

What measures are used to identify well-managed cardiovascular programs?

The 100 Top Hospitals Cardiovascular award is based on a wide set of measures:

- **Patient outcomes:** Survival rates for heart attack, heart failure, angioplasty, and heart bypass patients, plus low rates of surgical complications such as infections and severe bleeding after surgery.
- **National treatment standards:**
 - **Core measures:** A set of basic care practices that should be used for all heart attack and heart failure patients. Core measures were developed by the National Quality Forum as minimum basic standards. A hospital is scored only on those core measures that the hospital reports publicly. You can see all hospitals' specific core measures scores at www.hospitalcompare.hhs.gov and www.qualitycheck.org.
 - **Surgical technique:** Use of the internal mammary artery in heart bypass — a standard for heart bypasses, set by the Society of Thoracic Surgeons. Although this is not possible for all patients, the best cardiovascular programs follow this standard for a very high percentage of cases.
 - **Efficiency:** Shorter hospital stays and lower costs. In the best cardiovascular programs, the hospital's cardiovascular staff are a team that constantly works together to do the right thing at the right time. When this happens, patients are returned to daily life faster and costs are kept lower.
 - **Procedure volume:** It makes sense that practice makes perfect. National volume standards have been set for the number of angioplasties and heart bypasses performed to assure reliable results. Winners of the 100 Top Hospitals Cardiovascular award exceed these standards.

Who performs the 100 Top Hospitals studies and why?

Thomson Healthcare, a national healthcare information company, performs the study annually at its own expense to share the new standards being set by the hospital industry, enabling other hospitals to improve their own cardiovascular performance. Thomson Healthcare uses only public Medicare data, so that all hospitals can be measured and the most reliable standards reported. Only 100 hospitals, selected from three categories (teaching hospitals with cardiovascular residency programs, teaching hospitals without cardiovascular residency programs, and community hospitals), are named.

Thomson Healthcare uses its own statisticians, physicians, and hospital industry experts to determine criteria and select the top-performing hospitals.

Thomson Healthcare, a business of The Thomson Corporation (NYSE: TOC; TSX: TOC), is the leading provider of decision support solutions that help organizations across the healthcare industry improve clinical and business performance.

Thomson Healthcare maintains the nation's largest healthcare databases, with data representing 78 percent of all hospital discharges. Thomson Healthcare also produces the 100 Top Hospitals®: National Benchmarks for Success and the 100 Top Hospitals®: Performance Improvement Leaders awards.

How can I learn more?

To learn more about the 100 Top Hospitals awards, including lists of all award winners and details on the measures used, visit www.100tophospitals.com.

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A Guide to the Thomson 100 Top Hospitals®: Cardiovascular Benchmarks for Success 2007

*Why your local hospital received this prestigious award
and what it means to you and the community.*

What is the 100 Top Hospitals Cardiovascular Award?

The Thomson 100 Top Hospitals®: Cardiovascular Benchmarks for Success award names hospitals that have achieved the highest national scores (benchmarks) on a set of important measures of cardiovascular care. A range of measures is used to identify well-managed cardiovascular programs that produce sound patient outcomes in four cardiovascular treatment areas: heart attack, heart failure, angioplasty, and bypass. Thomson Healthcare produces these benchmarks every year for hospitals across the country to target improved cardiovascular performance.



Its management, doctors, nurses, and hospital employees work together to constantly measure, review, and improve performance to make it a better place to be treated for heart disease.

Does this mean that I should choose this hospital for my cardiovascular care?

Hospital choice is a complex decision that requires consultation with your physician about your illness and the type of treatment best for you. This study does not address all possible issues that are important to you.

The 100 Top Hospitals Cardiovascular study is an objective statistical comparison of cardiovascular performance using publicly available data. A 100 Top Hospitals Cardiovascular award-winning hospital, compared with similar hospitals on the measures listed, has set national standards for treating cardiovascular disease in the year preceding the award. These hospitals have set a standard to which other hospitals can aspire in the coming year.

Why is it so difficult to win this award?

There are two reasons:

1. This award uses only statistical information to select the top performers from nearly 1,000 hospitals across the country. The 100 Top Hospitals Cardiovascular award winners must perform well across many measures. Your hospital is only matched to similar hospitals before computing and comparing scores to choose the top performers.
2. The measures in the study change, usually every year, based on new and higher standards of care. For example, the survival rate for cardiovascular patients has risen every year for the past 10 years, thus raising the standard for patient survival. To win, a hospital must keep up with new performance standards, and develop new techniques to achieve better performance.

If this award is for hospitals, what does it mean to patients?

While there are no perfect cardiovascular hospitals, research has shown that surgeon and hospital teamwork produces a greater likelihood of better outcomes, adherence to standards, and more reasonable costs. Patients can feel comfortable that a 100 Top Hospitals Cardiovascular award-winning hospital has adopted a team approach to heart care and is performing well against national standards.

What does it mean if my hospital doesn't win again next year?

Winners of the 100 Top Hospitals Cardiovascular award are like athletes who win a national championship one year — they may not win the championship the second year, but they are still high performers.

It is very difficult to achieve national benchmark level performance every year. Only a handful of hospitals in the United States have won this award every year since its inception in 1999. It is exceedingly difficult to win this award even once and should be a point of pride in the hospital and the community.

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