

How to Choose a Hospital for Procedures or Surgeries

Many patients become overwhelmed when they learn they need to have a procedure or surgery, and make quick decisions based on convenience. But before quickly settling for the nearest hospital, there are a few important things patients should consider.

Read Reviews

Before choosing a restaurant, you may read a few reviews. So why wouldn't you do the same for something much more important than dinner?

Spend some time researching the various hospitals on your list for their track records on safety, patient outcomes and patient experience.

Find out more about the healthcare professionals that you will encounter. Not just the surgeon, but rather the entire team that will be caring for you while you are there. How long has your surgeon been in practice? What is his or her success rate? Several organizations, including independent non-profits list hospital rankings and ratings based on a number of factors, and are searchable by various disciplinary specialties.

Treatment Options

Even if your doctor doesn't mention it, there may be new treatment options available for your condition that are safer or have higher success rates. Not every hospital has the same technological capabilities and facilities, so you may not even be aware of what's available to you without asking a few questions.

For example, [CyberKnife](#), a computer-controlled radiosurgery system, delivers radiation to cancerous and non-cancerous tumors with millimeter accuracy. This virtual surgery may be worth a trip, for those diagnosed with prostate cancer, a brain tumor, or lesions in the spine, lungs, liver and pancreas. Done in five treatments on an outpatient basis, it involves no incisions, no blood, no pain and no complications from anesthesia; and patients can resume daily activities immediately following treatment. Additionally, this form of radiation therapy can treat many tumors that are inoperable by other methods.

"Because the technology is so precise, physicians can apply higher doses of radiation, offering patients a better chance for cure while minimizing damage to healthy tissue," says Louis Schwartz, MD chief, radiation oncology, at Overlook Medical Center, a hospital with over 10 years of treatment experience in CyberKnife technology.

No matter what your condition is, do your research about the new innovative methods being employed by hospitals nationwide to treat it.



**Atlantic
Health System**

Trusted Network of Caring™

Ask Questions

Supplement your research by asking targeted questions of the right people. Ask trusted health care experts for their opinion. Seek out online forums of other patients with your condition. The feedback you hear may be some of the most invaluable information you collect during your search for the perfect hospital or facility for your treatment.

Before scheduling surgery or a procedure, get the facts and know your options. With a little digging, you may discover options for higher-quality care.