenses. Fees for other purposes do not qualify.

**Clinic:** Medical expenses for treatment at a health clinic are reimbursable.

**Coinsurance amounts:** Medical coinsurance amounts and deductibles are reimbursable.

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Contact Lenses, Diabetes, Fertility, Hearing Aids ...

**Contact lenses:** See [Vision care](#).

**Cosmetic surgery** needed to improve congenital abnormality, personal injury, or disfiguring disease is reimbursable. Expenses for other types of cosmetic surgery are not reimbursable. This applies to any procedure that is directed at improving the patient's appearance and does not meaningfully promote the proper functions of the body or prevent or treat illness or disease. For example, face lifts, hair transplants, hair removal (electrolysis), teeth bleaching and liposuction are not reimbursable. If there is a concern that a medical or dental surgery could be considered cosmetic, a doctor's certification should be obtained explaining how the procedure meaningfully promotes the proper function of the body or prevents or treats an illness or disease.

**Crutches:** Medical expenses paid to buy or rent crutches are reimbursable.

**Deductibles, medical:** Insurance deductibles and coinsurance amounts under the employer's plan are reimbursable. Must be associated with services and service dates. Insurance premiums are not reimbursable through a health care FSA.

**Dental services:** Expenses for medically necessary dental treatment are reimbursable. This includes fees paid for X-rays, fillings, braces, extractions, dentures, etc.

Also see [Cosmetic surgery](#).

**Dermatologist's fees** are reimbursable expenses.

**Diabetes management:** See [Insulin, Medicines](#).

**Diaper service:** Payments for diapers or diaper service are not reimbursable unless they are needed to relieve the effects of a particular disease.

**Diagnostic services** are eligible expenses.

**Diets:** See [Special foods](#).

**Drugs:** See [Medicines](#).

**Drug addiction:** See [Alcoholism and drug abuse](#).

**Employment taxes:** See [Nursing services](#).

**Eye examination fees:** See [Vision care](#).

**Eyeglasses:** See [Vision care](#).

**Family or group counseling or therapy** is not an eligible expense unless verified by a physician's written statement of medical necessity for the treatment

of a medical condition. Physician's note must accompany claim.

See [Marriage counseling](#), [Psychiatrist's fees](#), [Psychoanalysis](#), [Psychologist's fees](#), [Psychotherapist's fees](#).

**Family planning:** Medical expenses paid for birth control pills and devices are reimbursable. This includes over-the-counter items. See [Birth control pills and devices](#), [Pregnancy termination](#), [Vasectomy](#).

**Fertility treatment:** Medical expenses related to the treatment of infertility, including in vitro fertilization, are reimbursable. Surrogate and embryo storage does not qualify.

**Group medical insurance:** See [Insurance premiums](#).

**Guide dog or other animal:** The cost of a guide dog or other animal used by a person who is visually or hearing impaired is reimbursable. Costs associated with a dog or other animal trained to assist persons with other physical disabilities are also reimbursable, as are amounts paid for the care of these specially trained animals.

**Gynecologist's fees** are reimbursable expenses.

**Healthy baby care:** See [Nursing services](#).

**Hearing aids:** Medical expenses for a hearing aid and batteries are reimbursable. Hearing aid insurance is not reimbursable.

**Hospital:** Expenses incurred as a hospital in-patient or out-patient for laboratory, surgical and diagnostic services qualify for reimbursement.

**Household help:** does not qualify.

**Impotence or sexual inadequacy:** Medical expenses related to the treatment of impotence are reimbursable if substantiated by a physician.

**In vitro fertilization:** See [Fertility treatment](#).

**Infertility:** See [Fertility treatment](#).

**Insulin:** The cost of insulin and other diabetic treatment aids is reimbursable.

**Insurance premiums:** No premiums for any health plan, including health plans maintained by a spouse's employer, are reimbursable through a health care FSA.

**Laboratory service fees** are reimbursable expenses.

**Late fees (late payments for bills):** are not a qualifying expense.

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Insurance Premiums, Laser Eye Surgery, Learning Disabilities, Medicine ...

