



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Virginia Mason Ranks 32nd in Gastroenterology in U.S. News & World Report's 2010-11 Best Hospitals

SEATTLE – (July 15, 2010) – Virginia Mason Medical Center (VM) is one of the top 50 hospitals in the nation for gastroenterology, ranking 32nd in the U.S. News & World Report's 2010-11 Best Hospitals, and will be featured in the August print issue of U.S. News, available on newsstands July 27. Virginia Mason is one of six hospitals on the West Coast included in the elite 2010-11 Gastroenterology ranking, and the only Washington state hospital to make this specialty listing.

"We're honored to receive this recognition of our Gastroenterology team and believe this represents the phenomenal work that goes into delivering the highest quality care for our patients," said Richard Kozarek, MD, executive director of the Digestive Disease Institute at Virginia Mason. "The patient is at the heart of everything we do. Our multidisciplinary digestive disease team is passionate about offering the best treatments and is focused on successful outcomes."

Virginia Mason offers a wide range of diagnostic and therapeutic gastroenterologic services, and has received worldwide attention because of excellent survival results for colon, esophageal and pancreatic cancer patients. Virginia Mason provides expertise in advanced endoscopic techniques, such as early destruction of cancer cells in high-risk patients, minimally invasive treatments for unresectable biliary cancers and innovative hybrid procedures using endoscopic and laparoscopic methods. The digestive disease team is engaged in a range of clinical trials and uses a variety of investigational medications and procedures to treat severe acid reflux, acute and chronic pancreatitis, hepatitis B and C, fatty liver, primary sclerosing cholangitis, inflammatory bowel disease and gut-motility disorders.

"When the stakes are high, you want the best care you can get for yourself or someone close to you," said Health Rankings Editor Avery Comarow. "These hospitals are accustomed to seeing the sickest patients day in and day out."

Best Hospitals 2010-11 includes rankings of 152 medical centers nationwide in 16 specialties, including cancer, diabetes and endocrinology, ear, nose, and throat, gastroenterology, geriatrics, gynecology, heart and heart surgery, kidney disorders, neurology and neurosurgery, ophthalmology, orthopedics, psychiatry, pulmonology, rehabilitation, rheumatology, and urology. Full data is available online for another 1,740 hospitals that qualified for ranking but did not score high enough to be ranked.

The rankings in 12 of the 16 specialties were driven by hard data such as death rates, procedure volume, and balance of nurses and patients. In the four remaining specialties—ophthalmology, psychiatry, rehabilitation, and rheumatology—hospitals were ranked on reputation alone.

To be considered in any of the 12 data-driven specialties, a hospital first had to meet at least one of four criteria: It had to be a teaching hospital, or be affiliated with a medical school, or have at least 200 beds, or have 100 or more beds and the availability of four or more types of medical technology considered important in a high-quality medical facility, such as a PET/CT scanner and certain precision radiation therapies.

Next, the hospitals had to meet a volume requirement, individually calculated for each specialty. The required volume was the number of Medicare inpatients from 2006 to 2008 who had various specified procedures and conditions in the specialty. A hospital that fell short could still qualify if it had been nominated by at least one physician in any of the *U.S. News Best Hospitals* reputational surveys conducted in 2008, 2009 and 2010. Visit usnews.com/besthospitals for complete listings.

About Virginia Mason Medical Center

Virginia Mason Medical Center, founded in 1920, is a non-profit comprehensive regional health care system in Seattle that combines a primary and specialty care group practice of more than 440 physicians with a 336-bed acute-care hospital. Virginia Mason operates a network of clinics throughout the Puget Sound area; manages Bailey-Boushay House, a nursing residence and Chronic Care Management program for people living with HIV and AIDS; and operates Benaroya Research Institute at Virginia Mason, internationally recognized in autoimmune disease research. Virginia Mason is known for applying manufacturing principles to health care to improve quality and patient safety. For more information, visit VirginiaMason.org or [Facebook/VMcares](https://www.facebook.com/VMcares) or follow @VirginiaMason on Twitter.

For media inquiries, contact:

Alisha Mark, (206) 341-1509

#