Today's COVID-19 stats from BJH

44 inpatients confirmed positive  2 admitted, awaiting test results

WashU Med to begin distributing COVID-19 vaccines

Beginning Monday, WashU Med will distribute the COVID-19 vaccine to faculty, students and staff across the Danforth and Medical Campuses, according to the guidelines set forth by the state and federal governments.
The school recently received state authorization to distribute vaccines. BJC HealthCare, which previously managed vaccinations on the Medical Campus, has turned its focus toward vaccinating members of the public who have pre-registered through its site.

The first round of WashU Med vaccinations, to be administered on the Medical Campus, will include a total of 200 doses for:

- University employees with patient contact who have yet to be vaccinated
- University employees age 65+ from the Medical Campus and Danforth Campus who have yet to be vaccinated

Invitations have been sent university-wide for those age 65+. If doses remain after these vaccinations, invitations will be sent to others who qualify based on eligibility guidelines.

There is no pre-registration process, and employees will be notified of their eligibility to receive a vaccine through an email from Occupational Health (covidvaccine@wustl.edu).

WashU Med will continue to order vaccine weekly, and some doses provided will go to Washington University Physicians outpatient clinics and Occupational Health based on need and tiers being vaccinated.

Learn more about employee vaccinations in our COVID-19 vaccine FAQ (PDF).

Clinical trial evaluating nasal drop vaccine developed at WashU Med
A nasal drop vaccine against COVID-19 developed at WashU Med has entered clinical trials to evaluate its safety and effectiveness in preventing COVID-19 disease and transmission. The initial clinical trial — a phase 1 study focusing on the vaccine’s safety — is being conducted by Bharat Biotech, a biotechnology company based in India that licensed the technology. The vaccine’s early development was led by David Curiel, MD, PhD, the Distinguished Professor of Radiation Oncology, and Michael Diamond, MD, PhD, the Herbert S. Gasser Professor of Medicine.

Vaccine clinic volunteers will now be paid
WashU Med staff members who volunteer at BJC’s public COVID-19 vaccination clinics outside of their regular work hours will now be paid for their time. Both clinical and non-clinical workers are needed.

- Hourly staff will be paid time and a half if they go over 40 hours/week.
- Salaried nurses will be paid a $250 bonus for an entire shift.
- Salaried staff who are not nurses will be paid a $200 bonus for an entire shift.
- Physicians and staff who are bonus-eligible in their department will not receive extra pay.

Learn more about dates, times and locations of open shifts.

Quantity, speed of vaccinations crucial to achieving widespread immunity
Local health officials project that the region will not vaccinate enough area residents to achieve widespread herd immunity against COVID-19 until mid-August if vaccinations continue at their current rate.

And once we get to herd immunity, “I don’t think we should take our foot off the gas,” Elvin Geng, MD, MPH, a professor of medicine in the Division of Infectious Diseases, told the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*. “Herd immunity is an important threshold. But if you reach herd immunity, it doesn’t mean you won’t have sporadic or endemic outbreaks.”

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**Asthma not tied to higher risk of severe COVID-19**
A new WashU Med study adds to a growing body of evidence indicating that people with asthma are not at increased risk of severe COVID-19. The study involved 435 patients who arrived at Barnes-Jewish Hospital or Christian Hospital with COVID-19 symptoms and received testing. Of the 343 patients who tested positive for COVID-19, the 72 patients with asthma were no more likely to require hospitalization, ICU care or mechanical ventilation, nor were they more likely to die than COVID-19 patients without asthma.

Asthma symptoms often mimic those of COVID-19, making it difficult to determine when an asthma patient needs a COVID-19 test. “This study highlights the importance of managing asthma flare-ups during the pandemic,” said senior author Leyao Wang, PhD, an instructor in medicine. “Asthma patients are at increased risk of exhibiting symptoms that are similar to COVID-19 symptoms, and this is a great challenge for clinicians in determining when a COVID-19 test is needed.”

Watch Match Day live tomorrow
Tomorrow is Match Day — when graduating medical students across the country find out which specialties, and which hospitals or care centers, they have matched to for their residency. Follow along as WashU Med’s Class of 2021 discovers where they will spend the next years of their lives training to become surgeons, pediatricians, neurologists or physicians in other specialties.

Medical Campus skyline to change
Last week a 400-foot crane started tearing down Queeny Tower, a fixture at the corner of Kingshighway Blvd. and Barnes-Jewish Plaza for 55 years. The demolition, part of the Campus Renewal Project, is expected to be completed by the end of September. A new 17-story inpatient tower featuring high-performing facilities and private rooms will eventually stand in its place.

**Important numbers and links**

- Call the BJC/WashU Med employee hotline for COVID-19 exposure or illness: 314-362-5056
- Use this [online screening tool](https://www.covid19.med.wustl.edu) before reporting to work
- Know your [screening stations](https://www.covid19.med.wustl.edu)
- Review [inpatient protocol](https://www.covid19.med.wustl.edu)
- Review [ambulatory protocol](https://www.covid19.med.wustl.edu)
- Contact the Employee Assistance Program for 24/7 work-life support: 844-365-4587
- View WashU Med [employee and student testing data](https://www.covid19.med.wustl.edu)
- Email story ideas and requests to [heroes@wustl.edu](mailto:heroes@wustl.edu)

For Medical Campus updates, visit [covid19.med.wustl.edu](https://www.covid19.med.wustl.edu)

To ensure that this newsletter is delivered to your inbox, add [update@wusm.wustl.edu](mailto:update@wusm.wustl.edu) to your address book.