



Costs of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses

J. Paul Leigh, Steven B. Markowitz MD, Marianne Fahs, Philip J. Landrigan

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As the debate over health care reform continues, costs have become a critical measure in the many plans and proposals to come before us. Knowing costs is important because it allows comparisons across such disparate health conditions as AIDS, Alzheimer's disease, heart disease, and cancer. This book presents the results of a major study estimating the large and largely overlooked costs of occupational injury and illness-- costs as large as those for cancer and over four times the costs of AIDS.

The incidence and mortality of occupational injury and illness were assessed by reviewing data from national surveys and applied an attributable-risk-proportion method. Costs were assessed using the human capital method that decomposes costs into direct categories such as medical costs and insurance administration expenses, as well as indirect categories such as lost earnings and lost fringe benefits. The total is estimated to be \$155 billion and is likely to be low as it does not include costs associated with pain and suffering or of home care provided by family members.

Invaluable as an aid in the analysis of policy issues, *Costs of Occupational Injury and Illness* will serve as a resource and reference for economists, policy analysts, public health researchers, insurance administrators, labor unions and labor lawyers, benefits managers, and environmental scientists, among others.

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