

# Health

“Baylor Scott & White has been assertive in helping me attack this cancer.”

**Sam Douglass**

sought treatment for his chronic heartburn, and it turned out to be much more  
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**WHEN YOU SHOULD WORRY ABOUT YOUR MEMORY LOSS**  
5 signs it's time to see a doctor for dementia  
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# The Hidden Risks of NSAIDs

Many of us rely on non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) to relieve pain or manage fevers—some of us even take them daily. But new research suggests routinely taking these medications might be risky.

According to a recent study published in *The BMJ* (formerly the *British Medical Journal*), commonly used NSAIDs, including over-the-counter ibuprofen and naproxen as well as prescription diclofenac and celecoxib, are associated with a raised risk for heart attack. The study showed that people using NSAIDs increased their overall risk of heart attack from 20 to 50 percent, with those taking higher doses at the greatest risk.

So, should you stop taking these medications? If you're healthy with few risk factors for heart attack, experts say no. "For many individuals, the occasional use of NSAIDs is still reasonable and adds very little to their

underlying risk for heart attack," says Melody Sherwood, MD, a cardiologist on the medical staff at Baylor University Medical Center at Dallas.

"However," she says, "for individuals with multiple risk factors or known heart disease, it's a good idea to talk to your doctor and consider alternative medications for pain relief, such as acetaminophen."

## TALK TO YOUR DOCTOR

Not sure whether you should be taking NSAIDs? It's a good idea to review all of your over-the-counter medications and supplements with your primary care physician. If you don't have a provider yet, find one by visiting [FindDrRight.com](http://FindDrRight.com) today.

## New Hope for Acid Reflux, Swallowing Difficulties

The Center for Esophageal Diseases and the Center for Esophageal Research at Baylor University Medical Center at Dallas are working together to improve care for those with acid reflux, swallowing difficulties and other esophageal disorders. Both centers opened in January.

Clinicians and researchers there are investigating esophageal conditions and collaborating to implement that knowledge directly through patient care. The effort is funded by the National Institutes of Health and Baylor Scott & White Research Institute.

"What's most exciting about this program is the collaboration between a productive lab and a patient-oriented clinical care team," says Vani Konda, MD, director of clinical operations at the Center for Esophageal Diseases. "It allows us to really explore how we can better the lives of patients living with esophageal diseases."

**MORE**

**Advancing Medicine**  
Baylor Scott & White Research Institute is pioneering the future of medicine through research. Visit [BSWHealth.com/Research](http://BSWHealth.com/Research) for details on initiatives in North and Central Texas.

Baylor University Medical Center at Dallas, 3500 Gaston Ave., Dallas, TX 75246. Patient Information: 214.820.0111. Volunteer Opportunities: 214.820.2441. Giving Opportunities/Baylor Health Care System Foundation: 214.820.3136. Visit [BSWHealth.com](http://BSWHealth.com) or call 1.800.4BAYLOR (1.800.422.9567) for information about Baylor University Medical Center at Dallas services, upcoming events, physician referrals, career opportunities and more.

Baylor Scott & White Health Mission: Baylor Scott & White Health exists to serve all people by providing personalized health and wellness through exemplary care, education and research as a Christian ministry of healing.

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**BAYLOR**  
University Medical Center  
at Dallas

Part of  BaylorScott&White HEALTH

# Baylor Scott & White Health and the Dallas Cowboys Team Up



Set to open in spring 2018, Baylor Scott & White Sports Therapy & Research (ST&R) at The Star in Frisco will feature many health care services centered on sports medicine, research and performance for people of all ages and abilities. Here are some highlights of the 300,000-square-foot campus, a collaboration with the Dallas Cowboys:

**1 Sports performance.** The ST&R will offer Fusionetics®, an evidence-based program designed to improve functional movement and training, prevent injuries and speed up recovery.

**2 Advanced imaging.** The imaging center will serve all patients, including Dallas Cowboys football players, and will feature an advanced MRI unit, plus multislice CT, ultrasound with 3-D applications, digital X-ray and bone density scanning.

