In this special issue of Innerpulse Extra, we’ll take a behind-the-scenes look at the U.S. News & World Report “America’s Best Hospitals” survey. You’ll meet employees from all areas that were ranked in this year’s survey, learn how the best hospitals are chosen, and discover why being No. 3 is something for which we can all be proud.

2006—A New Standard of Excellence

Since 1990, U.S. News & World Report has been ranking “America’s Best Hospitals.” And for that same number of years, Cleveland Clinic has been honored among the best of the best.

This year is no exception. Thanks to the teamwork of everyone at Cleveland Clinic, this year sets a new standard of excellence in our U.S. News rankings.

For 2006, Cleveland Clinic is listed among the nation’s best in all 16 medical specialties ranked by the magazine, and the hospital is ranked third on the Honor Roll of best overall hospitals.

The last time—and only other time—Cleveland Clinic has been ranked in Honor Roll of best overall hospitals.

For 2006, Cleveland Clinic is listed among the nation’s best in all 16 medical specialties. When we say we deliver world-class care, we mean it!

Nationally, U.S. News reviewed data from 5,189 hospitals to determine its rankings. Of that group, 176 facilities were ranked in at least one category.

As U.S. News reported in its July 10 issue: “It’s a pretty elite group that emerged from the nearly 5,200 hospitals put through the wringer this year: Only 3 percent ranked in any of the 16 specialties. And merely 14 qualified for the ‘America’s Best Hospitals’ Honor Roll with a top position in at least six specialties—a demonstration of broad expertise.”

Though a source of great pride, our U.S. News rankings are much more. They are a quality indicator that helps patients choose where they seek medical care.

According to the Division of Marketing and Communications Research and Planning staff, 76 percent of patients surveyed in the first half of 2005 said they chose Cleveland Clinic because of our excellent reputation.

Talking about the Rankings with Dr. Cosgrove

Cleveland Clinic employees can be proud of our U.S. News rankings. Innerpulse Extra decided to talk with CEO and President Toby Cosgrove, M.D., to find out what he thinks about the rankings.

IPX: What do you think led to us moving up in the U.S. News rankings?

Dr. Cosgrove: I believe our emphasis on quality, our ongoing pursuit of clinical excellence, and the fact that we are united in putting patients first were the most important reasons we moved up in the rankings.

IPX: Is the U.S. News ranking really that important?

Dr. Cosgrove: Yes, I think so. It is a wonderful recognition of the hard work of our employees, who are passionate about what they do. It is also important to patients who use this information when they are trying to choose a hospital for their care. Finally, it is a great thing for the city of Cleveland and the Cleveland community.

IPX: Are we trying to move even higher in the rankings?

Dr. Cosgrove: Of course we want to move up. Everything we do is built around excellence and service. I think we are on a great track, and clearly the best days are ahead of us. We have a clear focus so that everyone knows we are here because of our patients. As long as we don’t lose sight of our objective, look out to those ahead of us. Here we come.

IPX: At the end of the day, what do U.S. News rankings mean to our employees?

Dr. Cosgrove: Our employees should feel an enormous sense of satisfaction and pride. It is rare to be ranked one of the top three hospitals out of nearly 5,200 in the United States. When you move from four to three, it is a big step. We are among an elite group, and we should see the ranking as recognition of all the hard work that went into getting us there.
This is only the second time in the history of the “America’s Best Hospitals” survey that Cleveland Clinic has been ranked in all 16 specialties evaluated by U.S. News & World Report. We asked employees from each area what they believe contributed to our success in the rankings. Their responses touched on all four cornerstones—Quality, Innovation, Teamwork and Service.

1 Heart and Heart Surgery
- History of innovation through continual breakthroughs in medical and surgical techniques including the nation’s first coronary bypass surgery
- World leader in atriil thalimation, valve replacement and repair; heart transplant; and minimally invasive heart surgery

Ruth Thiel, RN, who works in the Heart and Vascular Institute’s Cardiac Cath Lab, witnesses the impact the No. 1 heart center in America has on patients daily. “I’m amazed at how well our patients respond to treatment,” she says. “What we do here makes a difference in their lives.”

