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8 Best Hospitals in Medellín – Quality Healthcare at Low Cost

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MAY 22, 2017 BY [JEFF](#)

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Medellín has eight of the best hospitals in all of Latin America, which positions the city as a hub for medical tourism. Colombia has been experiencing an increase in medical tourism, particularly in Medellín and Bogotá.

Foreigners have been slowly discovering the benefits of having surgeries in Colombia. Costs can be much lower, yet there are highly qualified and skilled surgeons in Colombia. Salaries of doctors in Colombia also can be a fraction of the salaries found in the U.S., though doctors are typically required to have similar education and skills.

This site has previously only looked at one of the best hospitals in Medellín, [Hospital F Tobón Uribe](#). Several readers asked us to cover more of the hospitals in Medellín. So in this article, we now look at the eight best hospitals in Medellín.

The above photo is of Clínica las Américas, by SajoR.

Medellín has 8 of the Best Hospitals in Latin America

A recent [study by América Economía](#) found that Medellín has 8 of the top 44 hospitals in Latin America. These eight best hospitals in Medellín with their Latin American rankings by América Economía are:

1. Hospital Pablo Tobón Uribe (#9)
2. Hospital Universitario de San Vicente Fundación (#16)
3. Clínica las Américas (#20)
4. Hospital General de Medellín (#29)
5. Clínica Universitaria Bolivariana (#33)
6. Clínica Medellín (#37)
7. Clínica El Rosario (#41)
8. Clínica Cardio Vid (#42)

Out of all the cities in Colombia and the rest of Latin America, only Bogotá has more hospitals on this best hospitals list. Bogotá has nine hospitals on the list. In fact, 48 percent of the hospitals on this list of the best hospitals in Latin America are found in Colombia.

The World Health Organization (WHO) ranks Colombia's health system as #22 out of countries it ranked. This is ahead of Germany (#25), Canada (#30), Australia (#32) and United States (#37). Furthermore, no countries in Latin America were ranked better than Colombia by WHO in terms of health systems.



Hospital Pablo Tobón Uribe, photo by SajoR

1. Hospital Pablo Tobón Uribe

[Hospital Pablo Tobón Uribe](#) is currently ranked the best hospital in Medellín. The private Catholic non-profit hospital is located in the Robledo neighborhood of Medellín. It was founded in 1970 and had 371 beds until a recent expansion reportedly increased this to 650 beds. In addition, it has an intensive care unit with over 70 beds.

Besides being a general hospital, this hospital also specializes in renal and cancer care, bariatric surgery, and pediatrics. The hospital is also a university hospital. Students re

training in medicine, nursing, nutrition, psychology and microbiology.

Pablo Tobón Uribe also has a special department that handles foreign patients including handling insurance and language and communications with medical practitioners in a home country. The hospital has several doctors that speak English as well as trained interpreters.

This hospital was [previously reviewed](#) on this site in 2014 by Larry, a patient.

Address: Calle 78 B # 69-240, Medellín



Hospital Universitario de San Vicente Fundación, photo by Yimicorrea

2. Hospital Universitario de San Vicente Fundación

[Hospital Universitario de San Vicente Fundación](#) is currently ranked the second-best hospital in Medellín. The private hospital is located on a campus in the Seville neighborhood of Medellín.

next to the Hospital metro station. It was founded in 1913 and currently has 662 beds operating rooms at this location. The beds in the hospital are typically over 90 percent It also has intensive care units that can handle 45 adults plus many additional children infants.

The hospital is one of the largest and most important hospitals in Colombia and Latin / treats over 25,000 patients per year and has over 200,000 medical appointments per y Furthermore, it handles over 16,000 surgeries per year.



The Infant Hospital at Universitario de San Vicente Fundación

The hospital has three specialty-centers: Cardiopulmonary and Peripheral Vascular Center, Digestive Diseases Center, and an Organ and Tissue Transplant Center. It also has a Infant Hospital that opened in 1961.

In 2011, San Vicente opened a new health complex in Rionegro near the international airport. The new complex has a cardiopulmonary and vascular system center, a digestive disease center, an oncology center and emergency center plus a transplant and tissue center. The hospital has 350 hospital beds of which 35 are for intensive care. A future planned expansion at this complex will add specialties for cancer, trauma, plastic surgery as well as 320 more beds.

Besides being a general hospital, San Vicente is very well known for transplants. The transplant group in the hospital performed the first bone marrow transplant in Latin America and the first trachea transplant in the world. The hospital also did the first kidney transplant, first liver transplant, first small intestine transplant, first esophagus transplant and first larynx transplant in Colombia (and second in the world).

San Vicente has done well over 4,000 transplants. Reportedly more than 50 percent of transplants in Colombia are done in Medellín and almost 90 percent of those are performed at San Vicente Fundación.

