

# Top DOCTORS

Featuring 200 Physicians in 19 Specialties



## Cardiology Check-up

### Five questions to ask a cardiovascular specialist:

Don't be embarrassed about probing your potential specialist's background, says cardiologist Robert Strumpf. "The ultimate banner over those questions is to be a good consumer. You want to get the best care you can get."

1. If the doctor has recommended a certain procedure, ask, "What's your experience? Have you encountered this problem a lot? What's the track record?"
2. Have you been trained specifically to perform this procedure?
3. Are you using the latest technology?
4. Is this the accepted treatment in the region?
5. Are there any alternatives, such as medicine or diet and lifestyle changes?

### Hot trends in cardiology:

With more Americans felled by heart disease than any other cause of death, cardiovascular medicine has benefited from a kind of economy of scale. The good news is that techniques for treating the disease, such as bypass surgery, have become more efficient and more effective.

"The trends for my field are to do procedures more safely, quicker, with less pain and less invasive trauma to the body," says Strumpf, a cardiovascular specialist and internist at the Arizona Heart Institute Medical Center in Phoenix.

The result is that a heart-attack victim is not only less likely to die or be disabled, but to be healthy again sooner.

"They used be in bed for six weeks and told to never go back to work again," Strumpf says. "Now they're out of the hospital in 48 hours and back to work within a week."

—M.M.

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