



Tuesday, July 21, 2009

## America's Best Hospitals Rankings: Definitions

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The following terms appear in the rankings tables. Further details and descriptions of measures factored into the scoring but not displayed can be found in the [complete methodology report](#).

### General Terms

<b>Rank</b>	Based on <i>U.S. News Score</i> except in ophthalmology, psychiatry, rehabilitation, and rheumatology. In those specialties, rank is based only on reputation.
<b>U.S. News Score</b>	Summarizes quality of inpatient care. The top-ranked hospital in each specialty was assigned a score of 100. The major elements are reputation (32.5 percent of the score), mortality (32.5 percent), patient safety (5 percent), and a set of various measures that affect the quality of care, such as patient volume and nursing care (30 percent).
<b>Reputation</b>	Percentage of board-certified physicians responding to <i>U.S. News</i> surveys in 2007, 2008, and 2009 recommending a hospital as among the best in their specialty for the most challenging cases and procedures.
<b>Mortality index</b>	Compares the number of Medicare inpatient deaths occurring within 30 days of admission in 2005, 2006, and 2007 with the number of deaths expected after adjusting for the severity of each patient's condition. An index number above 1.00 means the hospital had more deaths than expected; below 1.00 means it had fewer than expected. <i>Lower is better.</i>
<b>Patient safety index</b>	Indicates success in minimizing avoidable deaths and injuries to patients from seven types of accidents and improper medical care, such as deaths of low-risk patients, postoperative hip fractures, and incisions that reopen after surgery. <i>Higher is better.</i>
<b>Discharges</b>	How many Medicare inpatients received certain medical or surgical care during 2005, 2006, and 2007.
<b>Nurse staffing</b>	Relative balance of nurses to patients. Nurses must be R.N.s and on staff, not temps or from agencies. Nurses are counted by "full-time equivalents"—for example, two half-time nurses add up to one full-time nurse. The patient count is an adjusted daily average of outpatients and inpatients, with inpatients weighted more heavily. <i>Higher is better.</i>
<b>Nurse Magnet hospital</b>	Meets standards for nursing excellence set by the American Nurses Credentialing Center, an arm of the American Nursing Association, as of March 1, 2009.

<b>Key technologies</b>	How many significant advanced technologies are offered. Varies by specialty.
<b>Patient services</b>	Various services related to overall quality of patient care. The number and mix vary by specialty.
<b>Trauma center</b>	Hospital is a state-certified Level 1 or 2 trauma center that can provide advanced care to severely injured patients. Certification is correlated with overall quality of care.

## Individual specialties

### Cancer

<b>NCI cancer center</b>	Designation by National Cancer Institute as of March 1, 2009, as a "clinical" or "comprehensive" cancer center, denoting high-quality research and clinical care.
<b>FACT credit</b>	Meets Foundation for the Accreditation of Cellular Therapy standards as of March 1, 2009, for transplanting cells to treat cancer. Hospital received 0.5 point if accredited only for autologous transplants (cells from patient are extracted, radiated, and returned), or 1 point if accredited for allogeneic transplants using donated cells (allowing a greater number and more kinds of cell transplants) or for both autologous and allogeneic transplants.
<b>Key technologies (7)</b>	Full-field digital mammography, image-guided radiation therapy, PET/CT scanner, robotic surgery, shaped-beam radiation, stereotactic radiosurgery, transplant services that include bone marrow transplant.
<b>Patient services (8)</b>	Genetic testing/counseling, hospice, pain-management program, palliative care, patient-controlled analgesia, translators, infection isolation room, wound-management services.

### Diabetes & Endocrine Disorders

<b>Key technologies (4)</b>	Diagnostic radioisotope services, image-guided radiation therapy, PET/CT scanner, stereotactic radiosurgery.
<b>Patient services (8)</b>	Genetic testing/counseling, hospice, pain-management program, palliative care, patient-controlled analgesia, translators, infection isolation room, wound-management services.

### Digestive Disorders

<b>Key technologies (7)</b>	Ablation of Barrett's esophagus, diagnostic radioisotope services, endoscopic retrograde cholangiopancreatography, endoscopic ultrasound, image-guided radiation therapy, stereotactic radiosurgery, transplant services.
<b>Patient services (8)</b>	Genetic testing/counseling, hospice, pain-management program, palliative care, patient-controlled analgesia, translators, infection isolation room, wound-management services.

