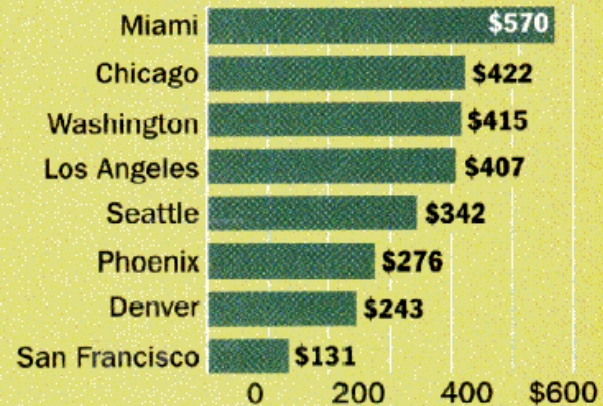


# LAI D OFF? GET HEALTH INSURANCE ONLINE

Since 1986, the most popular way for the recently unemployed to stay insured has been through COBRA (Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act). The government-mandated program keeps any former employee's corporate health-insurance plan active for 18 months. Now the Internet enables comparison shopping for health insurance, and there are cheaper alternatives to COBRA. Websites like *eHealthInsurance.com* allow an evaluation of various health plans in any given ZIP code. Gary Lauer, *eHealthInsurance.com*'s chief executive, says a family of four can usually find an online deal that's better than COBRA's average \$600 per month premium, although prices vary by state. "Most people don't realize that it's so easy to compare," he says. But with the national unemployment rate at 5.8%, more folks may start.

## BASIC HEALTH

Monthly premium for a typical family of four with a \$500 deductible



Source: eHealthInsurance

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