**3 Orthopedic care.** “People who want a healthy and safer athletic or active lifestyle deserve advanced orthopedic care,” says Brody Flanagan, MD, an orthopedic shoulder surgeon on the medical staff at Baylor University Medical Center at Dallas and Baylor Scott & White Medical Center – Frisco. At the ST&R, physicians on the medical staff, including family practice and orthopedic surgery, will focus on the sports medicine needs of athletes and nonathletes alike.



## Solutions for Urological Problems

If you’ve ever had a burning sensation while urinating or leaked urine when you sneezed, you’re not alone. These and other urological problems are common among women, and many people simply live with it because they’re not comfortable talking about it or they don’t know that help is available.

Know this! Urologists and urogynecologists on the medical staff at Baylor Scott & White are committed to caring for you, offering evaluation, consultation and treatment of all kinds of conditions, including:

- ▶ Urinary tract infections
- ▶ Urinary incontinence
- ▶ Painful bladder syndrome
- ▶ Kidney and bladder stones

## HAVE A LOOK INSIDE THE ST&R

Learn more about the innovative programs and services that will make Baylor Scott & White Sports Therapy & Research at The Star the first facility of its kind. Go to [BSWHealth.com/Star](http://BSWHealth.com/Star) for updates.

**20%** People ages 55 to 74 who have a history of heavy smoking are 20 percent less likely to die from lung cancer if they’re screened with a low-dose CT scan compared with a standard chest X-ray, according to a study sponsored by the National Cancer Institute. **Baylor Scott & White Health offers screenings in North and Central Texas for those at high risk of lung cancer.** Ask a doctor about your eligibility for a low-dose CT scan.

**MORE**

### Need Help?

The health care teams at Baylor Scott & White provide the comprehensive services you need as a woman. Visit [BSWHealth.com/Women](http://BSWHealth.com/Women) for details and to find a location near you.

# Weathering Arthritis Pain

The elements could be making your joints ache. Here's what you can do about it



➔ If you have arthritis, your local forecast may tell you more than just the temperatures for the week. It could also provide insight into how bad your symptoms might be.

“It sounds odd, but certain weather conditions really can cause some people to experience an increase or decrease in their symptoms,” says Alan Jones, MD, chief of orthopedic surgery at Baylor University Medical Center at Dallas.

Here are the types of weather that could be affecting you—and how you can get relief.

## WATCH THE WEATHER

Barometric pressure—the weight of the air around us—often drops significantly before a cold front or storm moves in. “Many people report worsening arthritis symptoms when this occurs,” Dr. Jones explains. This may include increased joint pain, stiffness or swelling, and decreased range of motion. “Experts aren’t sure exactly why this happens,” he adds, “but it seems to be a real phenomenon.” On the other hand, some people notice more pain when the barometric pressure increases.

Excessively cold or hot weather also can worsen symptoms, Dr. Jones says. “Many people report an increase in joint pain when there are significant, sudden changes in temperature in either direction,” he says.

Although no two people with arthritis experience weather changes exactly the same, Dr.

Jones says one thing does seem to be consistent: “Whatever type of weather worsens symptoms for an individual, that usually seems to be consistent over the course of the disease.”

## MANAGE THE PAIN

The next time the weather starts giving your joints grief, try these tips for relief from Dr. Jones:

**Warm up.** If your symptoms worsen with cold weather, keep your home well-heated and heat up your car before driving to help minimize symptoms.

**Cool down.** “If high temperatures bother your joints,” Dr. Jones says, “use an ice pack to minimize inflammation and ease your symptoms on hot days.”

**Stop the swelling.** Wear compression stockings or gloves to help minimize swelling when the barometric pressure shifts.

**Move more.** Walk or perform other low-impact indoor activities to circulate synovial fluid through the joints and reduce stiffness and pain.

**Adjust accordingly.** “Pay attention to your body and learn what specific weather changes bother your joints the most,” Dr. Jones says. “Then check your local forecast daily and adjust your medications and activities accordingly.”

## NATIONALLY ACCLAIMED CARE

Baylor University Medical Center is rated high performing nationally in orthopedic care by *U.S. News & World Report*. Go to [BSWHealth.com/DallasOrtho](https://www.bswhealth.com/DallasOrtho) to learn about the comprehensive services available near you.

