

CMS Begins Reporting on Hospital Return Days!

What are the Hospital Return Days?

Hospital Return Days are the average number of unplanned days patients who are hospitalized for certain conditions spend back in the hospital soon after they are discharged. Hospital Return Days include time spent in the emergency department, under observation, or in an inpatient hospital unit. CMS (the agency behind Medicare & Medicaid) recently updated its *Hospital Compare* website to provide information on hospital return days for patients who visit the hospital for a heart attack or heart failure. A video, available on <http://www.corevideos.org/>, provides more information on hospital return days, and why they're important!

How is this information useful to me or my family?

This information can help you, or a loved one, learn more about your local hospital and make an informed decision when it comes to your medical care.

What other information is available on *Hospital Compare*?

Hospital Compare provides you with a lot of interesting information. For example, it can tell you how often people die after visiting a hospital for a certain condition, how often complications occur after certain surgeries, and how likely patients are to return to a hospital for unplanned medical care within 30 days of leaving the hospital.

Information is available for a **variety of medical conditions and surgical procedures**, including:

- ❖ Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)
- ❖ Heart Attack
- ❖ Heart Failure
- ❖ Pneumonia
- ❖ Stroke
- ❖ Coronary Artery Bypass Graft (CABG)
- ❖ Hip or Knee Replacement

Using this information, you can choose the hospital that is best for you.

For example, you can see how hospitals in your area compare with each other--and with the nation as a whole—when it comes to treating a heart attack.

Why does CMS publicly report this information?

CMS's goal in reporting this information is to improve health care. CMS evaluates hospital quality of care and gives incentives to hospitals to make improvements that result in better care.

How do I find this information on Hospital Compare?

You can access the website, for free, at www.medicare.gov/hospitalcompare/search.html or by going to www.medicare.gov and selecting “Find hospitals” under the “Find doctors, providers, hospitals, plans & suppliers” heading. Enter your zip code, select a hospital (or hospitals) to compare, and view the Complications & deaths tab, Hospital returns tab, or the Payment & value of care tab to see updated results.

Don't pass up the opportunity to take advantage of this valuable information!