**Laser eye surgery:** Medical expenses associated with laser eye surgery are reimbursable in all 50 states.

**See Lasik surgery, Radial keratotomy.**

**Lasik surgery:** See **Laser eye surgery, Radial keratotomy.**

**Lead-based paint removal:** The cost of removing lead-based paints from surfaces in a home to prevent a child who has (or has had) lead poisoning from eating the paint are reimbursable. These surfaces must be in poor repair (cracking or peeling) or within the child's reach. The cost of repainting, however, is not reimbursable. Physician's note required with claim. See page 4.

**Learning disabilities:** Tuition payments to a special school for a child who has severe learning disabilities caused by mental or physical impairments, including nervous system disorders, are reimbursable. A doctor must recommend that the child attend school. **See Schools.** Also, tutoring fees paid on a doctor's recommendation for a child's tutoring by a teacher who is specially trained and qualified to work with children who have severe learning disabilities are reimbursable. Physician's note required with claim. See page 4.

**Legal fees** paid to authorize treatment for mental illness are reimbursable. However, any part of a legal fee that is a management fee—for example, a guardianship or estate management fee—is not reimbursable.

**Lodging:** The costs of lodging at a hospital or similar institution are reimbursable if the employee's (or dependent's) main reason for being there is to receive medical care. The cost of lodging not provided in a hospital or similar institution while an employee (or dependent) is away from home is reimbursable if four requirements are met: (1) the lodging is primarily for and essential to medical care; (2) medical care is provided by a doctor in a licensed hospital or in a medical care facility related to, or the equivalent of, a licensed hospital; (3) the lodging is not lavish or extravagant under the circumstances; and (4) there is no significant element of personal pleasure, recreation or vacation in the travel away from home. **See Meals.**

*NOTE: The reimbursable amount cannot exceed \$50 per night per person. Lodging is included for a person whose transportation expenses count as medical expenses, due to the fact that they are traveling with the person receiving the medical care. For example, a parent traveling with a sick child, up to \$100 per night.*

**Marriage counseling** is not reimbursable.

**Mastectomy- related special bras:** Generally won't qualify unless a medical practitioner prescribes one for treating mental health.

**Massage:** Fees paid for massage are not reimbursable unless prescribed and substantiated by a physician with the claim to treat a physical defect or illness. Physician's note required with the claim.

**Mattresses:** A mattress used exclusively to treat a medical condition such as arthritis is reimbursable. A special mattress must be documented by a physician's note. Only the difference between the special mattress and a comparable quality mattress is reimbursable.

**Meals:** Meals for the traveling patient only at a hospital or medical institution are reimbursable.

**Medical information plan:** Amounts paid to a plan that keeps medical information so that it can be retrieved from a computer bank for medical care are reimbursable.

**Medical services:** Only legal medical services if they bear a direct relationship to the provision of medical care to a taxpayer are reimbursable.

**Medicines:** Amounts paid for prescribed medicines and drugs procured in the U.S. are reimbursable. A prescribed drug is one which requires a prescription by a doctor for its use by an individual and is medically necessary. The cost of insulin and other diabetic care supplies and birth control supplies and devices are also reimbursable. Prescriptions that are cosmetic related are not reimbursable. i.e. Retina-A, Propecia, Vaniqa, etc.

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Mental Health, Nursing Homes, Orthopedic Shoes, Prosthetics ...

**Mental health:** See [Psychiatrist's fees, etc.](#)

**Mentally retarded, special home for:** The cost for a mentally retarded person to reside in a special home (not the home of a relative) on the recommendation of a psychiatrist to help the person adjust from life in a mental hospital to community living is reimbursable.

**Midwife:** Medical services paid to a midwife for prenatal and birth are reimbursable as the service is being incurred, upfront fees must be allocated with services that is being rendered or divided out over treatment plan.

**Native American healing ceremonies by medicine man:** Expenses incurred are reimbursable.

**Neurologist's fees** are reimbursable expenses.

**Nursing home:** Not a qualifying expense.

**Nursing services:** Wages and other amounts paid for nursing services are reimbursable. The services do not have to be provided by a nurse as long as they are the kind of services generally performed by a nurse, such as giving medication or changing dressings, bathing and grooming the patient. Personal services or household services are not reimbursable. If these services are provided, the amounts must be divided between the time spent on each.

