



## NOMINATION PROCESS

### **How Castle Connolly Makes Its "Top Doctors" Selections**

Castle Connolly's Top Doctors™ selection process begins with surveys of physicians and healthcare professionals. Each year, Castle Connolly surveys thousands of physicians and other healthcare professionals and asks them to identify excellent doctors in every specialty in their region and throughout the nation. When we began the research for the first edition of *America's Top Doctors®*, we surveyed over 230,000 of the nation's leading medical specialists, department chairs, residency program directors, vice presidents of medical affairs and presidents of the nation's leading medical centers and specialty hospitals.

In addition to mail and online surveys, the Castle Connolly physician-led research team makes thousands of phone calls each year, talking with leading specialists, chairs of clinical departments and vice presidents of medical affairs, seeking to identify top specialists for most diseases and procedures.

The Castle Connolly physician-led research team carefully reviews the credentials of every physician being considered for inclusion in Castle Connolly Guides®, magazine articles and website. The review includes, among other factors, scrutiny of medical education, training, hospital appointments, administrative posts, professional achievements, and malpractice and disciplinary history.

Information on outcomes, procedure volume and malpractice is becoming increasingly available, but the public disclosure varies from state to state. Castle Connolly uses its best efforts to gather the information that is available and use it effectively. Ultimately, however, it is the professional judgment of the Castle Connolly editors, the Chief Medical and Research Officer and the research staff, which determines Castle Connolly Top Doctor™ selection.

Physicians may also be removed from the Castle Connolly lists if, in the judgment of the selection team, that is warranted. Some of the reasons physicians are removed include retirement, change in practice (taking a full time administrative post, for example), unavailability to patients, malpractice or disciplinary issues, negative physician or patient feedback, professional demeanor or a change in the "mix" of specialists Castle Connolly will present for a given community. Being removed from a Castle Connolly list does not necessarily indicate something negative about the physician. At the same time, Castle Connolly does not claim to identify every excellent physician in the nation or a region. The physicians identified through the Castle Connolly research process are clearly among the very best, but there are always other very good physicians not identified by Castle Connolly and that is why our guides, websites and other distribution channels for this critical information describe a process whereby consumers can identify excellent physicians using their own efforts.

### **How does Castle Connolly Medical Ltd. get its physician information?**

Each of the selected doctors is asked to complete a comprehensive professional biography form and also provide information on their special practice areas of expertise. The information contained in the biographical forms becomes an integral part of selected doctors' listings in the Guide.

### **How often does Castle Connolly Medical Ltd. update profiles of America's Top Doctors?**

The listings of top doctors are updated annually. Additionally, as Castle Connolly's research staff becomes aware of changes in doctors' information, changes are made on an ongoing basis in doctors' profiles.

### **Do doctors pay to be listed in Castle Connolly Guides?**

No. Doctors cannot and do not pay to be listed in any Castle Connolly guide to top doctors. They are selected based on nominations by their peers and reviewed by Castle Connolly's physician-directed research team.