


CHOOSING QUALITY HEALTH CARE

A consumer guide to hospitals in St. Louis



We all want to make the best health care choices, for ourselves and our families. Still, it can be hard to know which treatments, hospitals and doctors offer the best chance for the best result.

This brochure has information from the U.S. government. It can help you and your health care team choose a hospital for certain conditions.

What's Inside:

Learn how many times hospitals in the area:

- Give recommended care.
- Have patients that need to return because they are still sick.
- Satisfy patients.

WHY DO I NEED TO KNOW?

Patients only get the care recommended by experts 55% of the time.¹

More deaths are caused by medical errors in hospitals each year than by AIDS, breast cancer and car accidents combined.²

Medical care can differ quite a bit. It can differ in communities and hospitals with great reputations.³

How can I stay safe?

MEDICAL ERRORS ARE RARE. However, they may occur more than you would think. The Institute of Medicine says that more than 100,000 patients die each year from a medical error while in a hospital.

A lot of these errors could have been prevented. Simple checklists prevent doctors and hospitals from making errors each day. Checklists can help patients prevent errors as well.

Checklist for a Successful Hospital Stay

TALK TO YOUR DOCTOR ABOUT YOUR TREATMENT

- Ask your doctor to tell you about your treatment plan. Ask a friend, family member or nurse to take notes.
- Find out where you can get more information on your illness and treatment.
- If you are told you need a test or treatment, ask why. Then ask about the pros and cons and if there are more options.
- If you are having a scheduled test or treatment, ask your doctor how you should prepare. Also, ask about the chance of infection or other problems.

"COULD YOU PLEASE WASH YOUR HANDS?"

- Don't be afraid to ask all staff and doctors to wash their hands before they treat you. Ask your visitors to do the same when they come to see you.

MEDICINE AND TREATMENTS

- Bring a list of your current medicines along with the strength and how often you take them. Or just bring the medicines with you.
- Know all new medicines prescribed for you in the hospital. Know their names, why you are taking them, how you should take them, the possible side effects and if you will take them when you go home.
- A lot of conditions, treatments and medicines can make you feel dizzy. Call for help before you get out of bed.

GOING HOME

- Don't leave the hospital without a plan for when you go home. This plan should cover your medicines, follow-up visits and other tips to help you heal.

Receiving Safe Care

Better communication could reduce medication errors and improve patient safety overall.

A new government website helps patients ask their doctors good questions about their care.

Do you know the right questions to ask?

- What is this test for?
- Why do I need this surgery?
- What complications may occur?



Build your own list of questions at:

www.ahrq.gov/questionsaretheanswer

PATIENT SATISFACTION

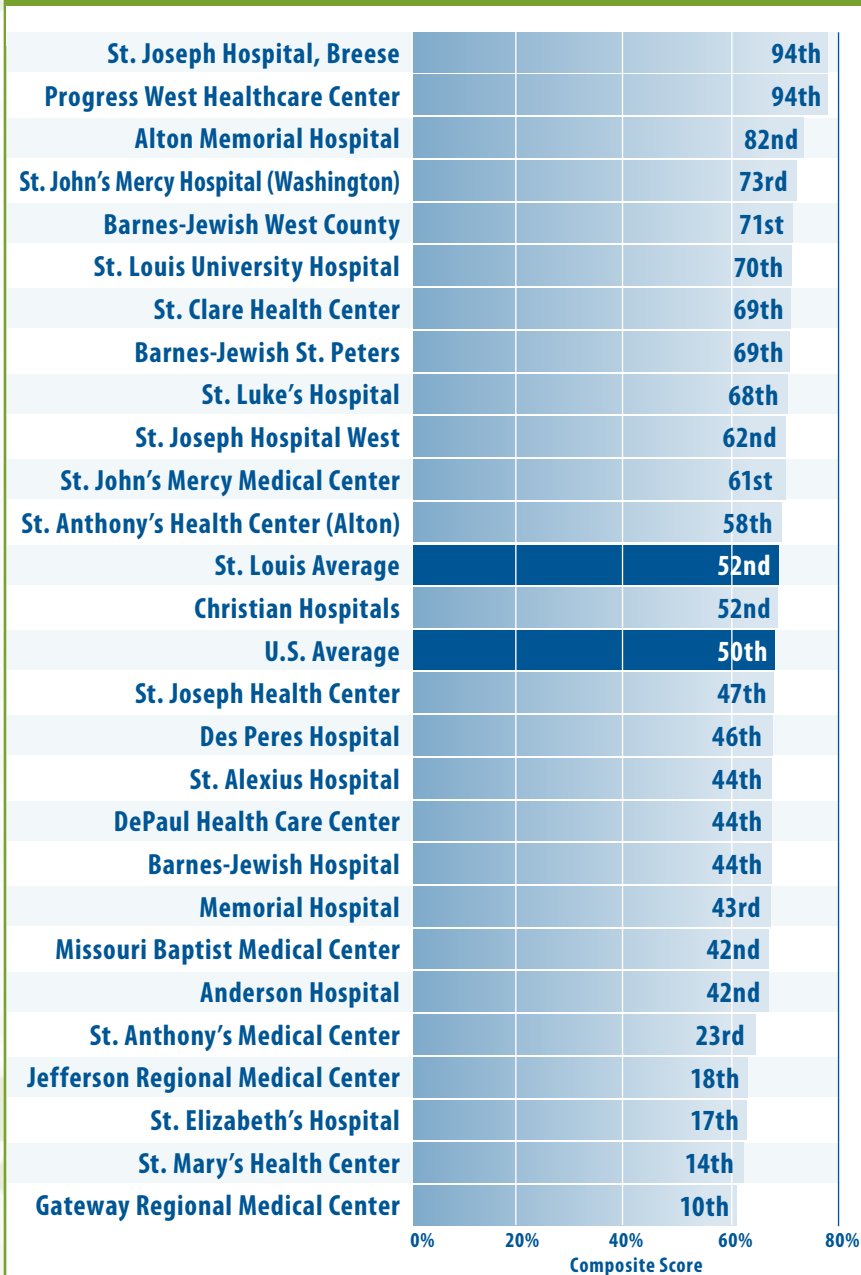
How often were patients treated at my hospital satisfied?