- Infant care: Nursing or babysitting services for a normal, healthy infant are not reimbursable.

**Obstetrical expenses** are reimbursable expenses.

**Optometrist's fees:** See [Vision care.](#)

**Ophthalmologist's fees:** See [Vision care.](#)

**Orthodontics:** Braces or orthodontics which are non-cosmetic are reimbursable on a monthly basis as services/appointments are rendered. See [page 6.](#)

**Orthopedic shoes:** Costs of specialized orthopedic items can only be reimbursed to the extent that they exceed comparable shoes. Difference is reimbursed, physician's note is required.

**Organ donor:** See [Transplants.](#)

**Osteopath's fees** are reimbursable expenses.

**Over-the-Counter Drugs and Medicines:** to alleviate or treat personal injuries or sickness are reimbursable. This includes antacids, allergy medicines, pain relievers and cold medicines. The receipt must state the name of the product. See OTC Guide on [www.benesyst.net](http://www.benesyst.net). Note:

your plan may not accept OTC items, check your Summary Plan Description or ask your HR department.

**Oxygen:** Amounts paid for oxygen or oxygen equipment to relieve breathing problems caused by a medical condition are reimbursable.

**Parking:** See [Transportation.](#)

**"Patterning" exercises:** See [Therapy, physical.](#)

**Pediatrician's fees** are reimbursable expenses.

**Personal use items:** Items that are ordinarily used for personal, living, and family purposes are not reimbursable unless they are used primarily to alleviate a physical or mental defect or illness. For example, the cost of a wig purchased at the advice of a physician for the mental health of a patient who has lost all of his or her hair from disease is reimbursable.

If an item purchased in a special form primarily to alleviate a physical defect is one that in normal form is ordinarily used for personal, living, or family purposes, the cost of the special form in excess of the cost of the normal form is reimbursable. **Also see [Braille books and magazines](#) and [Capital expense.](#)**

**Physical exams** are generally reimbursable, except for employment-related physicals.

**Podiatrist's fees** are reimbursable expenses.

**Pregnancy termination:** Medical expenses associated with the termination of a pregnancy, including legal abortion are reimbursable.

**Prescription drugs:** See [Medicines.](#)

**Private hospital room:** The extra cost of a private room is reimbursable.

**Prosthesis:** See [Artificial limb.](#)

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## Special Schools, Smoking Programs, Special Foods, Transplants ...

**Psychiatric social worker's fees:** Expenses incurred for recommendation of an individual's specific treatment by psychiatrist are reimbursable.

**Psychiatrist's fees** for individual counseling are reimbursable expenses. Family counseling is not an eligible expense unless verified by a doctor's written statement of medical necessity for the treatment of a medical condition. Marriage counseling is not an eligible expense.

**Psychoanalysis:** Medical costs associated with individual psychoanalysis, even if it fulfills requirement for admission to a school of psychoanalysis training, are reimbursable. **See Psychiatrist's fees.**

**Psychologist's fees** for individual counseling are reimbursable expenses. **See Psychiatrist's fees.**

**Psychotherapist's fees** for individual counseling are reimbursable expenses. **See Psychiatrist's fees.**

**Radial keratotomy:** **See Laser eye surgery.**

**Reasonable and customary charges, amounts in excess of:** Medical expenses in excess of the plan's reasonable and customary charges are reimbursable.

**Schools, special:** Expenses paid to a special school for a person who is mentally impaired or physically disabled are reimbursable if the main reason for using the school is its resources for treating the disability. This includes a school that:

- teaches Braille to a child who is visually-impaired;
- teaches speech-reading or American Sign Language to a child who is hearing-impaired; or
- provides remedial language training to correct a condition caused by a birth defect.

