

UC San Diego Medical Center Among Nation's Best

Ranked In Eight Specialties by U.S. News and World Report

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UCSD Medical Center is the only San Diego hospital ranked among the nation's best in eight specialties in *U.S. News & World Report's* new 2008 "America's Best Hospitals" issue. Among the five leading California hospitals in the total number of top-ranked specialties, UC San Diego Medical Center has combined innovative treatments and compassionate care to earn recognition in multiple specialties for several years in this annual survey.

UC San Diego Medical Center is recognized among the nation's best in Respiratory Disorders, Cancer, Gynecology, Kidney Disease, Psychiatry, Rheumatology, Urology, and Ear, Nose and Throat in the July 21 issue of "Best Hospitals," due on newsstands July 14. UC San Diego's Respiratory Disorders program, ranked 6th in the nation this year, has ranked among the nation's top 10 programs nine years in a row.

To identify the nation's best hospitals, *U.S. News & World Report* screened 5,453 medical centers to identify the best in 16 specialties. This year, only 170 hospitals achieved any rankings, and over half of these ranked only in a single specialty. With top rankings in eight specialties, UC San Diego Medical Center is among a distinguished few.

"UC San Diego Medical Center is the only university-based health system in the region, which means we deliver excellent, innovative care backed up by the educational and research strengths of our School of Medicine and the Skaggs School of Pharmacy," said Richard Liekweg, chief executive officer of UC San Diego Medical Center. "Our physicians, researchers, nurses and patient care staff are recruited from the best hospitals nationally. We have exceptional people committed to improving health and the delivery of care, which is reflected in this national survey."

"The America's Best Hospitals rankings provide readers with trusted material during some of life's most concerning times - hospitalization," said Brian Kelly, editor of *U.S. News & World Report*. "Our rankings highlight the internal culture of excellence embraced by caregivers in the great hospitals throughout the U.S."

UC San Diego's pulmonary program has continuously ranked among the nation's top 10 nine years in a row, with critical care services for complex patients provided by the Division of Pulmonary and Critical Care Medicine and the Division of Cardiothoracic Services.

"Our goal is to provide innovative, exceptional, humanistic care for our patients," said Patricia Finn, M.D., Chief of Pulmonary and Critical Care Medicine. "We owe our consistent success to an integrative approach to clinical care and investigation. Our research focuses on understanding lung health and creating new ways to prevent, detect and treat respiratory disorders. And we are dedicated to educating the next generation of physicians to be outstanding clinicians, biomedical researchers and leaders in medicine."

Illustrative of the approach at UCSD Medical Center is the innovative work in the care of patients with various diseases affecting the circulation to the lung (pulmonary vascular diseases). For example, UCSD Medical Center is the world's leading center for a complex surgical procedure called pulmonary thromboendarterectomy (PTE), pioneered at UCSD, in which life-threatening chronic blood clots are removed in order to restore blood flow to the lungs. Other areas of expertise include procedures to evaluate and treat disease in the airways, care of patients with cystic fibrosis, lung transplantation, respiratory therapy, rehabilitation of patients with chronic lung disease, and breathing-related sleep disorders. The combination of leading edge treatments and technologies establishes UC San Diego as a major referral center for pulmonary and critical care medicine.

UC San Diego Medical Center operates two hospitals and multiple primary and specialty care outpatient centers in Hillcrest, La Jolla and Scripps Ranch. Ophthalmology services are offered at the UCSD Shiley Eye Center in La Jolla. Advanced cancer care is provided at Moores UCSD Cancer Center, the region's only National Cancer Institute-designated Comprehensive Cancer Center.

UC San Diego Medical Center in Hillcrest recently expanded its 40-bed regional neonatal intensive care unit, adding nine beds in response to increasing numbers of premature and critically ill infants. Further improvements are underway at the Hillcrest facility.

The Sulpizio Family Cardiovascular Center is under construction on the UC San Diego Medical Center, La Jolla campus and a new inpatient tower is in the design stages. The expansion of the La Jolla medical campus will further integrate the groundbreaking research and training programs on the UC San Diego campus with the patient care delivery system, accelerating the process of translating discovery into improvements in the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of disease and injury.

In this year's "Best Graduate Schools" edition, *U.S. News & World Report* ranked the UCSD School of Medicine (5th) in the nation among public medical schools (14th among all U.S. medical schools), with its AIDS program ranked 6th.

Rankings:

6th Respiratory Diseases
16th Rheumatology
21st Psychiatry (**New ranking**)
35th Kidney Disease
37th Gynecology
38th Urology (**New ranking**)
43rd Cancer
47th Ear, Nose and Throat

Methodology

The rankings in 12 of the 16 specialties weigh three elements equally: reputation, death rate, and a set of care-related factors such as nursing and patient services. In these 12 specialties, hospitals have to pass through several gates to be ranked and considered a Best Hospital:

The first gate determines whether a hospital is eligible to be ranked at all by requiring that *any* of three conditions be met--to be a teaching hospital, to be affiliated with a teaching hospital, or to have at least six important medical technologies from a defined list of 13.

The second gate determines whether a hospital is eligible to be ranked in a particular specialty. To be eligible, the hospital had to either have at least a specified volume in certain procedures and conditions over three years, or had to have been nominated in the magazine's yearly specialist survey.

The third gate is whether a hospital does well enough to be ranked, based on its reputation, death rate, and factors like nurse staffing and technology.

In the four other specialties--ophthalmology, psychiatry, rehabilitation, and rheumatology--ranking is based solely on reputation, derived from the three most recent physician surveys.

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