

IN EVERY ISSUE

Message from the Editor

BY MELISSA WEBER

Patients must balance price of drugs with the literal cost of living.

Americans aren't happy with the state of healthcare, and cost is the main reason. A survey of Americans this past fall conducted by *ABC News*, the Kaiser Family Foundation and *USA Today* found eight out of 10 Americans are dissatisfied with the cost of healthcare, and more than half of the uninsured in this country aren't covered because they simply can't afford it.

But rising premiums and insurance status aside, cancer patients have told *CURE* they're going to get the drugs that will make them live longer—no matter how much they cost. More drugs that target cancer cells have entered the market in recent years, and while we've covered the successes of these drugs, we've also pointed out that they cost a lot of money. Escalating drug costs have created a bevy of negative press, not to mention carved a permanent place at the political table every election cycle. As for *CURE*, our goal isn't to pile on the blame-game discussion, but rather to address how something as simple as a bottle of pills quickly becomes complicated by access.

You, as a cancer patient, need a drug that could extend or save your life. Yet that need comes with a high price tag that you may not be able to afford. While nonprofit groups, government agencies and even drug manufacturers are constantly wrangling to address the problem, hearing that they're working on a down-the-road solution doesn't help you right now. You need to know what to do and where to get help, which is exactly what contributing writer Jo Cavallo tackles in [“Can You Afford Cancer?”](#).

As we put this story together, an interesting thing happened—two drug giants, Amgen and Genentech, voluntarily capped out-of-pocket costs for two of their most expensive cancer drugs, Vectibix and Avastin. (Full disclosure: Amgen and Genentech both advertise in *CURE*.) Other cancer drugs could follow suit, too. And while some argue that the real motive for drug manufacturers is retaining the ability to set their own prices, the move is also seen as a much-needed olive branch to patients who are desperate to get these drugs.

Although expensive—indeed, a month’s supply of Vectibix can cost upward of \$8,000—what we often hear from readers is gratitude these drugs exist. But at some point, our nation’s pride as a leader in drug innovation becomes obscured by the reality that many Americans only get as good healthcare as they can afford.

Also in this issue, *CURE* gives you the chance to honor the oncology nurse who inspired you, cared for you and listened to you. We’ve been moved by your stories over the years, so [click here](#) for details on how you can nominate your nurse for the Extraordinary Healer Award for Oncology Nursing. The award will be presented this spring at the launch party for *CURE*’s sister magazine, *Heal*, during the Oncology Nursing Society’s annual meeting in Las Vegas.

Spring is also when we will kick off the 2007 CURE Day of Caring Breast Cancer Forums and bring back our popular Patient & Survivor Forums. You can find event details [here](#). See you in 2007!

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