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America's Best Maternity Hospitals 2026
- Methodology -

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1 Introduction

High-quality maternity care is essential to ensuring the long-term health and well-being of both mothers and newborns. From prenatal visits and childbirth to postpartum recovery, the support provided during this critical time plays a pivotal role in both immediate and future health outcomes (World Health Organization n.d.). Recognizing the importance of exceptional maternity care, Statista and Newsweek have partnered for the fifth consecutive year to identify "America's Best Maternity Hospitals". This ranking highlights hospitals that excel in providing comprehensive and compassionate care to mothers and babies.

The current 2026 edition of the ranking is an extension and update of the annual America's Best Maternity Hospitals ranking, which was first published by Newsweek and Statista in March 2022. In the 2026 edition, the leading **461 hospitals in the field of maternity in the U.S. are featured in total.**

The America's Best Maternity Hospitals 2026 ranking is intended to be a resource to help patients make a more informed and data-driven decision when choosing a hospital for their medical needs, as well as to provide a composite benchmark for hospitals that is indicative of their relative performance when compared to their national peers.

2 Ranking Framework and Evaluation Criteria

The following sections provide an overview of the study design, and the underlying methodology used to determine the various rankings. First, the newly implemented features and changes in this year's edition are described (section 2.1). Second, eligibility for inclusion in the ranking is outlined in section 2.2. Following this, the general methodology and per-pillar methodologies are described (section 2.3). Finally, the overall scoring model is outlined (section 2.4).

2.1 New features and changes in the 2026 edition

The following list provides a brief overview of the major changes in this year's edition, compared to the America's Best Maternity Hospitals 2025 ranking:

- **New hospital data source:** Data from the Leapfrog Hospital and Surgery Center Survey, providing standards-based measures for hospital quality, maternity service availability, and maternity care performance.
- **Removal of data source:** The American Hospital Association (AHA) dataset has been removed to reduce reliance on primarily structural service-availability indicators.

2.2 Eligibility

Hospitals that were not accessible to the public and/or had a low bed count were excluded from the ranking as they were unlikely to receive enough recommendations to make the final list and were not comparable in the range of services provided. To be eligible for analysis, hospitals were required to report maternity-specific performance data and/or receive at least a two-star rating from CMS.

To be included in the evaluation, hospitals were required to achieve a score of at least 60% in all pillars. For a more detailed description of the scoring model, see section 2.4.

2.3 General methodology

The 2026 America's Best Maternity Hospitals ranking is based on three pillars:

- **Hospital quality metrics** with a focus on indicators relevant to maternity care (see section 2.3.1).
- **Patient experience** (see section 2.3.2).
- **Reputation score** (doctors, hospital managers, healthcare professionals) (see section 2.3.3).



2.3.1 Hospital quality metrics

The hospital quality metrics score for the America's Best Maternity Hospitals ranking is derived from multiple data sources, detailed in the following section.

a. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS)

The dataset provided by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is available for over 4,600 hospitals publicly reporting quality information on the Care Compare platform (The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services 2026). This dataset includes information on hospital characteristics, quality measures, patient satisfaction, performance metrics, and Medicare reimbursements. The *America's Best Maternity Hospitals* ranking evaluated quantitative indicators relevant to hospital performance and maternity care. The most recently published dataset (February 2026) was used to determine the CMS quality score.¹ The following indicator groups were used for the evaluation:

- Maternal Health
- Timely and Effective Care
- Healthcare Associated Infections

Scores for each indicator group were calculated as follows:

For *Maternal Health* and *Timely and Effective Care*, indicators were compared to national percentiles. Hospitals whose indicator fell in the 90th or higher percentile received one

¹ Data for (e)PC-02 and (e)PC-07 were not reported in the Q1 2026 update. For these measures, the data from the most recent available publication (Q3 2025) were used instead. PC-05 was retired in October 2025, data from the most recent available publication (Q3 2025) was used instead.

point. Hospitals who participated in *National Perinatal Quality Initiatives/Maternal Morbidity Structural Measures* also received one point.

