

WashU Med COVID-19 Update

April 1, 2021

Information for School of Medicine faculty, staff and students

Today's COVID-19 stats from BJH

36 inpatients confirmed positive **7** admitted, awaiting test results

Newsletter to be published on an as-needed basis

WashU Med's weekly COVID-19 Update will be published on an as-needed basis going forward. In the year since the newsletter was created, our campus community has adapted with resiliency and heroism to the pandemic. We hope you have found and continue to find stories in the newsletter informational, helpful and inspirational.



Continuing safety measures critical after receiving vaccine



Health experts have stressed that getting vaccinated will not immediately result in immunity to COVID-19 and — while it will likely protect you from experiencing symptoms — it’s not yet fully clear whether you could still contract the virus and potentially be a carrier.

“The vaccine is a critical part of managing COVID. However, individual vaccination — even in a majority of our employees — does not alter our current public health practices,” said Eva Aagaard, MD, interim senior administrator for occupational health.

With the virus still spreading in our community and the vaccine’s impact on asymptomatic transmission unclear, “it is critically important to complete your symptom screening before coming to campus, and continue to wear your mask and maintain social distancing and hand hygiene both on campus and off,” Aagaard said.

Promising reports on vaccines’ efficacy, protection from variant

The messenger RNA vaccines from Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna were 90 percent effective at preventing COVID-19 infections in

real-world settings, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report](#) published March 29. Researchers evaluated the efficacy of the vaccines among 3,950 health-care personnel, first responders and other essential workers who did not have a previous confirmed COVID-19 case. The majority of participants in the study were fully vaccinated, having received both vaccine doses, and 477 received a single dose.



In a separate report released today by Pfizer and BioNTech, the companies announced that the ongoing Phase 3 clinical trial of its vaccine confirms its protection lasts at least six months after the second dose, and appears to be fully effective against the B.1.351 variant.

WashU Med researcher urges public to take first vaccine available

Rachel Presti, MD, PhD, an infectious disease physician who led WashU Med’s participation in the Johnson & Johnson/Janssen COVID-19 vaccine trial, encourages the public to take the first vaccine available to them.

Presti’s team conducted their clinical trial for several months — as the St. Louis area saw massive spikes in COVID-19 cases — and found the vaccine’s effectiveness to be comparable with those from Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna.

“Whatever vaccine the different community locations offer, take it,” Presti said. “All three vaccines authorized for use in the U.S. have been shown to provide safe and highly effective protection against serious illness, hospitalization and death due to COVID-19.”



To learn more, visit the [WashU Med news hub](#).

Volunteers needed for vaccination event at South City Hospital



South City Hospital, formerly St. Alexius Hospital, is seeking nurse and doctor volunteers to administer vaccines through Friday, April 9. The working hours are 7-11 a.m. and 1-3 p.m. each day. Volunteers are needed for all shifts. Because this event is organized by Missouri state Sen. Steven Roberts, volunteers are not eligible for compensation from BJC HealthCare or WashU Med.

The completion of [this survey](#) signifies that you are a qualified medical professional and agree to have South City Hospital contact you.

WashU Med trial evaluates effectiveness of vaccines for people taking immunosuppressant drugs



Although research has shown that authorized COVID-19 vaccines generate a strong antibody response, their effectiveness has not yet been evaluated in those taking immunosuppressants to treat diseases such as lupus, arthritis, psoriasis and Crohn's. In a [recent KSDK story](#), Alfred Kim, MD, PhD, assistant professor of medicine, says that this uncertainty led him to start a clinical trial to evaluate the antibody response in such patients. Kim is currently recruiting health-care workers at WashU Med and patients seen in Washington University outpatient clinics.

He strongly encourages patients on immunosuppressants to get vaccinated, as they have a higher risk of experiencing serious complications of COVID-19.

For more information about participating in the trial, email covaripad@wustl.edu.

WashU Med supports AAPI community

We stand
in solidarity with
Asian Americans
across this country.



WashU Med stands in solidarity with the Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) community — on our campus and across the country — as they face a recent increase in discrimination and hate crimes. Visit the [Office of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion website](#) to read WashU Med’s full statement of support for the AAPI community, including actions we are taking to create an anti-racist environment on campus.

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](#) before reporting to work
- Know your [screening stations](#)
- Review [inpatient protocol](#)
- Review [ambulatory protocol](#)
- Contact the Employee Assistance Program for 24/7 work-life support: 844-365-4587
- View WashU Med [employee and student testing data](#)

- Email story ideas and requests to heroes@wustl.edu

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

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