# Destined for Diabetes?

Take this quiz to determine your risk

→ TYPE 2 DIABETES GETS a lot of attention, and it's easy to see why. More than 29 million Americans have it—their bodies do not use insulin properly, leading to high blood glucose (sugar) and the possibility of significant health problems. And 86 million have elevated blood glucose levels that put them at risk for the disease. Could you be one of them? Take this quiz to find out.

1. Are you older than 45? Yes  No

2. Are you overweight? Yes  No

3. Do you have a family history of diabetes?  
Yes  No

4. Do you have high blood pressure, low HDL ("good") cholesterol or high triglycerides?  
Yes  No

5. Are you generally inactive?  
Yes  No

## LET'S SEE HOW YOU DID

The more questions you answered "yes," the higher your risk for type 2 diabetes. Here's why.

1. The risk of developing type 2 diabetes increases as you get older. "The incidence peaks in 65- to 74-year-olds," says Lydia Best, MD, medical director of Baylor Scott & White Health and Wellness Center in Dallas. "The unfortunate fact is that diabetes among the youngest age group more than doubled over the past 30 years."

2. Excess weight is the strongest predictor of diabetes. Nearly 90 percent of people with type 2 diabetes are overweight or obese. But there is good news. "It has been well established that a modest 7 percent reduction in weight cuts the five-year progression to diabetes by over 50 percent," Dr. Best says. For a 175-pound person, that's about 12 pounds.

3. Most people with type 2 diabetes have at least one immediate family member with the disease. Race and ethnicity are also factors. "The prevalence of the disease is highest among Native Americans and African-Americans," Dr. Best says. "Hispanic-Americans and Asian-Americans are also at increased risk."

4. About 4 in 10 people who have high blood pressure have diabetes, too. Diabetes also lowers good cholesterol and raises bad, so if your levels have changed, ask for a blood glucose test. Further, if your levels of triglycerides (the amount of fat in your blood) are high, you're more likely to have high glucose levels as well.

5. An inactive lifestyle, specifically sitting for long periods, is associated with a 91 percent increase in risk of developing type 2 diabetes, according to a study in the *Annals of Internal Medicine*. The American Diabetes Association recommends getting up and walking at least every 90 minutes.

MORE

## Managing Diabetes Better, Together

The Ruth Collins Diabetes Center at Baylor University Medical Center is recognized nationally for diabetes services. Visit [BSWHealth.com/DallasDiabetes](http://BSWHealth.com/DallasDiabetes) to learn more.

Sam Douglass with his wife, Joanne



# Life Changing

**When his heartburn didn't seem right, Sam Douglass lobbied for early screening—and it uncovered a cancer in time to be treated**

➔ **SAM DOUGLASS MAKES A LIVING HELPING PEOPLE**, traveling the world to start churches and coaching individuals through life changes. Earlier this year, he would need to rely on others to navigate a life change of his own.

The 67-year-old from Rockwall, Texas, had heartburn for years, and his primary care doctor suggested antacids, saying a little heartburn was normal at his age. Douglass knew something wasn't right. "I said, 'The reflux is pretty serious. This is more than usual.'"

Already scheduled for a routine colonoscopy, Douglass urged his doctor to also check for the cause of his heartburn. The additional test, an upper endoscopy—where a small, flexible instrument is used to examine the esophagus and stomach—may have saved his life.

The endoscopy revealed Barrett's esophagus with dysplasia, which are precancerous cells. Douglass was referred to the Center for Esophageal Diseases at Baylor University Medical Center at Dallas. There, an

“My doctors have been thorough and forthright with me. I’ve got an awesome team.”

—Sam Douglass

endoscopy specialist removed a small area of the esophagus to both diagnose the cancer and eliminate the tumor.

“My doctors have been thorough and forthright with me,” Douglass says. “When needed, they were able to explain things so I could get it. I’ve got an awesome team.”

Because the cancerous tissue was discovered early and removed before the cancer spread, Douglass avoided open surgery to remove part or all of the esophagus. When it comes to this kind of cancer, however, not everyone has such encouraging results.

“Esophageal cancer is often diagnosed at late stages when it is really too late to cure people,” says Vani Konda, MD, director of clinical operations at the Center for Esophageal Diseases. “When we can discover it early, we have the opportunity to make a true difference.”

## WHAT HEARTBURN COULD MEAN

Not all heartburn leads to cancer, of course. Some heartburn is normal, and you shouldn’t worry if it happens occasionally. Talk to a doctor, though, if your discomfort is a daily development or can’t be controlled, Dr. Konda says.