For *Healthcare Associated Infections*, indicators were compared to national averages. Hospitals whose indicator exceeded the national average were awarded one point, those with an indicator equal to the national average were awarded 0.75 points, and those with a score below the national average were awarded 0.5 points.

A weighted sum of all measures was calculated to produce the final CMS quality score. A full description of all CMS quality indicators is provided in Appendix 1.

b. Leapfrog Data

The Leapfrog Group supports the ranking as a data partner. The following paragraph is included for contextual information only and is not part of the methodological framework or scoring approach.

The Leapfrog Hospital Survey was created and is administered by The Leapfrog Group - a leading independent, national not-for-profit organization advocating for hospital transparency (The Leapfrog Group 2026). They strive to make giant “leaps” forward in the U.S. by promoting transparency through their data collection and public reporting initiatives. With their goal of saving lives by reducing errors, injuries, accidents, and infections, The Leapfrog Group focuses on measuring and publicly reporting hospital performance through the annual Leapfrog Hospital Survey. The survey is a trusted, transparent and evidence-based national tool in which over 2,500 hospitals voluntarily participate free of charge.

The *America’s Best Maternity Hospitals* ranking evaluated qualitative indicators relevant to hospital performance and maternity services and care. The following indicator groups were used for the evaluation:

- Patient rights and ethics
- Medication safety
- Physician and nurse staffing
- Patient safety practices
- Managing serious errors
- Outpatient procedures
- Maternity services
- Maternity care

Scores for all indicators (apart from maternity services) were calculated based on Leapfrog's assessment of whether hospitals met the established standard for each indicator, as follows: 1 point for "achieved the standard", 0.75 points for "considerable achievement", 0.5 points for "some achievement", and 0.4 points for "limited achievement".

For the maternity services indicator group, hospitals were awarded one point for each service that they provided. Per-group scores were calculated as the mean average score for all indicators in that group. Overall score was calculated as a weighted sum of group scores. A full description of all Leapfrog quality indicators is given in Appendix 2.

c. Accreditations and specialized programs

Accreditations and specialized program enrollments were included to reflect the commitment to excellence in maternal and child healthcare.

These included *The Joint Commission's Perinatal Advanced Care Certification* (Joint Commission International 2026) which recognizes hospitals providing high-quality perinatal care, and the *Maternal Levels of Care designation*, which categorizes hospitals based on their capabilities to care for pregnant patients and newborns. Additionally included were hospitals' participation in programs under the *Health Resources and Services Administration* (HRSA) related to maternal and child health (Health Resources & Services Administration 2026), and the *UNICEF Baby-Friendly designation*, which emphasizes breastfeeding support and mother-infant bonding (Baby-Friendly USA, Inc. 2026).

2.3.2 Patient experience

Publicly available data from existing patient surveys were used to analyze patient experience, based on data reported by CMS. The *Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems* (HCAHPS) survey is a standardized survey of hospital patients in the USA regarding their experiences during a recent inpatient hospital stay (HCAHPS 2026). The most recently published dataset was the February 2026 edition, which is based on surveys from patients discharged in 2024.

2.3.3 Reputation score

A reputation score was calculated from the weighted number of recommendations and the respective quality assessments from peers. From January to February 2026, Statista conducted an online survey among hospital managers and medical professionals with expertise in maternity care. The survey was accessible to participants via Newsweek.com and invitations were also sent through email. This nationwide survey targeted neonatal

and perinatal healthcare professionals, as well as hospital managers, asking them to recommend and rate maternity hospitals in key areas such as perinatal care, operative obstetrics, patient education & counseling, accommodation & service, and nurse & midwife staffing.

a. Hospital recommendations from peers

Hospital recommendations provided by participants were weighted based on the order of recommended hospitals, and their professional experience. The reputation score for each hospital was determined by the total number of weighted recommendations received.

