

What is the 100 Top Hospitals National award?

The **Thomson Reuters 100 Top Hospitals®: National Benchmarks award** names 100 hospitals that achieve the highest national score based on the hospital's combined rank on nine separate measures of hospital performance that affect patients and the community.

Having a 100 Top Hospitals award-winner in the community means that:

- Patients are measurably less likely to have a complication, adverse patient safety event, or die unnecessarily
- Patients are more likely to receive care efficiently at a reasonable comparative cost
- The community can rely on the hospital as a well-managed major employer that will continue to invest in newer technology and services needed by the community

Thomson Reuters produces these benchmarks every year to announce the new level of performance that can be achieved and to help other hospitals set goals for higher performance.

WHO PERFORMS THE 100 TOP HOSPITALS STUDIES AND WHY?

The Healthcare business of Thomson Reuters, a global 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 hospital-wide performance. By using only high-quality public data, we are able to measure all hospitals and report the most reliable standards. Only 100 hospitals, selected from five categories (Major Teaching, Teaching, and Large, Medium, and Small Community Hospitals), are named.

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

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A GUIDE TO THE THOMSON REUTERS 100 TOP HOSPITALS®: NATIONAL BENCHMARKS 2008


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



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WHAT MEASURES IDENTIFY HOSPITALS THAT PERFORM WELL HOSPITAL-WIDE?

The *100 Top Hospitals: National Benchmarks* award is based on a set of measures that reflect highly effective performance across the whole organization, including board members, medical staff, management, and nursing. These include:

Patient outcomes: Survival rates for all patients, plus low rates of surgical complications like infections and severe bleeding after surgery.

Patient safety: Avoiding unwanted events, like respiratory failure, infections, and unexpected deaths in low-risk diseases, which occur infrequently, but which all hospitals are working to reduce.

National treatment standards (core measures): A set of basic care practices that all heart attack, heart failure, pneumonia, and surgery patients should receive. Core measures were developed by the National Quality Forum (NQF) 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 qualitycheck.org and hospitalcompare.hhs.gov.

Patient satisfaction: Patient rating of the hospital's overall performance, as reported on the Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS), a standardized patient survey instrument created by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services and the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, and endorsed by the NQF and the Hospital Quality Alliance.

Efficiency: Length of patient stay and average expense. In the best hospitals, all parts of the organization work together to do the right thing at the right time. When this happens, patients return to their daily lives faster and costs are usually lower.

Financial stability: Profit and cash-to-debt ratio. A high-performing hospital must be well-managed financially so it can attract the best healthcare professionals, acquire new technology, and expand services to improve results for patients. The top-performing hospitals must have enough cash to pay down their bills and must generate a surplus to be financially stable and invest in the future.

WHY DOES HOSPITAL-WIDE PERFORMANCE MATTER WHEN I AM BEING TREATED FOR ONLY ONE DISEASE?

When a patient is treated in a hospital, many specialized services are provided to the patient by many skilled professionals. To make sure the patient receives the best care and all the test and treatments received are coordinated, the hospital needs to be a well-managed organization. When all the departments and services of a hospital are working in concert, patients benefit because measurably better outcomes can be achieved safely, efficiently, and at comparatively reasonable costs. These across-the-board results are achieved by the 100 Top Hospital award winners.

For the patient, this means this hospital is significantly more likely to provide dependable, high-quality care because doing the right thing at the right time matters to everyone in the hospital—not just doctors.

IF THIS AWARD IS FOR HOSPITALS, WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO PATIENTS?

Although there are no perfect hospitals, research has shown that teamwork across an organization produces a greater likelihood of better outcomes, adherence to standards, and more reasonable costs. Patients can feel comfortable that a *100 Top Hospitals: National Benchmarks* award-winning hospital is performing well against national standards. Its board, management, doctors, nurses, and hospital employees work together to constantly measure, review, and improve performance to make it a good place to receive care.

DOES THIS MEAN THAT I SHOULD CHOOSE THIS HOSPITAL WHEN I NEED 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: National Benchmarks* award selects winners by an objective, statistical comparison of hospital-wide performance using publicly available data. A 100 Top Hospitals winner, compared with similar hospitals on the measures listed above, has set national standards for organization-wide performance in the year before the award. These award-winning hospitals have set the new standard to which other hospitals can aspire.

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 more than 3,000 hospitals across the country. The 100 Top Hospitals award winners must perform well across many measures, not just one. Your hospital is matched only 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 of hospitalized patients has risen every year for more than a decade, thus raising the standard for patient survival. To win, a hospital must keep up with the new standards of performance and develop new techniques to achieve better performance.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN IF MY HOSPITAL DOESN'T WIN AGAIN NEXT YEAR?

Winners of the 100 Top Hospitals award are like athletes who win a national championship one year. And like a championship team, they may not win the second year but are usually still extremely high performers. Research by scholars has shown that hospitals that win this award remain very high performers in the year after winning—usually within the top 20 percent of all hospitals.

It is exceedingly difficult to be selected as a national benchmark hospital every year. Although several hospitals have won this award 10 times or more, no U.S. hospital has won this award every year since its inception in 1993. It is difficult to win this award even once and should be a point of pride in the hospital and the community. Our research has shown that hospitals that win this award three or more times have particularly high levels of performance over many years.

HOW CAN I LEARN MORE?

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