2 Digestive Disorders
- Pioneered less radical surgery for colorectal cancer; created the world’s first inherited colorectal cancer registry; established the first enterostomal therapy training program
- World leader in treatment of inflammatory bowel disease; Crohn’s disease; and liver disease

Treating patients as people, not numbers, is what Medical Secretary Peg Kriese, a 20-year employee who works at the Digestive Disease Center, strives for daily. “I treat patients like I would want to be treated,” she explains. And patients seem to appreciate the extra effort, especially because many travel to Cleveland to receive care for complex diseases that aren’t treatable at many hospitals.

3 Kidney Disease
- Historical achievements included one of the nation’s first cadaver kidney transplants; development of the kidney dialysis machine and the mosaic theory of hypertension
- Works collaboratively with urology in the management of kidney transplantation
- Recognized internationally for research and treatment of kidney diseases

Emil Paganini, M.D., a 30-year physician in the Nephrology Department, says treating patients with respect is one of her biggest responsibilities. “That’s my No. 1 priority,” she says. “I’m at the frontlines here, and this is their first impression of the hospital.”

4 Rheumatology
- Pioneered medical treatments for arthritis and other rheumatological disorders; offers innovative treatment of rare and complex diseases of the bone and skeletal system
- Advanced research at the genetic, molecular and cellular levels

Debora Bork, Rheumatic and Immunologic Disease, will celebrate her 10-year anniversary at Cleveland Clinic this April. She attributes the department’s success to its expertise in treating disease, and she’s determined to help her department keep moving up in the rankings. “I think Rheumatology should be No. 1,” she says. “We’re on the right course—it just takes time.”

5 Orthopaedics
- Leading the nation in breakthroughs in tissue regeneration, spinal surgery, joint replacement and resurfacing

Wael Barsoum, M.D., of Orthopaedics says his department, currently ranked No. 5, is on its way to No. 1. “We already see ourselves as No. 1,” he explains. “It’s just a matter of time before U.S. News also recognizes us the leader in orthopaedics. We won’t be satisfied until then.” He attributes the department’s success to its reputation and team-oriented environment.

6 Neurology and Neurosurgery
- Offers comprehensive diagnosis and treatment of all neurological conditions
- Pioneered innovative diagnostic and surgical procedures for epilepsy in adults and children
- One of the nation’s largest brain tumor centers
- Pioneered deep brain stimulation for treatment of Parkinson’s disease and other disorders

Michelle Crespo, RN, wasn’t surprised that Cleveland Clinic is now the No. 3 hospital in the country—or that the Head and Neck Institute, where she works, is No. 7. “I really feel that we belong there, based on what I hear from our patients,” she says. Crespo attributes the institute’s success to its employees’ ability to work as a team, as well as innovative treatments and new technologies.

7 Endocrinology
- Diabetes Self Management program recognized by the American Diabetes Association
- Special expertise in thyroid cancer management and pituitary disease management
- Diabetes and kidney transplant clinic provide better management of blood sugar control

Patient Service Representative Frazier Benn Ward, a 30-year employee who works in Endocrinology, says treating patients with respect is one of her biggest responsibilities. “That’s my No. 1 priority,” she says. “I’m at the frontlines here, and this is their first impression of the hospital.”

8 Urology
- World’s largest and most specialized urology practice
- Pioneered laparoscopic radical prostatectomy; world leader in kidney sparing surgery and minimally invasive urologic surgery; advanced research in kidney, bladder and prostate cancers

Ask Surgical Coordinator Dan Fagan, of the No. 2 nationally ranked Glickman Urological Institute, why he’s been working here 19 years and he’ll reply, “The people. Our administration has really focused on keeping the spirit of teamwork alive in our area.” As a team, his department has worked to streamline patients’ experiences—in turn, increasing their satisfaction with Cleveland Clinic.
Respiratory Disorders
- Pulmonologists, critical care specialists and allergists are recognized national leaders, providing state-of-the-art treatment of respiratory diseases and allergies
- Center of excellence in sarcoidosis; NIH joint fellowship for clinical training in pulmonary and critical care medicine
Being “good,” according to Georgiann “Jody” Krizmanich, RN, of Pulmonary, Allergy and Critical Care Medicine, isn’t good enough. That’s why her department consistently focuses on achieving high patient satisfaction—one of the reasons why she believes they are ranked No. 7. “We’re always looking at quality improvement, taking things from good to the best.”