The hospital with the highest number of weighted recommendations received a recommendation score of 100%. All other hospitals received a relative score based on the number of weighted recommendations (e.g., when hospital A received the most votes with 100, hospital B, with 80 votes, received a score of $\frac{80}{100} = 80\%$).

Recommendation scores from the 2025 survey period were additionally included with lower weight compared to those from 2026. These scores were included to reflect long-term reputation and reduce fluctuation over time.

b. Quality assessment

For each recommended maternity hospital, participants were asked to assess hospital quality on several dimensions using a linear scale from 1 ("Poor") to 10 ("Excellent"). These dimensions were as follows:

- Operative obstetrics
- Perinatal care
- Patient education & counseling
- Accommodation & service
- Nurse & midwife staffing

Quality assessments per hospital were averaged across all recommendations and weighted per dimension to produce the participant-reported quality score.

2.4 Scoring model

The scoring model is based on the hospital quality metrics score, the patient experience score, and reputation score. Maternity hospitals were categorized based on data





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thresholds. To be included in the ranking, hospitals were required to meet predefined percentile thresholds for all pillars.

To be awarded five ribbons, hospitals were required to score in the 80th percentile or higher in all three data pillars. To be awarded four ribbons, hospitals were required to score in the 70th percentile or higher in all three data pillars.

Ribbons were awarded based on overall performance compared to all three percentile thresholds. I.e., to be awarded five ribbons, hospitals' scores were required to be above the five-ribbon threshold for hospital quality metrics, patient experience, and reputation score. A hospital with two scores above the five-ribbon threshold and one above the four-ribbon threshold would be awarded four ribbons. An award of four ribbons therefore represents very good performance across all evaluated criteria, and an award of five ribbons represents outstanding performance across all evaluated criteria.

As a result, the 461 best maternity hospitals in the US were awarded.

Ribbons	Hospital	City	State
	AdventHealth Orlando	Orlando	Florida
	Advocate Good Samaritan Hospital	Downers Grove	Illinois
	Ascension St. Vincent Carmel	Carmel	Indiana
	Banner Gateway Medical Center	Gilbert	Arizona
	Baptist St Anthony's Hospital	Amarillo	Texas

3 Disclaimer

The rankings are comprised exclusively of hospitals that are eligible regarding the scope described in this document. A mention in the ranking is a positive recognition based on peer recommendations and publicly available data sources at the time. The ranking is the result of an elaborate process which, due to the interval of data collection and analysis, is a reflection of the last calendar year. Furthermore, events preceding or following the period 02/26/2025-02/26/2026 and/or pertaining to individual persons affiliated/associated to the facilities were not included in the metrics. As such, the results of this ranking should not be used as the sole source of information for future deliberations. The information provided in this ranking should be considered in conjunction with other available information about hospitals or, if possible, accompanied by a visit to a facility. Due to the focus on uncomplicated pregnancies, no conclusions towards high-risk pregnancies and specialized obstetrics care pertaining to these situations can be drawn from this ranking. Please note that data are subject to change and may be affected by continuing differences among states in abortion and child-birth complications. The quality of hospitals that are not included in the rankings is not disputed.

4 Literature

Baby-Friendly USA, Inc. 2026. <https://babyfriendlyusa.org/>.

HCAHPS. 2026. <https://hcahpsonline.org/en/>.

Health Resources & Services Administration. 2026. <https://www.hrsa.gov/>.

Joint Commission International. 2026. <https://www.jointcommission.org/en/certification>.

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. 2026. <https://data.cms.gov/>.

The Leapfrog Group. 2026. <https://ratings.leapfroggroup.org/>.

World Health Organization. n.d. *Prioritizing quality of care in maternal health*. Accessed January 2026.

5 Appendices

Appendix 1. Hospital quality indicators from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) dataset.

