

## Trends in U.S. Medical Malpractice Rates

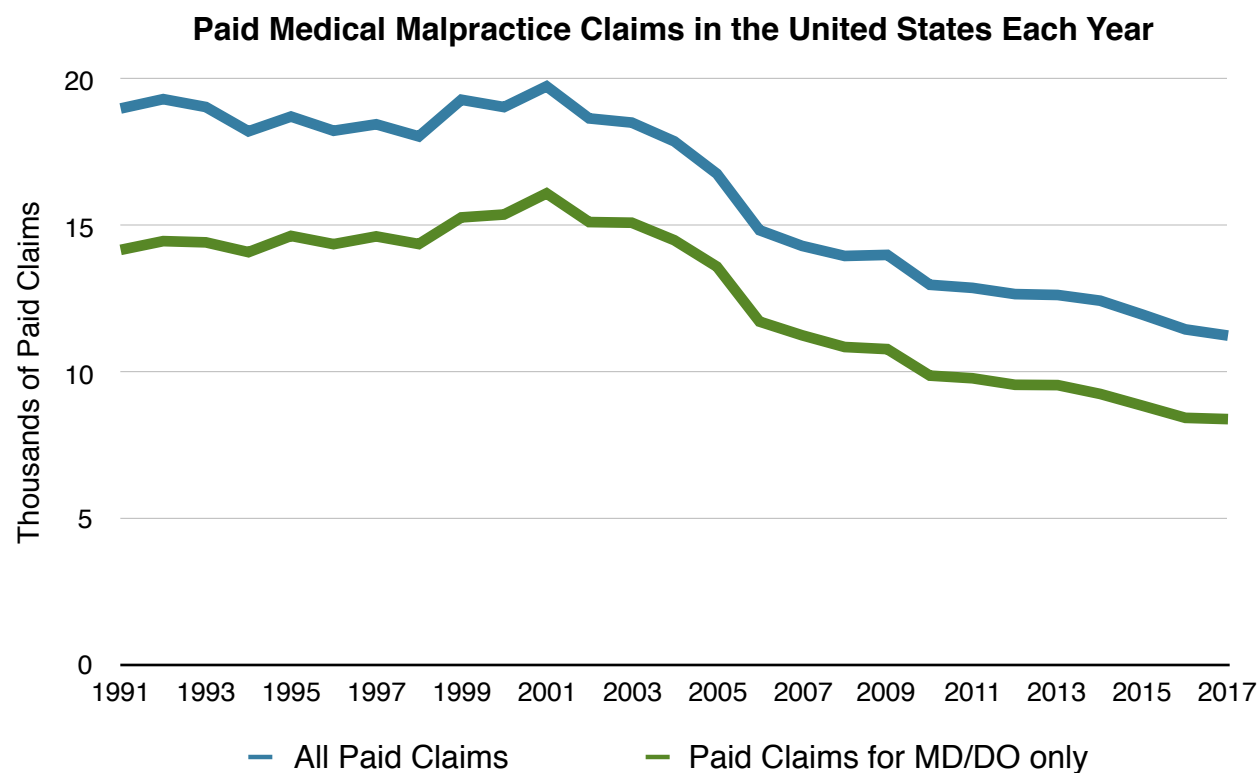
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Most of the information provided in this report is based on data taken from the National Practitioner Data Bank website.

