

GENERAL CARDIOLOGY

FACT SHEET 2026

Your comprehensive guide to career opportunities, compensation and market trends

General cardiology is one of the most in-demand medical specialties right now. This fact sheet covers what you need to know about salaries, the job market, who's in the field, what the work is like and the problems the specialty faces.

Your Earning Potential

Most cardiologists earn between \$553,000–\$700,000, with a median income around \$625,000.^{1,2,4}

However, this amount can vary depending on your experience, where you work and where you live.



Salary by Practice Setting		
Practice Setting	Average Annual Salary	Notes
Large Hospital Systems	\$500,000 - \$650,000	Includes benefits, CME allowances, malpractice coverage
Academic Medical Centers	\$480,000 - \$600,000	Teaching opportunities, research stipends, pension plans
Private Practice	\$550,000 - \$750,000	Higher earning potential, productivity-based pay
Rural / Underserved Areas	\$575,000 - \$800,000	Premium pay, loan forgiveness, relocation bonuses

Top Paying States

California (\$645,000), Washington (\$640,000), Massachusetts (\$550,000), New York (\$600,000), and Alaska (\$575,000) typically offer the highest salaries for general cardiologists.

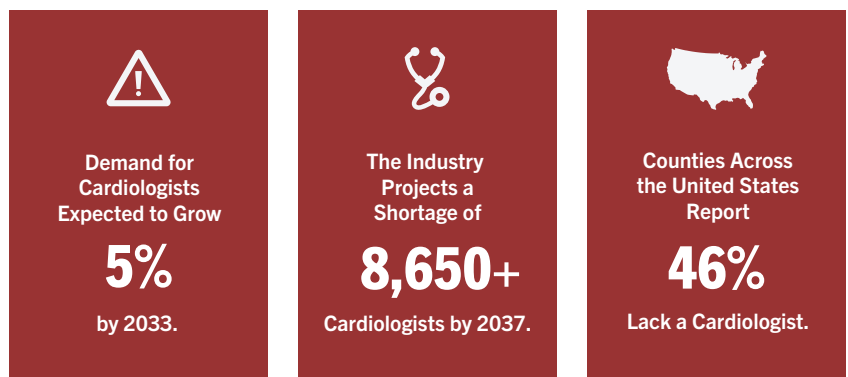
Texas (\$480,000-\$800,000) and Florida (\$520,000-\$750,000) are also popular because they have no state income tax, which means more money in your pocket.

Note: These figures depend on experience, practice type and local conditions. Consider cost of living when comparing offers.

Cardiology Job Market Outlook

Demand for cardiologists continues to grow faster than supply of physicians. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects **5% growth** by 2033, above the 4% average growth for all occupations.⁷

Meanwhile, the AAMC predicts we'll be short **5,800 to 15,800** cardiologists by 2030.⁶



Why Demand Is So High



AGING POPULATION

The baby boomer generation is getting older, people need more heart care. About **half of U.S. adults** have some form of cardiovascular disease. That number keeps rising as obesity, diabetes and high blood pressure become more common.



GEOGRAPHIC GAPS

Almost half of U.S. counties don't have a cardiologist.^{8,11} That leaves roughly **22 million Americans** without local access to specialized heart care. Rural areas are even worse off—about **86% of rural counties** have zero access to a cardiologist.



INCREASED JOB CHOICE

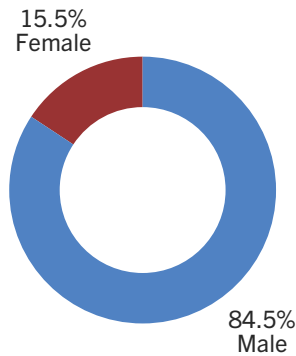
Jobs are available everywhere: hospitals, private practices, academic centers and telehealth companies. You can work inpatient, outpatient or both. Schedule options vary too—8-hour, 10-hour, and 12-hour shifts with different call arrangements.

Cardiologists generate up to **seven times their salary** in revenue for hospitals.⁸ Average pay is around \$565K, and there aren't enough doctors to meet demand.