Often, chronic heartburn is a sign of gastroesophageal reflux disease, or GERD, an illness that occurs when acid backs out of the stomach, irritating the lining of the esophagus. Heartburn can indicate other issues, too, so it’s important to work with a health care provider.

“A doctor should be careful to find out what people are feeling and then separately why they are feeling that way,” Dr. Konda says. “Is it due to reflux, or is it something else?”

For example, an allergic condition in the esophagus called eosinophilic esophagitis can seem like reflux, Dr. Konda says.

“Another thing that could mimic reflux is a motor disorder of the esophagus called achalasia,” she says. “Achalasia is most often associated with trouble swallowing, but sometimes people attribute what they are feeling to heartburn.”

## WHEN TO SEEK TREATMENT

Dr. Konda says people experiencing heartburn regularly should talk to their doctors, even if they believe they are managing their symptoms with over-the-counter medications.

“Chronic reflux can lead to chronic injury and chronic inflammation,” she says, “and that is a setup for a change in the lining in the esophagus called Barrett’s esophagus.”

Most cases of heartburn can be treated with diet and lifestyle modification and occasional medications. A small number of people have conditions that call for surgery, Dr. Konda says.

Usually, you can identify and avoid foods that trigger heartburn, refrain from eating at least three hours before bedtime, and sleep with your head and shoulders raised 3 to 6 inches.

Trouble swallowing, weight loss, vomiting, or blood in vomit or stool warrants immediate evaluation.

## SPREADING THE WORD

For the foreseeable future, Douglass will undergo regular treatments designed to regrow healthy tissue in his esophagus. One day, he hopes to be declared cancer-free. In the meantime, he is advocating for more vigilant screening—and also praising his care team at Baylor Scott & White Health.

“I was looking for and praying for a dream team, and Baylor Scott & White is my dream team,” Douglass says. “They have been assertive in helping me attack this cancer.”

## COOL HEARTBURN WITHOUT MEDICATION

For 1 in 5 American adults, heartburn is a weekly occurrence. But with medications to treat the cause—gastroesophageal reflux disease, or GERD—being linked to negative side effects, many people are exploring alternatives. If you experience chronic heartburn, consider these tips from Stuart Spechler, MD, chief of gastroenterology at Baylor University Medical Center at Dallas:

**Eat smaller meals.** “Overeating can trigger reflexes that can cause heartburn,” Dr. Spechler says.

**Avoid fatty foods and chocolate.** “These foods weaken the lower esophageal sphincter, making it more likely that reflux [acid backing out of the stomach] will occur,” he says.

**Take an antacid or chew gum.** “Antacids neutralize the acid that causes heartburn, while chewing gum stimulates the secretion of saliva, which can do the same thing,” Dr. Spechler says.

**Sleep on an incline.** Elevating the head of your bed 4 to 6 inches can prevent reflux at night.

“If these tips don’t help, or if you’re experiencing difficulty swallowing, recurrent vomiting, black or bloody stools or weight loss, talk to your doctor,” Dr. Spechler says. “These can indicate something more serious.”

**MORE**

## In Distress?

At Baylor University Medical Center, experts not only diagnose and treat digestive conditions, but they also help people make healthy changes that can improve their quality of life. Visit [BSWHealth.com/DallasDigestive](https://www.bswhealth.com/DallasDigestive) for an overview of services.



To stay mentally sharp as you age, get regular physical activity and maybe learn a new language—bonus for doing them at the same time!

# Memory Matters

**Your mind isn't what it used to be. Should you worry?**

➔ *PASS THE PEAS, PLEASE, Jim ... Emma ... Rex ... Matt ... er, what's your name? Michael!*

If you've had to cycle through every name in your family—including the dog's!—before recalling the right one, or you've been losing your keys more frequently, you might be wondering whether the memory loss is normal. In short, yes, says M. Blake Freeman, MD, a neurologist on the medical staff at Baylor Scott & White Medical Center – Lakeway.

“Some degree of memory decline can often be seen with normal aging,” he says. “However, when memory difficulties exceed what is expected with normal aging, that may be a sign of mild cognitive impairment or even dementia.”