Gynecology
- Offers advanced laparoscopic procedures for fibroids and abnormal uterine bleeding and the latest techniques for management of gynecologic cancers
- Collaborates with pediatric cardiology on innovative approaches to treatment of congenital heart defects in utero; offers comprehensive fertility program
Medical Secretary Karen Krauss says OB/GYN patients appreciate the department’s friendly atmosphere. “Everyone just goes out of their way to help people,” she says. And this quality not only brings patients back—it retains employees like Krauss, who’s been here 20 years. “When you’ve been at the top, where do you go?” she asks. “You just never leave.”

Cancer
- Experimental therapeutics program offers novel treatment strategies for both common and rare cancers
- Bone Marrow Transplant program offers state-of-the-art therapies
- Extensive programs devoted to study of molecular biology and genetics of cancer
Taussig Cancer Center’s Angela Bailey, Administrative Program Coordinator, helps educate community residents on cancer prevention—part of the center’s ongoing commitment to community service, which is one of the factors that impacts our U.S. News rankings. “This is a way of giving back,” she says, “and it employs people to become advocates for their health and potentially reduce their risk of cancer.”

Ophthalmology
- One of the world’s most advanced eye institutes, providing highly specialized ophthalmologic care
- One of the nation’s highest patient volumes
- State-of-the-art outpatient surgical center and diagnostic technology

Advanced research program offers access to the latest clinical trials
Raised in Cleveland, Patient Service Representative Greg Beyer knew of Cleveland Clinic’s reputation for world-class care. Now that he’s a part of it, he says it’s nice to be recognized. “The doctors provide quality service and everyone else does their part, too—it’s all about the patient,” he says. “I think the Cole Eye Institute does this very well.”

Psychiatry
- Comprehensive range of services for adult and pediatric patients includes behavioral and psychosocial evaluation; psychotherapy; chronic pain management and rehabilitation; chemical dependency program; medication management
- Areas of special interest include the relationship between depression and heart disease and the use of deep brain stimulation for treatment-resistant obsessive compulsive disorder and depression
Discovering that Psychiatry moved up three spots this year proved to be rewarding. “This is a way of giving back,” he says, “and it employs people to become advocates for their health and potentially reduce their risk of cancer.”

Pediatrics
- Ohio’s only pediatric heart/lung transplant center
- More than 150 pediatric specialists and subspecialists
- Offers innovative care in open heart surgery and leading-edge therapies for cancer and other complex problems
After 13 years at Children’s Hospital, Molly Nikolae, RN, is just as enthusiastic and proud as she was on her first day. “The communication between all the staff is great.” Everything as a whole contributed to the rise in rankings, she says. “Our physicians collaborate—they’re just a phenomenal group.”

Rehabilitation
- Comprehensive programs in inpatient rehabilitation, skilled nursing care, outpatient care and home care services
- Clinical research in collaboration with NIH and industry focused on improving mobility and transportation of the disabled and wheelchair users
Vinoth Ranganathan, Program Manager in Rehabilitation, believes that success isn’t an individual effort—it’s achieved as a team. So after discovering that Rehabilitation ranked No. 22 in the country, he says, “It’s recognition for the whole team.” Working together, he adds, is what drives the U.S. News rankings. “Once everyone gets into the spirit of it, it all goes up from there.”
Take a Look at U.S. News Ranking Methodology

To understand exactly how U.S. News & World Report ranks the nation’s best hospitals, you have to read the 96-page report outlining the magazine’s scientific methodology. To understand why Cleveland Clinic is ranked among the best of the best in every possible category, you just have to look around.

The same teamwork that results in world-class patient care and cutting-edge research also is responsible for Cleveland Clinic’s success in the 2006 U.S. News rankings. In determining “America’s Best Hospitals,” the magazine considers factors that involve employees and expertise in all areas.