The cost of meals, lodging and ordinary education supplied by a special school is reimbursable only if the main reason for using the school is its resources for treating the mental or physical disability. The cost of sending a non-disabled child with behavioral problems to a special school, though the child may benefit from the course of study or discipline, is not reimbursable. **See also Learning disabilities.**

**Sexual inadequacy and incompatibility treatment:** Expenses for counseling provided to a husband and/or wife conducted by a psychiatrist are reimbursable.

**Smoking program:** The cost of a program to stop smoking for the improvement of general health is reimbursable, if doctor prescribed.

**Special foods (such as gluten-free or salt free dishes):** Will qualify if prescribed by a medical practitioner to treat a specific illness or ailment and if the foods do not substitute for normal nutritional requirements. But the amount that may qualify is limited to the amount by which the cost of the special food exceeds the commonly available versions of the same product. To show that expense is primarily for medical care, a note from a medical practitioner recommending it to treat a specific medical condition is normally required.

**Sterilization:** Cost of a legal sterilization (operation performed to make a person unable to have children) is reimbursable. **See Vasectomy.**

**Student health fee:** No, if fee is simply the cost of belonging to the program—such fees aren't reimbursed because they are generally premiums for medical care. They may be reimbursable if the expenses are separately broken down and are for specific medical services.

**Substance abuse:** **See Alcoholism and drug abuse.**

**Telephone:** The costs of purchasing and repairing special telephone equipment that allows a person who is hearing-impaired to communicate over a regular telephone are reimbursable. **See Capital expense.**

**Television:** The cost difference between specially equipped television set in excess of the cost of the same model regular set. **See Capital expense.**

**Therapy, physical:** Amounts paid for therapy received as medical treatment are reimbursable. Payments made to an individual for special exercises administered to a child who is mentally retarded are also reimbursable. These "patterning" exercises consist mainly of coordinated physical manipulation of the child's arms and legs to imitate crawling and other normal movements. **See Mental health.**

**Transplants:** Payments for surgical, hospital, laboratory and transportation expenses for a prospective or actual donor of an organ are reimbursable.

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## Transportation Expenses, Vasectomy, Weight Loss Programs ...

**Transportation:** Amounts paid for transportation primarily for, and essential to, medical care are reimbursable (except as provided below). These include:

- bus, taxi, train or plane fare, or ambulance service;
- parking fees and tolls;
- transportation expenses of a parent who must accompany a child who needs medical care;
- transportation expenses of a nurse or other person who can give injections, medications or other treatment required by a patient who is traveling to get medical care and is unable to travel alone; and
- transportation expenses for regular visits to see a dependent who is mentally ill if these visits are recommended as a part of treatment.

Mileage to and from medically necessary trips are reimbursable at a flat rate of 18 cents per mile for calendar year 2006, 20 cents for 2007. The cost of tolls and parking may be added to this amount.

Reimbursable expenses do not include:

- transportation expenses to and from work, even if a medical condition requires an unusual means of transportation; or
- transportation expenses incurred if, for non-medical reasons, a participant chooses to travel to another location (or to a resort or spa) for an operation or other medical care prescribed by a doctor.

**Trips:** Amounts paid for transportation to another location, if the trip is primarily for and essential to receiving medical services, are reimbursable. A trip or vacation taken for a change in environment, improvement of morale or general improvement of health, is not reimbursable, even if it is taken at the advice of a doctor.

**Tutor's fees:** See Learning disabilities.

**Umbilical cord, freezing and storing of:** Might qualify if there is a specific medical condition that the umbilical cord is intended to treat. Collection and storage indefinitely, just in case it is needed, is not medical care. "Temporary" is not defined—one consideration might be whether it is stored and used within the same year. The cost of storing cord blood where a newborn has had a birth defect and where the cord blood would be needed in the near future might qualify.

**Vacation:** See Trips.

**Vaccines:** Expenses for vaccines are reimbursable.

**Vasectomy:** Expenses for vasectomy are reimbursable. See Family Planning, Sterilization.

**Vision care:** Optometry services and medical expenses for eyeglasses and contact lenses needed for medical reasons are reimbursable. Eye exams and expenses for eyeglasses and contact lens solutions are also reimbursable. However, clip-on sunglasses and premiums for contact lens replacement insurance are not reimbursable.