Dementia is the severe decline in cognitive, memory and reasoning skills that makes completing everyday tasks and caring for oneself difficult. Mild cognitive impairment, or MCI, is a condition that causes greater problems with memory than normal aging but isn't disruptive enough to be diagnosed as dementia, though about a third of people who have MCI go on to develop Alzheimer's disease within five years.

## WHEN THERE'S CAUSE FOR CONCERN

So how do you know what you're dealing with? The Alzheimer's Association outlines several telltale signs for distinguishing between normal age-related memory loss and dementia. Here are five:

**Memory loss is disrupting your daily life.** Forgetting a hair appointment is one thing, but frequently failing to remember important dates and repeatedly asking for the same information is not normal.

**You're unable to solve problems.** Don't beat yourself up for a mistake when splitting the bill at a restaurant. But seek help if you're unable to develop plans or follow a familiar recipe.

**You don't know the date.** It's natural to forget what day of the week it is, if you can figure it out later. It's not normal to forget what season or year it is.

**You can't locate misplaced items.** Everyone loses keys, phones and glasses from time to time. A sign of trouble, however, is not being able to retrace your steps to find them.

**You start avoiding social activities.** Our obligations at work, at home and with friends can wear us down sometimes. But if you find it difficult to follow the local sports team or remember how to play a favorite card game, that's a sign you should see a doctor.

If you're experiencing any of these situations, talk to your doctor about a memory assessment. And if friends or family comment on your forgetfulness, take heed.

"Especially in older individuals, when relatively new memory changes are noticed by family members or loved ones, that may be a sign of more serious problems," Dr. Freeman says.

The sooner you see a doctor, the better your chances for maintaining cognitive function and slowing the progression of dementia.



## WHAT YOU CAN DO ABOUT IT NOW

There is no surefire way to protect against age-related memory loss and dementia, Dr. Freeman says. "That said," he adds, "there is good consensus that staying mentally engaged and physically active can help maintain individual brain cells and help stimulate connections to help preserve cognitive function as we age."

The National Institute on Aging recommends the following steps to maintain mental sharpness into your golden years:

- ▶ Engage in regular physical activity.
- ▶ Eat a healthy diet. (What's good for the body is good for the brain.)
- ▶ Limit alcohol use.
- ▶ Get out of the house and be social.
- ▶ Pick up a hobby that requires thinking and problem-solving.

## ADVANCES IN ALZHEIMER'S TREATMENT

Although there is no cure for Alzheimer's disease, medications can help with cognitive and behavioral symptoms. "These medications are most effective in the early stages of Alzheimer's," explains Claudia R. Padilla, MD, medical director for research at the Baylor AT&T Memory Center at Baylor University Medical Center at Dallas. "Fortunately, new treatments are on the horizon."

Dr. Padilla shares two of the most promising:

**Monoclonal antibodies.** "This type of antibody may help lower the level of beta-amyloid in the brain. Beta-amyloid is the main component of plaques found in the brains of people with Alzheimer's," Dr. Padilla explains. "Findings from a preliminary trial with one type of monoclonal antibody documented removal of plaques and a slowed rate of cognitive decline."

**Enzyme inhibitors.** "This type of medication inhibits the ability of an enzyme called beta-secretase to make beta-amyloid," she says. "In some studies, it was found to reduce beta-amyloid levels in people with mild to moderate Alzheimer's."

New treatments are continually being explored, and these advancements are dependent on people who have the condition. "Participation in clinical trials is critical for discovering potential new treatments," Dr. Padilla says. Go to [BSWHealth.com/ClinicalTrials](https://www.bswhealth.com/ClinicalTrials) for information on clinical trials in Dallas and beyond.

**MORE**

## Dedicated Neurological Care

If you think a loved one has dementia, experts at the Baylor AT&T Memory Center at Baylor University Medical Center can provide an evaluation, a diagnosis and a care plan. Visit [BSWHealth.com/MemoryCenter](https://www.bswhealth.com/MemoryCenter) for details.



# In Pursuit of Pain Relief

Study on spinal disk degeneration could lead to better treatments for back problems

➔ Chances are good that you will experience low back pain, if you haven't already. In fact, about 8 in 10 adults do at some point in their lives. For many people, it's enough to be disabling.

