

# Inpatient? Outpatient? What's the Difference?



**Inpatient care** is done in a hospital where you will stay overnight at least one night.



**Outpatient care** takes place in a hospital or a freestanding surgery center. Afterward you are released to recuperate at home.

## What are some of the other differences?

### Inpatient Care

- › Usually a more invasive procedure such as surgery that involves cutting into the body.
- › Total hip or knee replacement, heart bypass surgery, and prostate cancer surgery, are just a few examples.

### Outpatient Care

- › Can include surgery, but it is sometimes less or minimally invasive and requiring a smaller incision.
- › Also includes diagnostic tests such as scans, mammography or other screenings.
- › MRIs, CTs, laparoscopic hernia surgery, and cataract surgery, are just a few examples.

**Average charge** can vary for inpatient and outpatient care.

Here's how it did for one particular procedure, cystoscopy, a procedure of the bladder:

› **Average Inpatient Cost: \$22,673**

› **Average Outpatient Cost: \$11,704**

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## Two Types of Care: Two Reports

Because inpatient and outpatient care are different, The Alliance® has created two reports to help you learn more about how these types of care vary.

- › **QualityCounts® Outpatient Procedures and Tests Report** provides cost information for a number of outpatient procedures and tests at facilities that belong to The Alliance network.
- › **QualityCounts® Inpatient Hospital Report** provides quality and cost information for a number of inpatient procedures at hospitals that belong to The Alliance network.

Both reports include definitions of procedures and questions to ask before scheduling one. You may be surprised when you read the reports at how cost and/or quality vary from provider to provider for the same procedure. We encourage you to review these reports before you schedule an inpatient or outpatient procedure.

**To access the reports**, visit [www.the-alliance.org](http://www.the-alliance.org) and click on the **QualityCounts®** logo. You'll be asked to log in. You can also connect to the **QualityCounts** reports as you are looking for a doctor through Find A Doctor at [www.the-alliance.org/find\\_doctor](http://www.the-alliance.org/find_doctor)



Sources: *Accounting for the Cost of U.S. Health Care: A New Look at Why Americans Spend More*, McKinsey & Company; CY 2010 Dates of Service Alliance claims data