

Foam mattresses

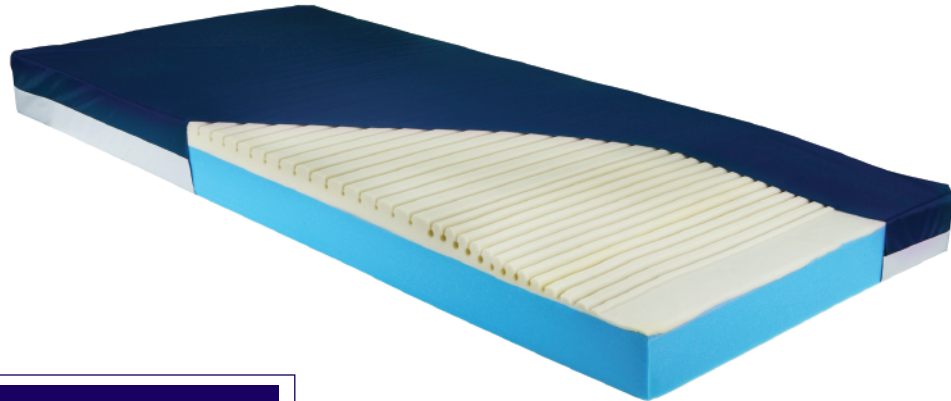


Photo: Span-America

Snapshot

Highest priced unit:	\$330
Average priced unit:	\$232
Lowest priced unit:	\$160

Pricing Trends

2007-2008: -1% to +3%
2008-2009: +2% to +3%
2010 projection: +3%

Typical delivery time: 3 to 14 days
(faster possible)

Typical delivery charges: Freight, if not included in terms of a volume deal. Be aware of possible transportation surcharges when budgeting.

Average life span of product: 7 years

Standard warranty: Wide-ranging, most common 5 years

Average maintenance cost per year: Light cleaning costs

(Figures cited are averages of all respondents' answers. Actual pricing will vary due to volume, bundling and other factors of a purchase.)

Sources: Blue Chip Medical Products, Chestnut Ridge, Comfortex, Direct Supply/Panacea, Encompass, Invacare, Keen Mobility, Span-America Medical Systems

FROM THE FRONT LINES:

"Look at the construction of the mattress—try to imagine where fluids will travel and make sure it's ready for that. People design very carefully, but liquids will always find the place you won't be able to clean."

Mark A. Jacobs, Administrator, Victorian Villa Rehabilitation and Living Center, Canton, ME

Buyer Notes

- Vendors note that competition is keeping downward pressure on prices, despite high material costs. Some vendors are willing to bargain to get "at the few dollars available."
- Expect vendors to be able to answer your questions about pressure ulcer prevention and wound-care plans. They expect you to ask them by now.
- A relatively recent market development is the appearance of more extra-wide mattresses. These are partly to address the growing population of obese adults but also satisfy others. They'll enjoy about 20% greater width (42 inches wide, up from about a standard 35 inches).
- Experts say it can't be stressed enough: Investigate any potential purchase very carefully. Test out a potential mass purchase on at least three or four patients—never fewer.

**For a list of vendors go to the:
RESIDENT CARE section, pages 155-184**