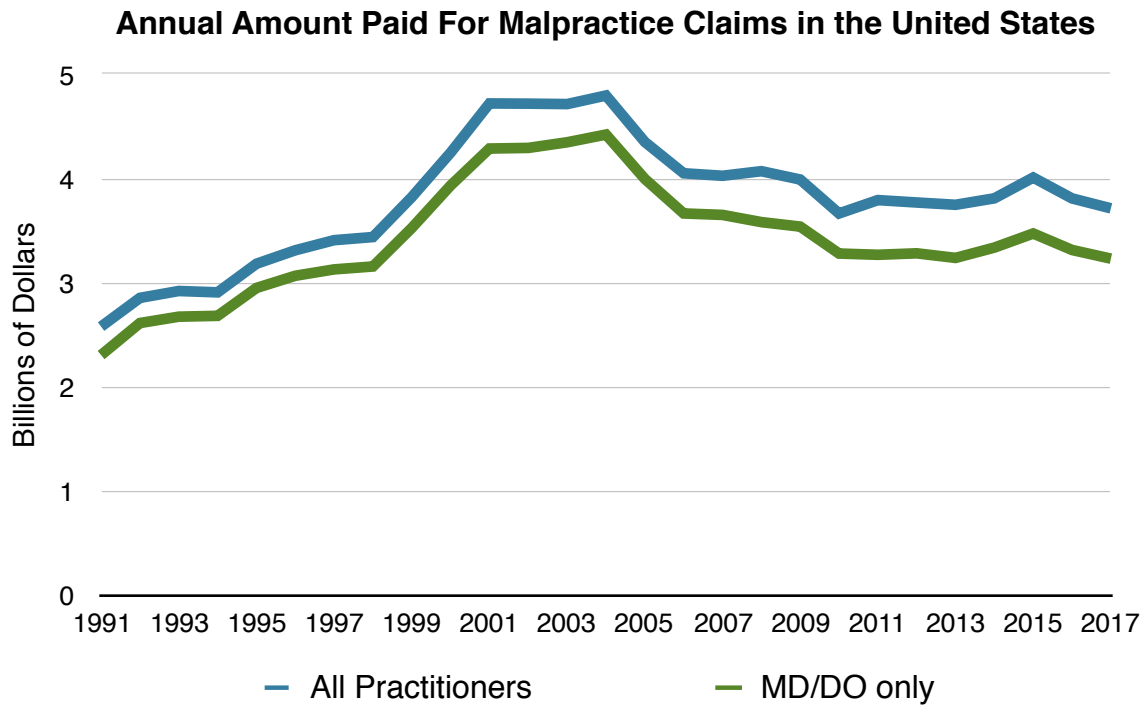
Each of the following graphs provide medical malpractice data for all health care professionals as well as for physicians (MDs and DOs) only. Claims against all health care professionals include claims against physicians, nurses, nurse practitioners, psychologists, social workers, counselors, optometrists, dentists, dental hygienists, pharmacists, pharmacy techs, podiatrists, physical and occupational therapists and speech therapists.

Since 2001 there has been an unquestionable drop in the total number of paid medical malpractice claims against health care professionals including physicians in the U.S. The amount spent on these claims has dropped significantly as well. The first two graphs show this trend.

For example, there were just over 16,000 paid medical malpractice claims against MDs and DOs in 2001 in the U.S. By 2016 that number had dropped to below 8500 which is nearly a 50% drop in 16 years. The amount paid on these claims dropped by about 23% during that time.

