



GETTY IMAGE

# Get Wise to FamilyWize

## Free card helps local families manage health care costs

By Barry Lessow, executive director, United Way of Monroe County

*Editor's note: This information is provided in partnership with ACHIEVE, a local organization that strives to make the healthy choice the easy choice.*

You can save a lot of money using coupons. There are TV and YouTube shows about people who've turned coupon clipping into an art form. But how often do you see a coupon for prescription medicines?

United Way of Monroe County is proud to partner with FamilyWize to offer a free card that can lower your prescription cost on thousands of

medications.

Prescription costs can be a minor challenge for some people and a prohibitive expense for others. In the latest community SCAN report, about 25 percent had trouble paying for their prescriptions. At lower income levels, it was more than 50 percent. Those who work in social service hear stories of people who try to save costs by taking half the dosage their doctor recommended or skipping days. For a lot of meds, that can have dangerous consequences.

There are ways to keep prescription costs

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lower. Insurance plans usually include prescription benefits. If you don't qualify for insurance through your employer, check [monroeunitedway.org/healthcare](http://monroeunitedway.org/healthcare) to learn more about various coverage options. For low- and moderate income residents of Monroe and Owen counties who don't qualify for any of those plans, or who are between plans, we are fortunate to have a wonderful Volunteers in Medicine clinic right here in Bloomington. Visit [vimmonroecounty.org](http://vimmonroecounty.org) to learn more about this United Way member agency and determine if you are eligible for their services.

For many people, staying well means taking one, two or a bunch of prescription medicines. Some you'll only use for a week, and some will be with you for the rest of your life. They come in all sorts of colors, shapes and sizes. But there's one thing they have in common: They're usually not cheap.

The FamilyWize Discount Prescription program is a community partnership that reduces the cost of medicine for families and individuals with or without prescription drug coverage through a partnership with 61,000 pharmacies nationwide. Anyone can use the FamilyWize card at a participating local pharmacy to get a discount on the price of FDA-approved name-brand and generic prescriptions. Using a card to save doesn't require enrollment or personal information.

FamilyWize can help lower the cost of prescription drugs during deductible or waiting periods before you are eligible for an insurance plan, and for medications not covered by your insurance plan. You can save an average of 30

percent off the pharmacy's usual and customary retail price of prescription drugs, with the highest savings on generic drugs.

The FamilyWize Prescription Savings Card is free and offers immediate savings at participating pharmacies. It functions like a reusable prescription discount coupon. There is no registration or membership process, age requirement, or income limit for eligibility. The card can be used by people who have no health insurance, by people with health insurance during deductible periods, and for prescription medicine not covered by health insurance, Medicare and other benefit plans. Of course, FamilyWize is not insurance, nor is it intended to replace insurance.

You can print a free copy of the card at [monroeunitedway.org/familywize](http://monroeunitedway.org/familywize).

FamilyWize also provides a Drug Price Lookup Tool, an online resource to compare prescription medication prices and find local pharmacies with the lowest FamilyWize price. Consumers can access the easy-to-use tool on [FamilyWize.org](http://FamilyWize.org) or through the FamilyWize app, also available for free through [FamilyWize.org](http://FamilyWize.org).

See a list of participating pharmacies at [monroeunitedway.org/fwpharmacies](http://monroeunitedway.org/fwpharmacies).

Working with our many partners in ACHIEVE, our 26 member agencies, local businesses, government officials and you, United Way creates and sustains solutions so that everyone in our community has the educational support, economic mobility and essentials to be successful. We want to be sure people have the opportunity to learn more, earn more and lead safer and healthier lives. Please join us! ■