

## **America's Best Hospitals 2013 Methodology**

Healthgrades America's 50 Best Hospitals™ award recognizes 50 hospitals as the top 1% in the nation for consistent clinical excellence based on an analysis of risk-adjusted mortality and complication rates for common procedures and conditions. Specifically, these hospitals have received a Healthgrades Distinguished Hospital Award for Clinical Excellence™ for the most consecutive years that Healthgrades has designated this award.

### **Identifying America's 50 Best Hospitals™**

To identify America's 50 Best Hospitals™, Healthgrades used a two-step process.

1. Identified those hospitals that received the Distinguished Hospital Award for Clinical Excellence for at least eight consecutive years.
2. If the number of hospitals identified above was less than 50, then the recipients for the last seven consecutive years were identified and sorted by average z-score from the most recent Distinguished Hospital Award for Clinical Excellence analysis. (The average z-score is a statistical measure of hospital quality outcomes.) The top hospitals from this list were then added to the list from Step 1 above to create a list of America's 50 Best Hospitals™ for 2013.

### **Identifying America's 100 Best Hospitals™**

Healthgrades America's 100 Best Hospitals™ award recognizes the top 100 hospitals that received the Distinguished Hospital Award for Clinical Excellence each year for at least the last four years. The next 50 top hospitals, (ranked by consecutive years and average z-score), were combined with the America's 50 Best Hospitals™ to determine America's 100 Best Hospitals™ for 2013. These hospitals are recognized as the top 2% in the nation for consistent clinical quality.

## **Distinguished Hospital for Clinical Excellence Award Process**

To help consumers evaluate and compare hospital performance, Healthgrades analyzed clinical outcomes data for nearly every hospital in the country across 27 different patient cohorts. The Healthgrades risk-adjustment methodology considers important differences in patient demographic (e.g., age, gender) and clinical characteristics (e.g., underlying medical conditions) that could increase the patient's risk of mortality or complications. Risk adjustment of the data is needed to make accurate and valid comparisons of clinical outcomes at different hospitals.

Hospitals are then stratified into one of three performance categories: 1-star (worse than expected), 3-star (as expected), or 5-star (better than expected) for each of 27 procedures and conditions. To have hospital performance evaluated in a specific procedure or condition, a hospital must have a minimum of 30 cases over the three years of study and at least five cases in the most recent year of analysis (2011).

For more information on Healthgrades risk-adjustment methodology, read the complete methodology, *Healthgrades Hospital Report Cards™ Mortality and Complication Outcomes Methodology*, at [www.healthgrades.com](http://www.healthgrades.com).

To be considered for Healthgrades Distinguished Hospital Award for Clinical Excellence, a hospital had to have been evaluated in at least 19 of the 27 procedures and conditions based on Medicare inpatient data from the Medicare Provider Analysis and Review (MedPAR) database (purchased from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services). After creating a list of hospitals that met eligibility criteria, Healthgrades took the following steps to determine the Distinguished Hospital Award for Clinical Excellence recipients.

1. Calculated the average performance rating and average z-score for each hospital by averaging all of their MedPAR-based performance ratings and the corresponding z-scores for all outcomes (in-hospital complications; and in-hospital mortality, 30-day mortality, and 180-day mortality outcomes are included).
2. Ranked hospitals in descending order by their average overall performance rating for all of the conditions and procedures evaluated, with ties broken by average z-score.
3. Selected the top 262 hospitals on the list (which represents the top 5% of all hospitals).
4. Designated these hospitals to receive the 2013 Distinguished Hospital Award for Clinical Excellence.

For more information see *Healthgrades Distinguished Hospital Award Clinical Excellence Methodology* at [www.healthgrades.com](http://www.healthgrades.com).

## **Procedures and Conditions List**

The following 27 procedures and conditions are used in this methodology.

### **Mortality-Based Procedures & Conditions**

Bowel Obstruction	Neurosurgery
Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)	Pancreatitis
Coronary Artery Bypass Graft (CABG)	Pneumonia
Coronary Interventional Procedures	Pulmonary Embolism
Diabetic Acidosis and Coma	Resection/Replacement Abdominal Aorta
Gastrointestinal Bleed	Respiratory Failure
Gastrointestinal Surgeries and Procedures	Sepsis
Heart Attack	Stroke
Heart Failure	Valve Repair/Replacement Surgery

### **In-Hospital Complication-Based Procedures & Conditions**

Back and Neck Surgery (With Spinal Fusion)	Hip Replacement
Back and Neck Surgery (Without Spinal Fusion)	Peripheral Vascular Bypass
Carotid Surgery	Prostatectomy
Gallbladder Surgery	Total Knee Replacement
Hip Fracture Treatment	