

Hospital

A hospital is a health [care institution](#) providing patient treatment with specialized staff and equipment.

The best-known type of hospital is the general hospital, which has an emergency department.

A district hospital typically is the major healthcare facility in its region, with large numbers of beds for intensive care and long-term care.

Specialised hospitals include trauma centres, rehabilitation hospitals, children's hospitals, seniors' (geriatric) hospitals, and hospitals for dealing with specific medical needs such as psychiatric problems (see [psychiatric hospital](#)), certain disease categories. Specialised hospitals can help reduce health care costs compared to general hospitals.

A teaching hospital combines assistance to people with teaching to medical students and nurses. The medical facility smaller than a hospital is generally called a clinic. Hospitals have a range of departments (e.g., surgery, and urgent care) and specialist units such as cardiology. Some hospitals will have outpatient departments and some will have chronic treatment units. Common support units include a pharmacy, pathology, and radiology.

Classification

Hospital classification systems vary by country, but they generally categorize hospitals based on the range and complexity of services they provide.

1. Level 1 (Primary or [General Hospital](#))

Purpose: Basic healthcare services.

Services:

General medicine (treating common illnesses and minor injuries).

Basic emergency care.

Outpatient services.

Maternity care (for uncomplicated births).

Capabilities:

Limited diagnostic and treatment resources.

Generally does not handle complex surgeries or specialized care.

Example: A community hospital or a small district hospital.

2. Level 2 (Regional or Secondary Hospital)

Purpose: Specialized services for a larger population in a specific region.

Services:

Specialized care (e.g., neurosurgery, cardiology, orthopedic surgery).

Emergency care for moderate to severe cases.

Intensive care units (ICUs).

Surgical services.

Capabilities:

More advanced medical diagnostics and treatments than Level 1.

Can manage more complex cases but may refer the most critical or complex patients to Level 3 hospitals.

Example: A regional hospital serving a city or a large town, typically with specialists available.

3. Level 3 (Tertiary or Teaching Hospital)

Purpose: Highly specialized care for complex conditions and critical cases.

Services:

Advanced medical treatments, surgeries, and highly specialized services.

Complex surgeries (e.g., organ transplants, neurosurgery).

Research and teaching (medical students and residents).

Advanced diagnostic tools (e.g., high-end MRI, specialized laboratories).

Capabilities:

Typically includes large ICUs, trauma centers, and a wide range of specialists.

Refers to patients from Level 1 and Level 2 hospitals for advanced care.

Example: University-affiliated hospitals or large city hospitals with advanced medical technologies.

4. Level 4 (Quaternary Hospital)

Purpose: The highest level of specialized care.

Services:

Extremely rare or complex medical treatments.

Cutting-edge research and experimental therapies.

Capabilities:

Facilities for clinical trials, specialized surgeries, and treatments are not available at other hospitals.

Example: Internationally recognized research hospitals or medical centers specializing in rare diseases or experimental treatments.

Summary of Levels:

Level 1: Basic care, general medicine, preventive health, emergency care for minor issues.

Level 2: More specialized care, some surgeries, and emergency care for moderate cases.

Level 3: Advanced specialized services, complex surgeries, research, and education.

Level 4: Cutting-edge care and research for rare or highly complex conditions.

Hospital classifications help ensure that patients are referred to the appropriate facility based on the complexity of their medical needs. Each level plays a crucial role in the healthcare system, contributing to the overall care and management of public health.

Types

[Level 1 hospital](#)

[Level 2 hospital](#)

[Level 3 hospital](#)

[Private hospital.](#)

[Tertiary teaching hospital](#)

[Nonteaching hospital.](#)

[Neurosurgery hospitals](#)

[Palliative care center](#)

[Safety Net Hospital.](#)

Hospital-acquired [infection](#) (HAI) — also known as [nosocomial infection](#) — is an infection whose development is favored by a [hospital](#) environment, such as one acquired by a patient during a hospital visit or one developing among hospital staff.

Hospital contamination

[Hospital contamination](#)

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