

RESEARCHING YOUR HOSPITAL COULD SAVE YOUR LIFE

FOR THE PATIENTS

WHY SHOULD YOU RESEARCH YOUR HOSPITAL?

A culture of patient safety extends from medical professionals to hospitals. Exploring how and what your hospital is doing on safety will help you make the best choice about your care. While shocking, and while the numbers are disputed, preventable medical errors are estimated to lead to between 20,000 and 250,000 deaths a year in the United States.

The fact that we can't agree on how to count these deaths is a problem. The fact that some are preventable is unacceptable.

IF HOSPITALS FOLLOW #BEST PRACTICES

including reporting on adverse events, they will be more likely to prevent unnecessary injuries, complications, infections, and deaths.

Only a few states report facility-specific information, and some do not [report](#) any information to the public at all. Hospitals are required to report and inquire the National Practitioners Data Bank about doctor's disciplinary actions. A 2007 [study](#) found that over a 20 year period, only half of hospitals in the U.S. had reported sanctions on doctors. Without enforcement of these requirements, low rates of reporting and inquiry will continue.

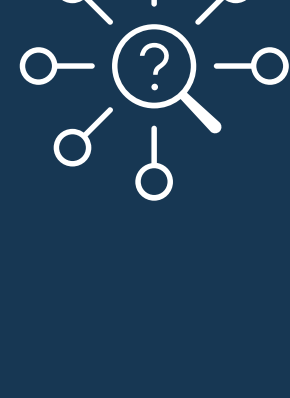
Even without a universally mandated reporting system, patients can still find some essential safety information to understand potential risks about a hospital's practices and help you make informed health care decisions.

FOLLOW THESE STEPS TO RESEARCH YOUR HOSPITAL



Performance.

Search for your hospital in the [HospitalCompare by Medicare database](#) to see how they perform in areas like readmissions, complications and timely and effective care.



Your Hospital's Grade.

The Leapfrog Group's [Hospital Safety Grade](#), which rates general hospitals, looks at infections, problems with surgery, practices to prevent errors, and staff prioritization of safety. You want a hospital that has a good track record of keeping its patients as safe as possible. If yours isn't making the grade, find a better one.



Inequities.

Certain communities are [more likely](#) to experience adverse patient safety events, are more likely to be sent to lower quality [hospitals](#) and be misdiagnosed. Call on policymakers to support policies that address racial inequities and bias in the medical system. If you believe you've been discriminated against, contact the [Office for Civil Rights](#) in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, your hospital, the [Joint Commission](#) and Medicare.

While some hospitals receive high rankings on patient outcomes, they may still perform poorly on civic [leadership](#) including pay equity, community benefit and inclusivity. Both equity and inclusivity measures affect patient safety.

Urge your state legislators to enforce reporting and review of patient safety practices in all hospitals to ensure public access to hospital related patient safety information.

Encourage hospitals to [adopt](#) a culture of openness and patient engagement on medical errors. This contributes to patient safety and helps providers learn from mistakes. Don't be afraid to speak up if you have concerns, talk to the hospital management and remember, your safety comes first.

LEARN MORE BY VISITING

- www.patientsafety.citizen.org
- www.littleton-roadph.com/forthepatients
- www.patientsafetymovement.org

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