Who's In Cardiology

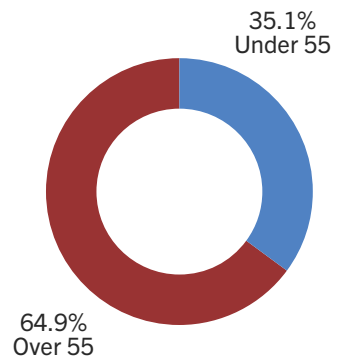
GENDER BREAKDOWN

The cardiology workforce is mostly male, but women's representation is increasing. Female cardiologists have grown **23% from 2016** and represent **21% of all cardiology fellows**.^{12,13}



AGE DISTRIBUTION

Cardiologists have an average age of **59 years**, the highest average age of any specialty. **More than half** of practicing cardiologists are over 55, and **26.5% plan to retire** within 5-10 years.^{10,14}



Finding Work-Life Balance

Non-invasive cardiology has a more predictable schedule than interventional cardiology, though the work is still demanding. Across the field, **long hours, high patient volumes, emergency call responsibilities** and **increasing administrative tasks** challenge a sustainable work-life balance.

For cardiologists, the high stakes of patient care and rapid pace of clinical decision-making add to stress and burnout, making it a growing priority for the profession.

Hours/Week: 40-60 office hours, on average

Call Time: Common to take on-call duty on evenings & weekends for 24/7 care

Clinical Work: Mix of outpatient clinics, inpatient consultations and diagnostic testing

Admin: Documentation, care coordination, quality improvement

Job Satisfaction

Many healthcare organizations now offer non-traditional arrangements like job sharing, part-time positions and slow-down schedules to increase job satisfaction and improve retention.

Some organizations, like VitalSolution, use block scheduling where cardiologists **work 7 days on, then get a full 7 days off**. This schedule offers **26 weeks off per year** while earning a full-time salary.

The consistent schedule makes it easier to plan your life outside of medicine, and VitalSolution’s multi-year contracts (typically 1-3 years) provide **income stability and predictable time off**, which many physicians prefer over traditional employment models.



88% of cardiologists are moderately to very satisfied with their career.¹⁸



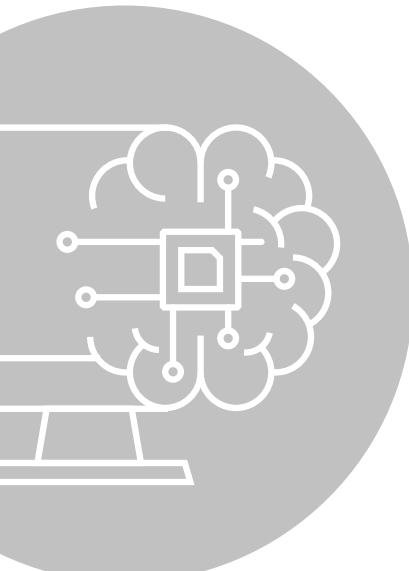
34% say patient relationships are the most rewarding part of their job.¹⁹



23% say being good at what they do is the most rewarding part of their job.¹⁹



Over 60% are satisfied with their financial compensation.^{1, 19}



The Future of Technology & AI in Cardiology

AI is improving efficiency and accuracy in echocardiography

Intelligence-assisted tools can automate measurements, flag abnormalities and generate high-accuracy preliminary interpretations, saving time and helping extend access amid workforce shortages.^{23, 24, 25}

AI can help reduce administrative burden and burnout

Ambient AI scribes and automation can cut documentation time by up to ~70%, reduce after-hours work and are associated with drops in clinician burnout.^{26, 27, 28, 29}

AI supports—not replaces—cardiologists

These technologies function as assistants for repetitive and time-consuming tasks, while physician judgment, clinical expertise and patient communication remain essential as the field integrates AI responsibly.^{10, 11, 23, 309}

Cardiology is evolving quickly, and understanding these changes is essential to delivering great patient care and building a sustainable career. VitalSolution helps you stay informed and take action with practical insights, tools, and support. Connect with us to join a community committed to navigating change and building a more fulfilling future in cardiology.

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When it's critical,
 we make it possible.

This fact sheet brings together information from peer-reviewed medical journals, government agencies (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, AAMC, HRSA), professional medical associations (ACC, MGMA, AHA), and established physician compensation survey organizations (Medscape, Doximity, MedAxiom). All salary figures, statistics, and projections come from peer-reviewed publications, government data, and industry reports published between 2024-2026.

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