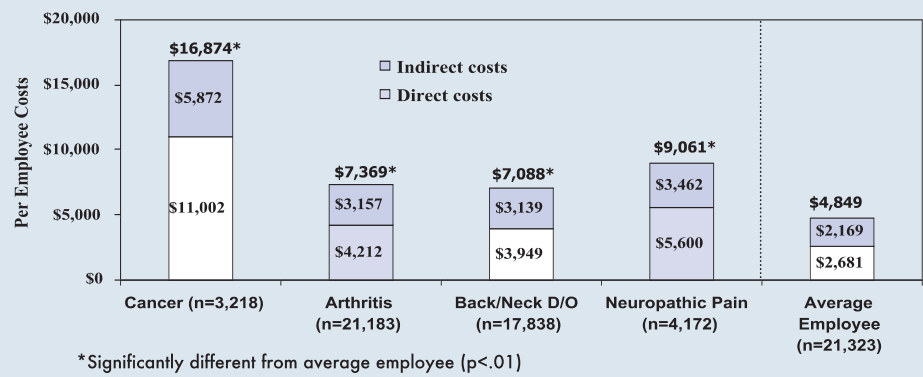


ACADEMY BRIEFS

Economic Burden of Illness for Employees with Painful Conditions

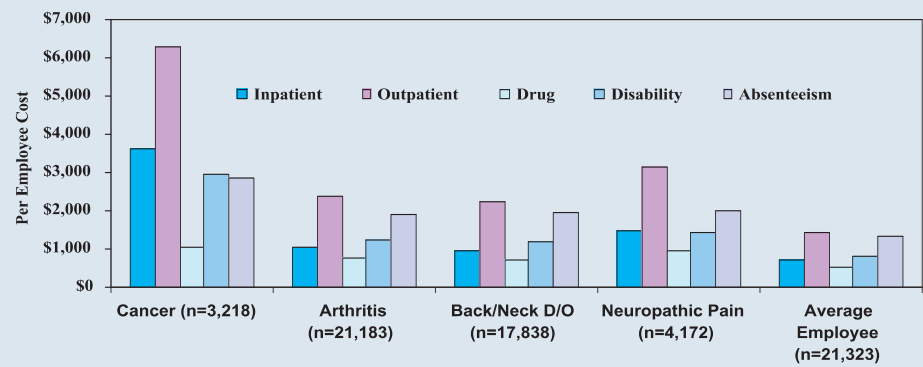
Direct and indirect costs associated with painful conditions are 1.5 to 3.5 times as high as those of average employees

Average annual direct and indirect costs of employees with painful conditions, 2000



Better management/treatment of painful conditions may help reduce the associated employer economic burden

Annual cost of painful conditions by cost category, 2000



This study compares direct (i.e., medical and medication) and indirect (i.e., disability and medical absenteeism) annual 2000 costs for employees with painful conditions (cancer, arthritis, back/neck disorders, neuropathic pain) with costs for average employees. An administrative claims database (approximately 600,000 covered lives) was used to identify patients with ICD-9 codes for painful conditions. The resulting sample sizes for the study of employees were: cancer (n=3,277), arthritis (n=21,439), back/neck D/O (n=18,034), neuropathic pain (n=4,230) and average employees (n=21,511). Indirect work loss costs were calculated from disability and medically related absenteeism costs—disability costs from employer administrative records and absenteeism costs associated with imputed wage payments incurred by employers for hospital outpatient/inpatient visits and doctor visits.

Total costs for employees with painful conditions were 1.5 to 3.5 times as high (p<.01) as those for average employees (range of \$7,088 to \$16,874 compared to \$4,849) depending on the painful condition. Disability and absenteeism accounted for as much as 44% of total employer costs of painful conditions.

Reference:
White AG, Birnbaum HG, Mareva MN, et al. Economic Burden of Illness for Employees with Painful Conditions. *Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine*. 2005;47(9):884-892.