Address: Calle 64 # 51D-154, Medellín



Clínica las Américas, photo by SajoR

3. Clínica las Américas

[Clínica las Américas](#) is part of Grupo Empresarial Las Américas, which was organized by a group of health professionals who had the ideal of building the best comprehensive care center in the city.

The primary Clínica las Américas hospital center opened in 1993. It is located in the L barrio of the Belén neighborhood in Medellín, which is near the Enrique Olaya Herrera Medellín. I used to live within walking distance to this hospital. Recently Clínica las Ar opened a new clinic location in Loma del Escobero in Envigado.

Clínica las Américas currently has 340 beds and 16 operating rooms for general and surgery. Among specialists and associates the hospital has a portfolio of more than 50

professionals. It reportedly offers services in 77 different medical specialties and sub-s

Address: Diagonal 75B # 2A-80/140, Medellín



Hospital General de Medellín

4. Hospital General de Medellín

Hospital General de Medellín's founding dates back to 1942 when it had only 20 beds. hospital currently has over 440 beds and eight operating rooms.

The public hospital is backed by the Medellín government. It offers inpatient services in of specialties including cardiology, general surgery, plastic surgery, transplants, gynecology, obstetrics, internal medicine, pulmonology, neurology, neurosurgery, oncology, orthopedics, and pediatrics.

The hospital also provides adult critical care, pediatric, neonatal, obstetric and gynecology care as well as pediatric emergency services 24 hours a day.

Address: Carrera 48 # 32-102, Medellín



Clínica Universitaria Bolivariana

5. Clínica Universitaria Bolivariana

The Clínica Universitaria Bolivariana is part of the Pontificia Bolivariana University system. The hospital is part of the university's processes of medical teaching and research. The hospital is located in Robledo. And it reportedly has 187 beds and seven operating rooms.

In 2013, the hospital opened a new maternal child unit named "Nuestra Señora de la Candelaria"

The hospital offers services of surgery hospitalization, emergency care, intensive care outpatient, laboratory and imaging services as well as prevention programs. The hosp handles an average of over 4,500 births, 7,000 surgeries and 30,000 emergency cons annually.

Address: Carrera 72B # 78B-50, Robledo, Medellín



Clínica Medellín in El Poblado, photo by SajoR

6. Clínica Medellín

[Clínica Medellín](#) has three different hospitals in Medellín that are located in El Centro, Poblado and its newest facility located in Belén, which opened in early 2014. The private hospital was founded in October 1947 with the goal to establish a clinic in Medellín that is similar in several ways to the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota.

Clínica Medellín offers a wide range of medical services in several areas including anesthesiology, cardiology, cardiovascular surgery, thoracic surgery, general surgery, plastic surgery, dermatology, physical medicine, gynecology, internal medicine, intensive care medicine, critical care medicine, pulmonology, neurosurgery, ophthalmology, orthopedics, otolaryngology, pathology, pediatrics, radiology and urology.

Clínica Medellín also has an international patient office. This office satisfies the needs of patients and their families, who require advice before their arrival to the city, during the stay and after their departure from the hospital.

- Address El Centro: Calle 53 # 46 – 38
- Address El Poblado: Calle 7 # 39 – 290
- Address Belén: Carrera 65B # 30 – 95



Clínica El Rosario in El Poblado, photo courtesy of Clínica El Rosario

7. Clínica El Rosario

[Clínica El Rosario](#) was founded in 1955. The hospital is a private, non-profit institution. Its headquarters location is in El Centro. In November 2005, the hospital opened its second location in El Poblado near El Tesoro mall. Reportedly the hospital has a total of 223 beds and 12 operating rooms.

The hospital has a vision to be by 2020 a highly complex health institution, leader in comprehensive, safe, humanized care and a reference center nationally and internationally.

The hospital provides emergency 24-hour emergency services, general surgery services, orthopedic surgery, pediatrics, neurosurgery, cardiovascular surgery, intensive care, outpatient surgery, and many other services. It has specialist centers including a heart institute, coronary care unit, and comprehensive oncology unit.

Clínica El Rosario also has an international patient office similar to Clínica Medellín.

- Address El Centro: Carrera 41 # 62-5
- Address El Poblado: Carrera 20 # 2 sur-185



Clínica Cardio Vid

8. Clínica Cardio Vid

[Clínica Cardio Vid](#) was founded in August 1966. It claims to be a pioneering Latin Am heart and lung transplantation center. The hospital specializes in diagnosis, treatment emergencies of cardiovascular, thoracic, pulmonary and neurovascular conditions. The reportedly did the first heart transplant in Colombia in 1985.

The hospital is located in Robledo near the Clínica Universitaria Bolivariana and repor has 153 beds and over 120 doctors. It has a 165,904 square foot facility with plans for project to expand its facilities.