“We used a lot of different criteria,” Avery Comarow, senior writer for U.S. News & World Report, told CBS News when the rankings were announced July 7. “One of the most important is sort of a peer review, what specialists think of hospitals in their specialty for very tough cases, not for average cases. We look at death rate. We look at the nursing, that sort of thing. It’s a combination of factors.”

Overall, U.S. News bases its rankings on three general areas, giving each one equal weight: reputation, mortality and a combination of patient-care factors. The patient-care factors involve a total of nine areas ranging from discharges and nurse-to-patient ratios, to technology and community services.

For 2006, U.S. News examined the availability of 114 different technologies considered important for diagnosis and treatment. Examples ranged from shaped beam radiation to bone marrow transplant.

Patient/Community Services

As part of its patient-care component, U.S. News & World Report created a pool of 14 items considered “essential in a high-quality hospital or that represent a major patient convenience, advanced care or responsiveness to community needs.” Those services are:

- Ambulance services
- Birthing rooms
- Case management
- Enabling services (such as transportation programs and/or referrals to social service agencies)
- Genetic testing/counseling
- Infection isolation room
- Obstetric care (a Level 3 unit)
- Pain management program
- Patient-controlled analgesia
- Patient representative (ombudsman)
- Rehabilitation care
- Sports medicine
- Translators
- Women’s health center

For community services, U.S. News considered 14 different programs, including whether a hospital has an ombudsman program and even whether it provides language translators for patients who don’t speak English.

U.S. News goes to such great lengths for one reason, editor Brian Duffy said in announcing this year’s best hospitals. “Choosing the right hospital is critical,” Duffy said in the magazine’s news release. “U.S. News’ annual hospital guide provides consumers with a comprehensive assessment to choose the best hospital specific to their needs.”

And why does Cleveland Clinic go to such lengths to earn recognition in all areas ranked by U.S. News? To know that, you just have to look around. You are—and you work among—the best in healthcare providing world-class care to every patient who enters our doors. •

“IT’s a pretty elite group that emerged from the nearly 5,200 hospitals put through the wringer this year. Only 3 percent ranked in any of the 16 specialties. And merely 14 qualified for the ‘America’s Best Hospitals’ Honor Roll with a top position in at least six specialties—a demonstration of broad expertise.”


**U.S. News Trivia**

Cleveland Clinic knows all about succeeding in U.S. News & World Report’s annual “Best Hospitals” surveys. But do you have the knowledge necessary to succeed in correctly answering all of these U.S. News brain-busters?

1. In 1990, the first year of the U.S. News rankings, Cleveland Clinic was ranked in how many categories?
   A. Four
   B. Five
   C. Eight

2. How many times has Cleveland Clinic been ranked in all possible U.S. News categories?
   A. Two
   B. Three
   C. Four

3. In 2006, Cleveland Clinic received a perfect 100 score from U.S. News for Heart and Heart Surgery. Which specialty received the second highest U.S. News score?
   A. Digestive Disease
   B. Kidney Disease
   C. Urology

4. In 1990, 57 of the nation’s nearly 6,500 hospitals earned a perfect score in at least one category of the inaugural U.S. News rankings. In 2006, how many hospitals earned at least one ranking?
   A. 74
   B. 105
   C. 176

**ANSWERS**

1. B. Five. In 1990, Cleveland Clinic was ranked as the nation’s sixth best hospital. In addition, Cleveland Clinic earned rankings for its expertise in Digestive Disorders, Heart and Heart Surgery, Neurology and Neurosurgery, and Urology.
2. A. Two. In both 2003 and 2006, Cleveland Clinic earned rankings in every U.S. News category.
3. B. Kidney Disease (Nephrology). Cleveland Clinic received a 94.7 score from U.S. News in Kidney Disease, earning this department the No. 3 spot on the list of the nation’s best.

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To read more about the scientific methodology used to determine the 2006 U.S. News & World Report rankings, visit usnews.com/usnews/health/best-hospitals/methodology.htm.