HEALTH CARE NEEDS TO work better for patients. Patients know if their health care team responds to their needs. They know if their doctor speaks to them in a clear way and if the hospital is clean and calm.

With this in mind, the U.S. government says hospitals must take part in the Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers. This is a national survey that shows what patients think of the care they have received.

higher is better

HCAHPS Composite Score and National Ranking 2009



What's the composite?

The composite score considers how well a hospital performed on several measures of patient satisfaction such as cleanliness, pain management, responsiveness and noise. Then, it uses a formula to create one score.



Want to know more about the quality of care at your hospital?

Visit www.whynotthebest.org
Visit www.hospitalcompare.gov

RECOMMENDED CARE

How often did my hospital provide recommended care?

2009 Frequency of Recommended Care and National Performance Rankings

Gateway Regional Medical Center					95th
SSM St. Joseph Health Center					83rd
St. John's Mercy Hospital - Washington					81st
SSM St. Joseph Hospital - West					81st
Missouri Baptist Hospital - Sullivan					79th
Missouri Baptist Medical Center					78th
Memorial Hospital Belleville					76th
St. Louis University Hospital					76th
Des Peres Hospital					76th
Progress West HealthCare Center					74th
Barnes-Jewish Hospital					72nd
SSM Depaul Health Care Center					70th
SSM St. Mary's Health Center					68th
Jefferson Memorial					68th
St. John's Mercy Medical Center					67th
Barnes-Jewish West County					64th
SSM St. Clare Health Center					63rd
St. Louis Hospital Average					61st
Anderson Hospital					60th
Barnes-Jewish St. Peters					60th
Christian Hospitals					59th
Alton Memorial Hospital					54th
U.S. Average					50th
St. Joseph's Hospital - Breese					49th
St. Anthony's Health Center - Alton					43rd
St. Luke's Hospital					41st
St. Elizabeth's Hospital - Belleville					39th
St. Anthony's Medical Center					38th
St. Alexius Hospital					36th
Forest Park					25th
Touchette Regional Medical Center					16th

75% 80% 85% 90% 95% 100%
Composite Score

higher is better

What's the composite?

It rates how well a hospital does on all measures using a formula to blend them into one score.

What is Hospital Compare?

It is a joint project of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid and the Hospital Quality Alliance. It shows the level of care in our hospitals. It looks at how often hospitals use well known ways to help patients recover and feel better.

Right now, Hospital Compare focuses on heart care, pneumonia and infections after a surgery.

Source: HealthInsights Medicare Quality Improvement Organization. Hospitals listed were the top 25 in volume of admissions.



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HOSPITAL READMISSIONS

How often did patients at my hospital need to return?

About 1 out of 5 Medicare patients are admitted back to the hospital in 30 days or less. This costs \$17.4 billion a year.⁴

Why might a patient need to go back?

- A new illness
- An infection
- Not following doctors' orders
- A complication
- Not taking their medicine

Experts feel that we could avoid a lot of these return trips to the hospital with clear communication among patients and their health care team. Soon, hospitals with high return rates will be paid less.

lower is better

St. Louis Area Hospitals Heart Attack 30-Day Readmission Rates 2009 Score

Missouri Baptist Hospital - Sullivan	18.3%
Alton Memorial Hospital	18.7%
Gateway Regional Medical Center	19.0%
St. Clare Health Center	19.0%
Missouri Baptist Medical Center	19.6%
Des Peres	19.8%
St. John's Mercy Hospital - Washington	19.9%
National Rate	19.9%
St. Mary's Health Center	20.3%
St. Anthony's Health Center - Alton	20.4%
St. John's Mercy Medical Center	20.6%
Barnes-Jewish St. Peters	20.6%
St. Louis Average	20.8%
St. Joseph Hospital - West	21.0%
St. Elizabeth's Hospital Belleville	21.2%
St. Joseph Health Center	21.2%
St. Luke's Hospital	21.2%
St. Anthony's Medical Center	21.6%
St. Louis University Hospital	21.7%
Jefferson Regional Medical Center	21.8%
Depaul Health Care Center	21.9%
Anderson Hospital	22.1%
Memorial Hospital Belleville	22.4%
Barnes-Jewish Hospital	22.6%
Christian Hospitals	24.2%

5 Ways You Can Keep From Needing to Return to the Hospital

1. Ask Questions. Take notes. Know all instructions before you go home from the hospital. Follow them at home.
2. Ask if there are resources in your community that might help with transportation, chores around the house and other tasks.
3. Take your medicine the way your doctor said you should. If you are taken off your normal medicine at the hospital, ask if you should take them when you go home.
4. Make your follow-up appointments as soon as you can. Keep those appointments.
5. Watch for changes in your health and weight. Tell your doctor if something seems not quite right.

Source: Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) Hospital Compare. Due to the low number of cases, the rates for Barnes-Jewish West County and St. Joseph Hospital Breese were not reported by Hospital Compare. Readmission rates are adjusted for illness severity.

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