

# Fixing America's medical liability system

The current medical liability system fails both patients and physicians.

## For patients, the current system:

- Limits access to health care
- Leads to additional tests and treatments
- Increases health care costs
- Creates a communication barrier between the patient and the physician

## For physicians, the current system:

- Leads to meritless lawsuits
- Increases liability premiums
- Causes physicians to practice defensive medicine
- Limits their ability to communicate with their patients

## Medical liability by the numbers:

For specific studies and citations, refer to *Medical Liability Reform--Now!*

**61%**

of physicians age 55 and older have been sued at some point during their careers.

**51%**

of obstetricians/ gynecologists under age 40 have been sued.

**9 out of 10**

surgeons age 55 and older have been sued.

**\$62.4 billion**

the 2012–2021 reduction in the federal deficit if medical liability reform were enacted.

**64%**

of claims filed against physicians are dropped or dismissed.

**\$70 to \$126 billion per year**

the cost of defensive medicine according to a 2003 study.

The American Medical Association (AMA) is working at the federal and state levels to reform the medical liability system by advocating for proven reforms, such as the caps on non-economic damages that have stabilized the liability climates in California, Texas and other states. The AMA is also calling for the testing and evaluation of proposed reforms, such as health courts, safe harbors for the practice of evidence-based medicine, and early disclosure and compensation models, to determine if these innovations can improve the medical liability system for patients and physicians.

Download a copy of *Medical Liability Reform – NOW!* at [www.ama-assn.org/go/liability](http://www.ama-assn.org/go/liability).