Maternal Health	
ePC-02 ²	The rate of nulliparous women with a term, singleton baby in a vertex position delivered by C-section birth
ePC-07a	Rate of any serious complications for mothers during delivery (per 10,000 deliveries)
PC-05	Percentage of newborns that were exclusively fed breastmilk during the entire hospitalization
SM-7	Hospitals participation in a Statewide or National Perinatal Quality Improvement Collaborative Initiative / Maternal morbidity structural measure "Birthing-friendly designation"
Healthcare Associated Infections	
HAI-5	Methicillin-resistant <i>Staphylococcus aureus</i> (MRSA) blood laboratory-identified events (bloodstream infections)
HAI-6	<i>Clostridium difficile</i> (C.diff.) laboratory identified events (intestinal infections)
Timely and Effective Care	
SEP-1	Compliance with Severe Sepsis and Septic Shock early management
IMM-3	Healthcare workers given influenza vaccination

² Due to data overlap, ePC-02 was not included in the CMS dataset for hospitals where the equivalent question "Csection_Results" was available in the Leapfrog dataset.

Appendix 2. Hospital quality indicators from the Leapfrog dataset.

Patient rights and ethics	
HealthEquity_Results	Overall Score: Health Care Equity
InformedConsent_Results	Overall Score: Informed Consent
Medication safety	
CPOE_Results	Overall Score: Computerized Physician Order Entry
BCMA_Results	Overall Score: Barcode Medication Administration
MedRec_Results	Overall Score: Medication Reconciliation
Physician and nurse staffing	
Adult_IPS_Results	Overall Score: Adult ICU Physician Staffing
NurseTotalHours_Results	Overall Score: Total Nursing Care Hours per Patient Day
NurseRNHours_Results	Overall Score: RN Hours per Patient Day
NurseBSN_Results	Overall Score: Percentage of RNs who are BSN-Prepared
Patient safety practices	
SP1_Results	Overall Score: Leapfrog NQF Safe Practice #1
SP2_Results	Overall Score: Leapfrog NQF Safe Practice #2
HH_Results	Overall Score: Hand Hygiene
Managing serious errors	
NeverEvents_Results	Overall Score: Never Events
Outpatient procedures	
SafeCheckOut_Results	Overall Score: Safe Surgery Checklist for Adult and Pediatric Outpatient Procedures
MedAllergy_Results	Overall Score: Medication Safety for Outpatient Procedures
Maternity care	
Csection_Results	Overall Score: NTSV Cesarean Section
Episiotomy_Results	Overall Score: Episiotomy
Bilirubin_Results	Overall Score: Newborn Bilirubin Screening Prior to Discharge
DVTPrevention_Results	Overall Score: Appropriate DVT Prophylaxis in Women Undergoing Cesarean Delivery

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HighRiskDelivery_Quality	Overall Score: High-Risk Delivery
Maternity services	
Mat_Midwives	Certified nurse-midwives for delivery
Mat_Doulas	Doulas for labor and delivery
Mat_Lactation	Breastfeeding/lactation services
Mat_TubalLigation	Postpartum tubal ligation during labor/delivery admission
NICU_Operate	Neonatal intensive care unit

Appendix 3. Patient satisfaction indicators from the Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS) dataset.

HCAHPS Composite Measures³	Questions
Communication with Nurses	1, 2, 3
Communication with Doctors	5, 6, 7
Responsiveness of Hospital Staff	4, 11
Communication about Medicines	13, 14
Discharge Information	16, 17
Care Transition	20, 21, 22
HCAHPS Individual Items	Questions
Cleanliness of Hospital Environment	8
Quietness of Hospital Environment	9
HCAHPS Global Items	Questions
Hospital Rating	18
Recommend the Hospital	19

³ “Responsiveness of Hospital Staff” and “Care Transition” were not reported in the February 2026 release. For data continuity, these measures were included in the overall Patient Satisfaction scores, using the November 2025 data release.