

# The Case of Mexico: Aging Baby Boomers Heading to the South



The Baby Boomers are best known for the non-conformity of the 1960s when they stood up to a government and a society that they found oppressive. It comes as no surprise that the Baby Boomers continue to redefine what it means to stand up and say no in today's world through their fight against unfair healthcare fees in the United States.

More than ever before, American Baby Boomers are flooding south into Mexico hospitals for procedures ranging from the complex and cutting edge to some of the oldest standards that medicine has to offer. In fact, some are even choosing to receive checkups during medical travel to Mexico rather than maintaining a regular doctor stateside. These changes save Baby Boomers hundreds or even thousands of dollars in medical bills every year, even after considering the low cost of airfare between the U.S. and the Mexico hospitals in question.



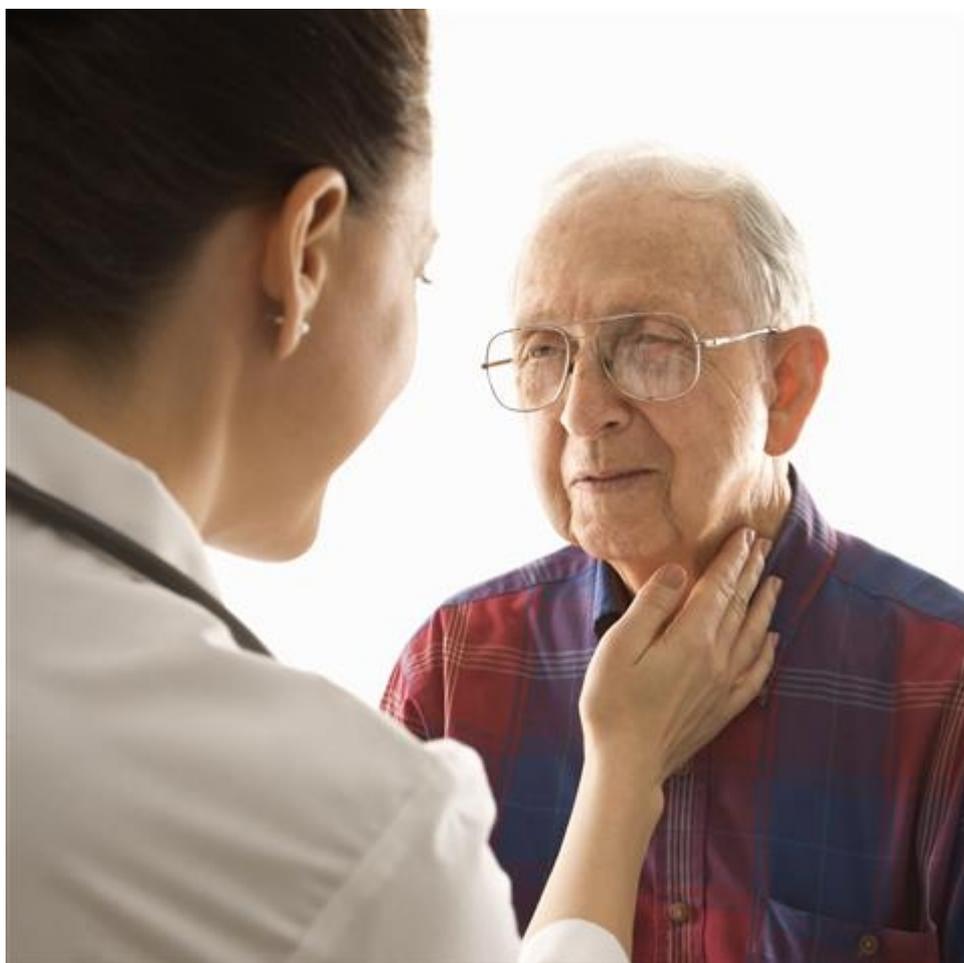
## Financial Wisdom: Lower Costs across the Border

In America, any doctor has to contend with a myriad of financial constraints that threaten his or her practice and livelihood. Insurance agencies have a large industry presence, crowding out doctors that try to avoid participating in the insurer's costly plans. The result is rising prices for the patient,

and increased co-pay amounts due to lower insurance coverage. In short, the amount covered by insurance is falling just as the amount charged by doctors and hospitals is rising. For many Baby Boomers, retirement expenses do not allow them to cover this gap.

Luckily, there are hospitals available just across the border. With medical travel in Mexico, these men and women are able to get the care they need without paying too much for it. They are able to maintain their health without completely losing control of their finances. The main differences between Mexico hospitals and U.S. facilities are the control that insurance companies have over the market and the general cost of living in the area.

In Mexico, the medical care industry is not dominated by private insurance or the publicly traded corporations behind it. Doctors are free to set prices as they choose, based upon what they believe their services are worth. There is no upward pressure on prices, and so they remain at a reasonable level. The best hospitals typically charge 40%-60% less than the best American hospitals, and 90% of medical travel patients reported in a survey by the Medical Travel Association that the level of care offered was not only comparable to the US but many times superior. Because of the way Mexican health care is structured, doctors are less burdened and thus able to pass on the good prices to medical travelers.



Lower cost of living also plays a role. Doctors tend to charge partially based on what they need to survive, and on what their practice needs in order to stay abreast of the latest technology. In Mexico hospitals, all these costs are lower. From the cost of medical school education to building construction, wages and daily utilities, to some of the most recent equipment technology purchases, Mexican doctors pay less, and medical travel in Mexico reflects those savings as well.

### **Skilled Surgeons**

One of the strengths Baby Boomers are noticing in Mexico hospitals is their ability to offer cutting edge treatments, such as spinal stabilization surgery and multifocal LASIK for presbyopia. Many of the doctors these Boomers choose have actually trained alongside the leading U.S. experts, and have the same degree of skill. The Boomers are getting the same quality of care, but the cost is tens of thousands of dollars lower.

### **A Comfortable Place to Recover**

In the past, some Boomers might have been concerned to spend the night so far from home. But as hospitals have continued to develop, they have become almost indistinguishable from any American hospital. Spending the night after medical travel in Mexico is no different from the night after a surgery stateside, the only difference is that home is a plane ride away rather than a car trip.

However, few Boomers seem to be bothered by the idea of distance. In fact, many report better treatment in private Mexico hospitals than in U.S. facilities. Staff is said to be more attentive, doctors more caring, and nurses more focused, with a lower ratio of nurses to patients. Overall, medical travel in Mexico produces as many positive responses in the Boomers as medical treatment in the U.S. and in many cases produces far more.



### **The Big Picture**

The Baby Boomers are the first aging generation to have access to the excellent private Mexico hospitals provided by medical travel in Mexico, and they are taking full advantage of everything that America's southern neighbor has to offer. From dental care to checkups to major surgery, the Baby Boomers are filling Mexico's state-of-the-art medical facilities and reaping the rewards. And in the face of rising costs at home, it seems unlikely that they will be returning to their local doctors any

time soon.

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