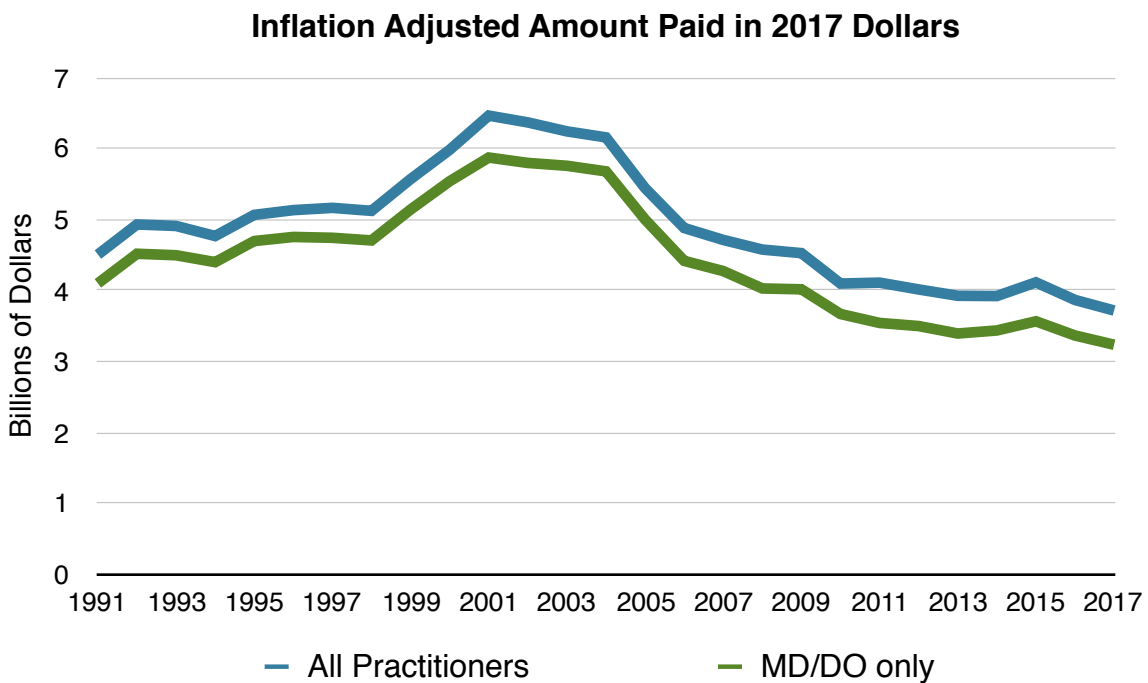


**Figure 1:** Total number of paid medical malpractice claims for the United States from 1991-2017 for all healthcare practitioners combined as well as for MD/DOs only.



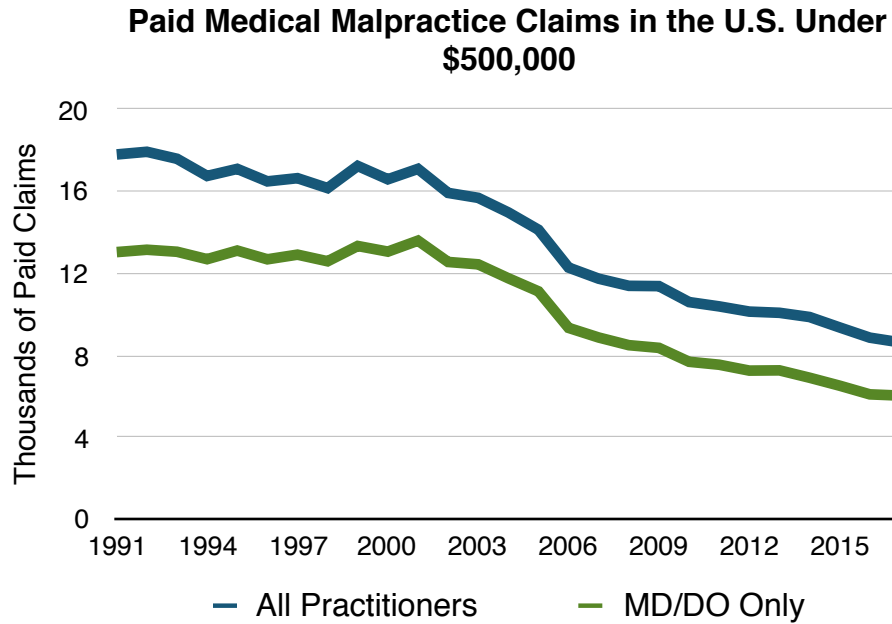
**Figure 2:** Total amount paid for all medical malpractice claims from 1991-2017 for all healthcare practitioners and MD/DOs only in the United States.

The third graph shows that, when adjusted for inflation, the cost of medical malpractice in the U.S. has dropped even further.



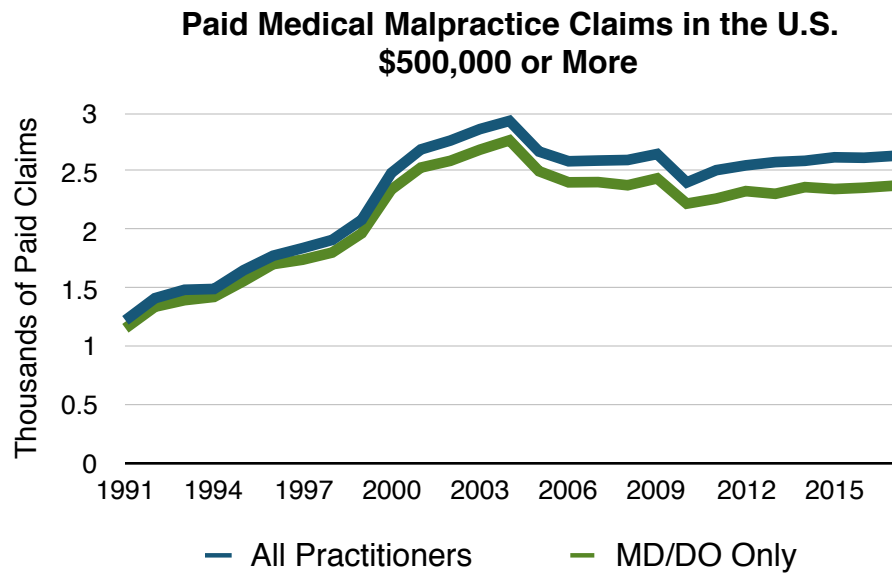
**Figure 3:** Figure 2 Data When Adjusted for Inflation.