Jason H. Huang, MD, chairman of the Department of Neurosurgery at Baylor Scott & White Health – Central Texas, knows this all too well.

“The neurosurgeons on our medical staffs do spinal surgeries every week,” he says, adding that current

treatment options for low back pain are often invasive and not always successful.

So, Dr. Huang set out to find a better option. He and Qiuqian Wu, PhD, developed a model that allowed them to study the mechanics of low back pain at the molecular level.

## EXPLORING ONE CAUSE OF PAIN

People experience low back pain for a number of reasons, including sprains and strains (when you lift something heavy or overstretch) and intervertebral disk degeneration (when the rubbery disks in between the bones of the spine deteriorate and lose their cushion). The intensity of pain ranges from dull and continual to sharp and sudden.

Dr. Huang's study, published this year in the *Journal of Neurosurgery: Spine*, looked at a gene called SMURF2 and its role in disk degeneration.

## MAKING PROGRESS

The results are promising. The study helps researchers better understand the molecular pathways that lead to disk degeneration so they can develop drugs to stop or even potentially reverse disk degeneration—and provide better treatments for low back pain.

“The goal is to develop a strategy that is less invasive than the current available treatments, such as spinal fusions,” Dr. Huang says. “And our model is the first step in the right direction.”

**MORE**

## The Guiding Light for What We Do

Baylor Scott & White focuses on medical breakthroughs that mean something to you—a more accurate diagnosis, a faster recovery or a more effective treatment. Visit [BSWHealth.com/Research](https://www.bswhealth.com/research) for details.

## ABOUT THE STUDY

### Ectopic Expression of SMURF2 and Acceleration of Age-Related Intervertebral Disk Degeneration

Researchers are studying the molecular mechanisms involved in the breakdown of the soft-tissue disks of the spine to seek out less invasive treatments for low back pain.

### Key Contributor

Baylor Scott & White Health



## RECIPE

### SLOW-COOKER TURKEY CHILI

Who says turkey has to be carved? This hearty meal, which features ground meat and two kinds of beans, is low in fat and high in protein and fiber.



→ Check out [BSWHealth.com/Recipe](http://BSWHealth.com/Recipe) for the ingredients, directions and nutrition information.

## QUIZ

### WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT SCOLIOSIS?

Scoliosis—a side-to-side curve in the spine—is most common in children, especially girls, but it also shows up in adults.



→ To learn more, go to [BSWHealth.com/ScoliosisQuiz](http://BSWHealth.com/ScoliosisQuiz) and answer some questions.



## ONLINE

### Quality Health Care in the Heart of Dallas

For more than 100 years, Baylor University Medical Center has exemplified quality in patient care, medical education, clinical research and community service.

→ Visit [BSWHealth.com/Dallas](http://BSWHealth.com/Dallas) to learn more about the specialties and services in your neighborhood.

## CALCULATOR

### FEEL THE (CALORIE) BURN

Exercise is a great way to lose weight because it burns off extra calories, but it can be tough to tell just how many calories. We've made it easy for you to find out.

→ Just enter your weight at [BSWHealth.com/CalorieBurnCalculator](http://BSWHealth.com/CalorieBurnCalculator) to see your burn rate for dozens of activities.



## VIDEO

### "IT FELT LIKE SOMEONE HAD JUST LAID ACROSS MY CHEST."

When Jamol Brocks experienced chest pain and nausea, his wife insisted he go to Baylor Scott & White. Doctors implanted a device to help with his life-threatening heart inflammation, and now he's back to exercising and spending time with family.

→ Visit [BSWHealth.com/MyStory](http://BSWHealth.com/MyStory) to watch him describe what happened.



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according to *U.S. News & World Report's* 2017-2018 ratings.

Caring for you is our highest honor. Baylor University Medical Center at Dallas is recognized in the latest “*Best Hospitals*” ratings as high-performing in seven specialties—  
**cancer, diabetes & endocrinology, geriatrics, nephrology, neurology  
& neurosurgery, orthopedics and pulmonology.**

Baylor University Medical Center at Dallas is also recognized as high-performing in eight common procedures or conditions. For you, these recognitions confirm our commitment to providing quality health care each day.

To find out more about our award-winning care, visit [BSWHealth.com/BestHospitals](http://BSWHealth.com/BestHospitals).

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