## Ear, Nose & Throat

**Key technology (1)** Stereotactic radiosurgery.

**Patient services (8)** Genetic testing/counseling, hospice, pain-management program, palliative care, patient-controlled analgesia, translators, infection isolation room, wound-management services.

## Geriatric Care

**NIA Alzheimer's center** Certification by National Institute on Aging as of March 1, 2009, as an Alzheimer's Disease Center, denoting high-quality research and clinical care.

**Patient services (9)** Alzheimer's center (hospital-designated, not an NIA Alzheimer's center), arthritis treatment center, hospice, pain-management program, palliative care, patient-controlled analgesia, geriatric psychiatry, translators, wound-management services.

## Gynecology

**Key technologies (5)** Full-field digital mammography, image-guided radiation therapy, PET/CT scanner, robotic surgery, stereotactic radiosurgery.

**Patient services (9)** Fertility clinic, genetic testing/counseling, hospice, pain-management program, palliative care, patient-controlled analgesia, translators, infection isolation room, wound-management services.

## Heart & Heart Surgery

**Key technologies (7)** Cardiac intensive care unit, multislice spiral CT, PET/CT scanner, robotic surgery, single-photon-emission CT, heart transplant, tissue transplant.

**Patient services (7)** Cardiac rehabilitation, hospice, pain-management program, palliative care, patient-controlled analgesia, translators, wound-management services.

## Kidney Disorders

**Key technologies (7)** Diagnostic radioisotope services, image-guided radiation therapy, multislice spiral CT, PET/CT scanner, robotic surgery, stereotactic radiosurgery, transplant services.

**Patient services (8)** Genetic testing/counseling, hospice, pain-management program, palliative care, patient-controlled analgesia, translators, infection isolation room, wound-management services.

## Neurology & Neurosurgery

**Epilepsy center** Accredited as of March 1, 2009, by National Association of Epilepsy Centers for staffing, technology, and training at level 4, the highest degree of recognition, denoting a regional or national referral facility.

<b>NIA Alzheimer's center</b>	Certification by National Institute on Aging as an Alzheimer's Disease Center, denoting high-quality research and clinical care, as of March 1, 2009.
<b>Key technologies (5)</b>	Diagnostic radioisotope services, image-guided radiation therapy, PET/CT scanner, single-photon-emission CT, stereotactic radiosurgery.
<b>Patient services (9)</b>	Alzheimer's center (hospital-designated, not an NIA Alzheimer's center), genetic testing/counseling, hospice, pain-management program, palliative care, patient-controlled analgesia, translators, infection isolation room, wound-management services.

## Orthopedics

<b>Key technologies (2)</b>	Computer-assisted orthopedic surgery, transplant services.
<b>Patient services (7)</b>	Arthritis treatment center, hospice, pain-management program, palliative care, patient-controlled analgesia, translators, wound-management services.

## Respiratory Disorders

<b>Key technologies (6)</b>	Diagnostic radioisotope services, image-guided radiation therapy, multislice spiral CT, PET/CT scanner, stereotactic radiosurgery, transplant services.
<b>Patient services (8)</b>	Genetic testing/counseling, hospice, pain-management program, palliative care, patient-controlled analgesia, translators, infection isolation room, wound-management services.

## Urology

<b>Key technologies (5)</b>	Diagnostic radioisotope services, image-guided radiation therapy, PET/CT scanner, robotic surgery, stereotactic radiosurgery.
<b>Patient services (9)</b>	Fertility clinic, genetic testing/counseling, hospice, pain-management program, palliative care, patient-controlled analgesia, translators, infection isolation room, wound-management services.

Tags: [hospitals](#)

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**j carney of MA**  
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**Great Hospital in California**

Presbyterian Intercommunity Hospital and their staff is one of the best hospitals in Southern California.

**Bill Tubbs** of CA

Jul 16, 2009 20:55:49 PM

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**orthopaedics**

My daughter has just had a double laminectomy. The nerve was completely compressed, so that she couldn't feel her feet. Where can she go for help. She's a teacher and has to work. She lives in Brewster, NY.

**Nancy H. Paul** of NY

Jul 16, 2009 17:17:51 PM

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