Address: Calle 78B # 75-21, Medellín.

Health Tourism in Colombia

According to WHO, Colombia has the best health system in Latin America, ranked #2 in the world. Colombia is also only three hours by plane from Miami and less than six hours from New York and Washington DC.

In Colombia, medical procedures can cost between 20-40 percent of the prices in the U.S. For example, a knee replacement surgery that may cost over \$40,000 in the U.S. may only cost about \$15,000 in Colombia.

Colombia is becoming a destination for health tourism for good reason. The country has a solid reputation for having the highest quality of health care in Latin America. Colombia has a history of medical innovation and achievement. For example, the pacemaker (external), the Hakim's valve and vaccine against Malaria were all invented in Colombia.

Around 40 percent of medical tourists seeking healthcare arrive through agreements with international health insurance companies (HMO's). For example, European insurance companies (mainly Dutch based) having coverage in the Caribbean, consider Colombia as a viable alternative for their patients to receive quality treatment at a lower cost and shorter wait times.

International patients in Colombia primarily come from the United States, Spain, Germany, Venezuela, the Caribbean and Canada.

Furthermore, recognizing the importance of English in health tourism, every effort is being made to promote bilingualism. Each of the best hospitals in Medellín have some staff that speak English. And several have offices to support international patients.

By the year 2032, the Colombian government has a goal to be a leader worldwide in health tourism with reportedly a revenue goal of over \$6 billion dollars.

The Bottom Line: Best Hospitals in Medellín

A number of publications have called Medellín one of the top foreign retirement locations including Businessweek, Huffington Post, International Living, Live & Invest Overseas News.

Good healthcare is very important for retirees and Medellín already has eight of the best hospitals in Latin America. If you live in Medellín it is possible to have access to world healthcare at a much lower cost than is found in hospitals in North America or Europe.

Health insurance is also relatively inexpensive in Colombia, which is a topic planned for an article on this site.

What experiences have readers had with the hospitals in Medellín?

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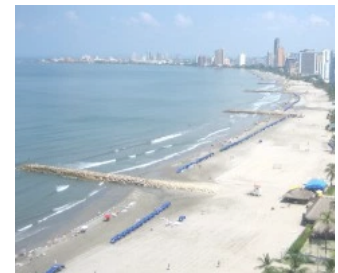
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About Jeff

Jeff first discovered Colombia back in 2006 and has traveled to all the major cities in Colombia. He is fortunate to have lived over seven years in Medellín. He is currently studying Spanish to become fluent.

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GREGORIO says:

[May 22, 2017 at 5:44 am](#)

Looking forward to your article on obtaining Colombian Health Insurance.

I'm 66 and have a Colombian Retirement Visa.

I'm currently eligible for MEDICARE in USA, but does me no good here in Colombia.

[Reply](#)



Edward says:

[May 22, 2017 at 9:20 am](#)

Jeff, thanks, this is a great article. I wasn't aware that Medellín has so many highly ranked hospitals. It's good to hear that Colombia has a better health system than in the US and costs are much lower. Healthcare in the US is becoming crazy expensive.

I heard recently that ambulances may not take you to the nearest hospital or the best hospital they get a commission from the hospital. Any truth to this? So perhaps it is best to take a taxi to a hospital.

[Reply](#)

Jeff says:

[May 22, 2017 at 9:54 am](#)

Hi Edward,

I recall seeing some news articles about this ambulance problem happening in Bogotá not sure if this is a problem in Medellín, as I haven't seen anything in the news. But I'm around.

[Reply](#)

Fred says:

[May 22, 2017 at 3:19 pm](#)

This maybe a long shot but does anyone know of any English speaking primary doctors or gastroenterologist who perform colonoscopies?

[Reply](#)

Harry says:

[May 22, 2017 at 4:34 pm](#)

While I appreciate the fact that Medellín has a number of leading hospitals and while I appreciate the thoroughness of Jeff's information, I wonder on what medication the guys were who ran Colombia's health care system ahead of Germany's or Canada's.

[Reply](#)



Jeff says:

[May 22, 2017 at 6:32 pm](#)

You can read a paper about the World Health Organization's (WHO's) methodology for ranking health systems of countries here: <http://www.who.int/healthinfo/paper30.pdf>.

The methodology looked at several goals. The first is improvement in the health of the population (both in terms of levels attained and distribution). The second is enhanced responsiveness of the health system to the legitimate expectations of the population. The third intrinsic goal is fairness in financing and financial risk protection. The aim is to ensure that poor households should not pay a higher share of their discretionary expenditure on health than richer households, and all households should be protected against catastrophic financial losses related to ill health.

WHO's rankings of health care systems are quoted everywhere.