The next three graphs show that most of the drop in paid medical malpractice claims have been in those that resulted in smaller payouts (less than \$500,000) which, for physicians, have dropped nearly 55% since 2001.



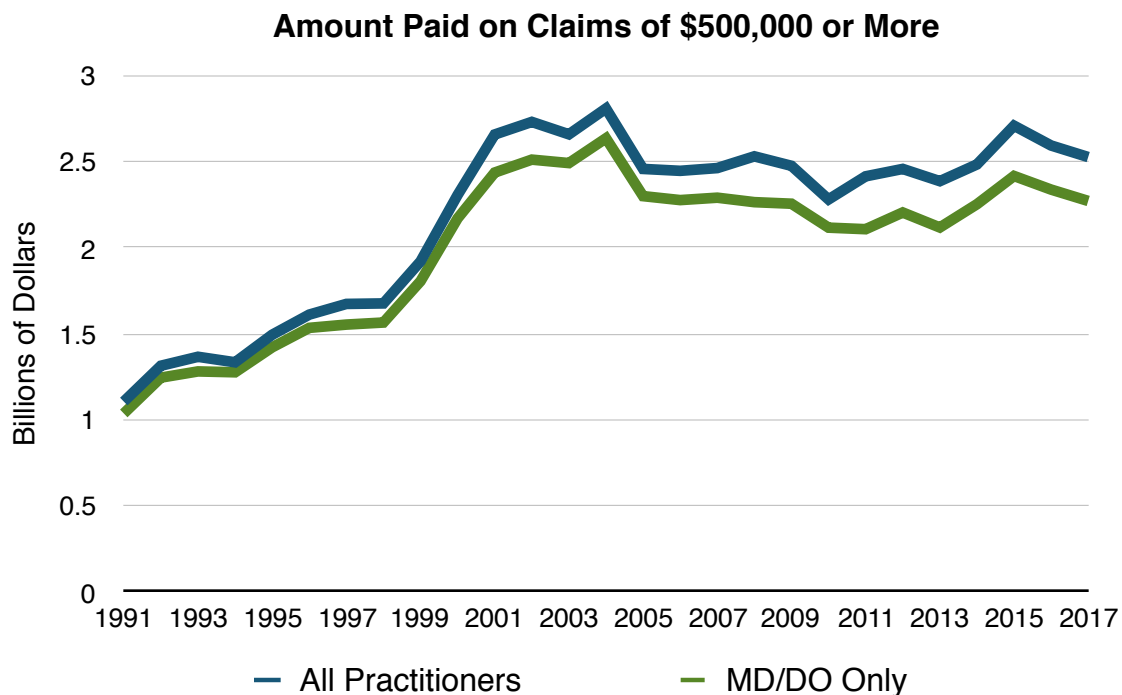
**Figure 4:** Number of paid medical malpractice claims each year in the U.S. that were settled for less than \$500,000.

The number of large claims (\$500,000 or more) against health care providers has been far more constant over that same period of time.



**Figure 5:** Number of paid medical malpractice claims in the U.S. each year that were settled for \$500,000 or more.

The average amount paid on claims of \$500,000 or more has gone up either. Figure 6 show that the total paid on these claims has also been surprisingly constant since 2001. This means that, even though the sky is the limit on how much an individual claim might pay in most states, the average amount paid on those claims hasn't budged much. Also note that figure 6 is not adjusted for inflation.



**Figure 6:** The annual amount paid on all paid medical malpractice claims in the U.S. that were settled for \$500,000 or more.

Sources:

<https://www.npdb.hrsa.gov/analysistool/>

[http://truecostofhealthcare.org/malpractice\\_statistics/](http://truecostofhealthcare.org/malpractice_statistics/)