

WashU Med COVID-19 Update

May 12, 2021

Information for School of Medicine faculty, staff and students

Today's COVID-19 stats from BJH

31 inpatients confirmed positive **3** admitted, awaiting test results

WashU Med offering Pfizer vaccine Friday for dependents — ages 12 and up — of university employees, students



Following the CDC/FDA decision to authorize use of the Pfizer-BioNTech

coronavirus vaccine in adolescents 12 to 15 years old, WashU Med is making it available to dependents of university faculty, staff, trainees and students. Appointments are now being scheduled for a vaccine clinic to be held Friday, May 14, from 8:30 a.m. – 2 p.m. at the BJC Institute of Health on the Medical Campus. You can [pre-register](#) dependents 12 years old and older using your WUSTL Key. A legal guardian is required to be present for anyone under the age of 18.

For questions regarding the vaccine clinic, email covidvaccine@wustl.edu. If you have concerns about the vaccine, please speak to your child's pediatrician. WashU Med experts weighed in on young teens receiving the Pfizer vaccine in a [recent FOX2 story](#).

Additionally, WashU Med/BJC HealthCare's community clinics will begin administering the vaccine to children in this age group on Thursday, May 13. Linda Postula, chief nurse executive at WashU Med, says that parents have options for scheduling vaccination for their children, including hospitals, pharmacies and even some schools. You can [make an appointment online](#) at one of the WashU Med/BJC community clinics.

"We recommend parents seek the vaccine from wherever it is available," Postula said. "Vaccinations are what can stop this pandemic, so we highly recommend vaccinating yourself and your family."

WashU Med continues to [offer the COVID-19 vaccine](#) to employees, trainees and their dependents older than 15.

Volunteers needed at vaccine clinics

With COVID-19 vaccination appointments now available through the university for all students, faculty, staff and family members ages 12 and up, we are in need of clinical and non-clinical volunteers to staff our vaccine clinics. Faculty, staff and students are encouraged to sign up by filling out the [clinic volunteer form](#) online. You do not need to have clinical experience to volunteer as we are also in need of administrative support.



Shifts are available at multiple locations, but vaccination of WashU faculty, staff, students and families is occurring in the BJC Institute of Health on the Medical

Campus. To sign up to help at the Medical Campus location, select “IOH (Employee site at Medical School)” in the Preferred Vaccine Clinic Location section of the form. You also will be asked if you have access to Epic, the electronic medical records system. (Epic knowledge is not needed at the IOH site.) Just click “no” if you are not familiar with Epic.

Thank you for your help!

Podcast: Pandemic contributing to uptick of mental health problems in kids



Although children tend to be at lower risk of serious COVID-19 complications, the number of kids with mental health and behavioral problems has exploded during the pandemic, driving an increase in pediatric hospital admissions nationwide.

In the latest episode of the [“Show Me the Science” podcast](#), John Constantino, MD, the Blanche F. Ittelson Professor of Psychiatry and Pediatrics, discusses the mental health challenges and the importance of returning to normal learning routines, particularly for kids with special needs. Christina Gurnett, MD, PhD, director of the Division of Pediatric and Developmental Neurology, is leading a testing program for such students now under way in St. Louis County’s Special School District. She explains why ensuring schools are safe and resuming in-

person learning can help reduce the need to hospitalize kids for psychiatric and behavioral issues.

As St. Louis City and County ease restrictions, masking and distancing continue on Medical Campus



Last week, St. Louis City and St. Louis County announced the easing of some COVID-19 restrictions regarding capacity limitations and masking. The joint decision was made because vaccinations are widely available and case counts have stabilized. According to the new public health orders, businesses and restaurants can increase capacity from the previous 50% to 100%, as long as social distancing guidelines can still be met. Masks must still be worn inside any business or public place, schools, gyms and outdoors when social distancing is not possible but are not required when people are outdoors and socially distanced.

As a reminder, on the Medical Campus:

- Unmasked gatherings are not allowed.
- While eating or drinking in break rooms, continue to maintain 6 feet of distance from others. With nicer weather, staff are encouraged to eat or

drink outdoors.

- In-person work meetings are now allowed (but not for social activities), and participants must wear masks and stay 6 feet apart. Occupancy limits of the room must be followed, and no food or drink is allowed.
- COVID-19 vaccinations are still voluntary. Not all of our employees are vaccinated, and the city and county have not relaxed their mandates for organizations or businesses that have achieved certain vaccination rates. CDC guidance on interactions between vaccinated people is only for private, not workplace, interactions. Therefore, on-campus guidelines will not be relaxed based on vaccination status.

WashU Med to hold in-person, outdoor commencement ceremony



Washington University will recognize graduates of all School of Medicine programs during an in-person ceremony at Francis Field on the Danforth Campus. The ceremony will be held outdoors on Friday, May 21, from 7 – 8:30 p.m., with seating of students and a small number of faculty leaders arranged to accommodate physical distancing. A limited number of guests will be seated separately. Everyone in attendance must wear a face mask and register in

advance. Members of the class of 2020 — whose in-person commencement was canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic — have been invited to participate.

“We are very excited to have this opportunity to offer an in-person recognition of our students,” said Eva Aagaard, MD, senior associate dean for education. “I am also excited about the opportunity to have a collaborative ceremony with many of the programs across our campus.”

Members of the WashU Med community are encouraged to watch the ceremony virtually. Please check the [WashU Med website](#) for more information.

WashU Med will continue to monitor COVID-19 safety recommendations and public health conditions and will adjust plans as needed.

Study: Increased alcohol use during pandemic a cause for concern



A growing body of research has determined that Americans are drinking more during the pandemic. A survey published in the [International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health](#) found that 60% of the more than 800 respondents were drinking more than before the pandemic, and 45 percent of the participants said their reasons for drinking included increased stress.

Carrie Mintz, MD, assistant professor of psychiatry, commented on the survey and the issue of higher alcohol use in a [recent FOX2 story](#). She said there are questions a person should ask themselves or a family member if overdrinking is suspected. “If you notice that the person is giving up activities that they used to participate in to be able to drink, are they finding that they’re thinking about drinking about alcohol for a large portion of the day, is it causing conflicts in either their interpersonal relationships or at their job?” Mintz said, adding that people who have concerns should talk first to their primary care physician.



In recognition of National Nurses Week, backpacks made from the vinyl “Thank You to all the Heroes” banner that once hung from Queeny Tower were given to 100 randomly selected WashU Med nurses in appreciation of their dedication during the pandemic.

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 »

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