[Reply](#)



Joe says:

[May 22, 2017 at 6:32 pm](#)

Sorry Jeff you lost me when you said the health system is better in Colombia than Australia Germany etc...

[Reply](#)



Jeff says:

[May 22, 2017 at 6:40 pm](#)

It's not my ranking. The ranking of country health systems quoted in the article is from World Health Organization, which is quoted many other places.

[Reply](#)



Daniel Uribe says:

[May 22, 2017 at 8:43 pm](#)

Now I do have to say I actually live in Medellín, I have also lived in the States and Canada...been to a doctor in all three countries and I personally have an a way better experience in Colombia...since I am employed here everything is covered...I'm actually my way to get gastric bypass surgery and everything is covered, I don't have to pay a dime...and surgeons in Colombia are world renowned...that is why a lot of foreigners come here to get surgeries done...I personally thank you Jeff for informing people of

[Reply](#)



Harry says:

[May 23, 2017 at 9:07 am](#)

Daniel:

your key word is "employed". and obviously with a good health plan from your employer, good for you! In Canada and Germany, it does not matter if you are employed, you are covered anyways (but we are off topic from Jeff's excellent article...)

[Reply](#)



geoffrey says:

[May 23, 2017 at 8:00 pm](#)

My only personal Medellín medical experience was at Clinica Las Americas. Although my was for a routine blood test I have to say that I was highly impressed with the very short wait time, the speedy results, the flabbergasting low cost and the confidence inspiring professionalism that the clinic exudes.

[Reply](#)

Joseph F Tana says:

[May 26, 2017 at 6:08 pm](#)

What are the monthly premiums for Health Insurance in Columbia?

[Reply](#)

Jeff says:

[May 26, 2017 at 9:08 pm](#)

Hi Joseph,

I plan to write about health insurance at a later date as there is much to research and details. Here's a brief overview:

EPS (Entidades Promotoras de Salud) is government health insurance available in Colombia to all residents with a "cedula". This is an option for people that are not eligible for private insurance such as due to age or pre-existing conditions. Monthly premium for individual for an EPS is 12.5% of the monthly gross income declared to the EPS. There are many EPS insurance providers but Sura is reportedly the best.

Private health insurance in Colombia is an option for people under the age of 60 and 62 with additional premium/requirements. Monthly premiums can be around \$125 US per month for a 40-year-old to about \$200 USD per month for a 60-year-old. Of course this varies by plan and options selected. Salud Sura private insurance has no deductible, copays of about \$10 USD for office visits and no cost for in-network hospital and no cost for diagnostic x-ray, CT, MRI.

There are many more details that will be covered in a future article on this site.

[Reply](#)

Rene Lavergne says:



[June 22, 2017 at 1:24 pm](#)

Jeff, EPS is not an option for people that are not eligible due to age. If you live for pension of the SS and do not have income from work in Colombia, you are not eligible. I tried SURA and Coomeva, both rejected us because of no income from work in Colombia. If anybody has an alternative please inform us that are not able to get it. Thank you

[Reply](#)



Me says:

[June 23, 2017 at 7:54 am](#)

Similar in my case, although with a student visa, about twenty years away from getting my pension still...

[Reply](#)



Joseph Doherty says:

[May 28, 2017 at 10:53 pm](#)

Hi Jeff I had surgery on my eye for glaucoma and it was great service and extremely professional and a tenth of the cost as in the USA I would recommend Clinica Oftalmologica medellin in el poblado for any type of eye care.

[Reply](#)

[Amir Simantov](#) says:



[May 29, 2017 at 12:47 pm](#)

Experience in emergency unit as I have had a good experience with the Poblado branch of ****Clínica Medellín****. I went to the emergency unit there about a month ago accompanied by my friend due to dengue fever, strong nausea.

Waiting time:

Although it felt very long to me as I was suffering the dengue symptoms, it took only about 15 minutes from my arriving until I have got the very treatment. In Israel, my home country, one has to wait hours until he gets the treatment. Well, I came as a private patient, I never did that before at home in Israel so maybe the comparison is unfair.

Money:

I had to pay upfront \$300,000 COP for the treatment. I have gotten back about \$90,000 COP upon leaving as the total cost was less than the upfront payment. I paid using my MasterCard and they paid me back with cash. They added a detailed invoice for any medicine and services they used and for each exam. Very organized and transparent.

Medical treatment:

This is the best part. I immediately been put in bed and checked by the doctor. The male nurse who took care of me was literally an angel (Javier) and was very patient with me, understanding and caring. They gave me some drug into my vein rapidly to relieve the nausea. They did X-rays and blood tests very fast and got the results in about an hour or so.

The place was clean, spotless.

*Bed was not comfortable, but hey, this is not a hotel.

Thanks Jeff for yet another important article!

[Reply](#)

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