**Vitamins:** No, if they are used to maintain general health. Yes under narrow circumstances, if recommended by a physician for a specific medical condition. Because this is a dual-purpose item, a physician's note with the claim evidencing that the pills are used to treat a specific medical condition is required.

**Weight loss program and/or drugs prescribed to induce**

**weightloss:** Will qualify if the weight-loss program is recommended by a physician to treat a specific medical condition (such as obesity, heart disease, or diabetes) and is not simply to improve general health. However, the costs of food associated with a weight-loss program (such as pre-packaged meals) would not qualify, since it just meets normal nutritional needs. To show that the expense is primarily for medical care, a note from a medical practitioner recommending it to treat a specific medical condition is required.

**Wheelchair:** Amounts paid for a wheelchair used mainly for the relief of sickness or disability, and not just to provide transportation to and from work, are reimbursable. The cost of operating and maintaining the wheelchair is also reimbursable.

**X-rays and X-ray treatments:** Amounts paid for X-rays and X-ray treatments for medical reasons are reimbursable.

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## Disability Accommodations, Insurance, and What's Not Covered ...

### *Capital expenses*

Medical expenses incurred by participants for special equipment installed in the home or for improvements are reimbursable if their main purpose is medical care. The cost of permanent improvements that increase the value of the property may be partly deducted as a medical expense. The cost of the improvement is reduced by the increase in the value of the property; the difference is a reimbursable medical expense. If others benefit from the improvement, then only the prorata amount allocable to the person with the medical condition will qualify.

Improvements made to accommodate a residence for a person's disability do not usually increase the value of the residence, and the full cost is usually reimbursable. These improvements include, but are not limited to: ramps, widening doorways and hallways, installing rails and support bars in bathrooms, lowering cabinets in the kitchen, moving electrical outlets and fixtures, installing porch lifts (but generally not elevators), modifying stairways, adding handrails and grab bars, modifying hardware on doors and re-grading the ground to provide access to the residence.

### *Insurance premiums*

*NOTE: Insurance premiums paid through your employer's plans are automatically reimbursed through the Automatic Pre-tax Employer Premium Account and should not be added to the Health Care Flexible Spending Account for reimbursement.*

Insurance premiums are never eligible to be reimbursed through a health care FSA.

Insurance premiums are eligible to be reimbursed through an "Outside Premium Reimbursement Account," if the employer sponsors this separate and specialized type of account. Expenses eligible to be reimbursed through an "Outside Premium Reimbursement Account" include personally paid, eligible health insurance premiums and COBRA health insurance premiums from a previous employer. Premiums not eligible for reimbursement include premiums paid to a spouse's employer and COBRA life insurance premiums.

### *Expenses not eligible for reimbursement*

This is a partial list of health care expenses that are not eligible for reimbursement from your health care flexible spending account.

**Breast pump**

**Contact lenses, glasses and sunglasses that are non-prescription**

**Contact lens replacement insurance**

**Cosmetic surgery, procedures, prescriptions**

**Dancing or swimming lessons**

**DNA collection**

**Domestic help fees of a non-medical nature**

**Ear piercing**

**Electrolysis or hair removal**

**Funeral expenses**

**Health club memberships/fitness programs, Exercise equipment**

**Life insurance premiums**

**Long-term/Lifetime care insurance premiums**

**Marriage counseling**

**Massage (unless prescribed by a physician to treat a medical condition)**

**Medical Savings Accounts**

**Medicare Part A and/or B**

**Nursing homes**

**Over-the-counter drugs that are for general health purposes, cosmetics, skin care, toiletries, hygiene products**

**Over-the-counter vitamins, supplements or dietary supplements**

**Personal use expenses (i.e. toothbrushes, electric toothbrushes, clothing, home items, pillows, etc.)**

**Physical therapy treatments for general well-being**

**Scientology "audits"**

**Surrogate expenses**

**Teeth whitening/Bleaching**

**Union dues**

**Vision discount programs or breakage coverage**