Today's COVID-19 stats from BJH

86 inpatients confirmed positive  0 admitted, awaiting test results

Vaccine booster available for immunocompromised, Pfizer-vaccinated patients beginning Saturday

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has amended the emergency use authorizations (EUAs) for both the Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna COVID-19
vaccines to allow for the use of an additional dose in certain immunocompromised individuals. A Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) advisory committee is meeting today to better define which additional populations will be eligible. Qualified patients should seek a third dose of their original vaccine, to be administered at least 28 days following their second dose.

BJC HealthCare and WashU Med will be providing Pfizer vaccine booster doses to qualified patients at the Clayton Avenue Building and Christian Hospital public clinics starting Saturday. Only patients who originally received the Pfizer vaccine will be eligible. Patients will be able to self-attest to their qualifying medical conditions (no doctor’s note required) and it must be at least 28 days since receiving a second Pfizer vaccine dose. Patients who prefer to schedule their doses will be able to schedule vaccine appointments next week.

N95 respirator required for interaction with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 patients

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has released a new standard requiring the use of N95 respirators/PAPRs/CAPRs when caring for any COVID-19 patient. WashU Med and BJC are working through the new standard and updating the PPE policy. The new policy, effective Aug. 18, will follow OSHA’s
updated standard, requiring the use of N95 respirators/PAPRs while caring for patients known or suspected to have COVID-19. This change was made only in response to OSHA requirements and does not reflect any change in risk to our employees who are caring for COVID-19 patients.

N95 respirators will continue to be worn across multiple patients and discarded only when removed for meals/breaks or if soiled, moist or wet.

These PPE changes may impact other COVID-19-related protocols. Further updates and details will be coming.

In addition to the regulation change regarding PPE, OSHA has published the COVID-19 Emergency Temporary Standard (ETS), which establishes federal requirements to protect workers from exposure to COVID-19 in health-care settings, with some exceptions, where employees provide health care or support services.

BJC and WashU Med have been following guidelines from OSHA and the CDC throughout the pandemic. Our previous PPE guidelines have been shown to be effective in keeping our team members safe; cases where staff have tested positive from COVID-19 have not resulted from patient interaction but from community spread and not adhering to safety measures. The enhanced respiratory protection requirements outlined in the ETS provide additional protection from current and future COVID-19 variants for employees providing direct patient care.

Monoclonal antibody (mAb) clinic reopens at Christian Hospital
In response to rising COVID-19 cases in our community, BJC reopened the monoclonal antibody (mAb) clinic at Christian Hospital on Tuesday, Aug. 10. The therapy (mAb) for COVID-19 has been granted emergency use authorization (EUA) by the FDA. The monoclonal antibody cocktail is administered through outpatient infusion and is indicated for high-risk outpatients who are early in their symptom presentation and not receiving oxygen related to their COVID-19 diagnosis. The BJC website provides details for ordering the treatment.

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**CDC recommends COVID-19 vaccine during pregnancy**
On Wednesday the CDC released new data on the safety of the COVID-19 vaccines in pregnant people and is recommending all people 12 years of age and older get vaccinated against COVID-19.

In the agency's [updated guidance](#), it stresses that the increased circulation of the highly contagious delta variant, the low vaccine uptake among pregnant people, and the increased risk of severe illness and pregnancy complications related to COVID-19 infection among pregnant people make vaccination for this population more urgent than ever.

In a recent post on the [Children’s Mom Docs website](#), WashU Med high-risk obstetrician Ebony Carter, MD, MPH, explains why she recommends the vaccine to her patients.

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**COVID-19 pre-procedural testing reinstated**
Due to increased COVID-19 activity in the community, COVID-19 pre-procedural testing will be reinstated for all patients, regardless of vaccination status. Please order COVID-19 testing three to four days prior to the procedure to ensure that results are back in time for scheduled elective procedures. The change, effective Wednesday, Aug. 18, allows for workflow changes and patient notification. Further details are available on the FPP website.

WashU Med pediatrician shares strategies for back-to-school safety
Rachel Orscheln, MD, WashU Med pediatric infectious diseases specialist at St. Louis Children’s Hospital, shared the latest information on strategies for the safe return of children to school this fall, on behalf of the Metropolitan St. Louis Pandemic Task Force. In this video message, she advocates for mitigation strategies to protect children from illness while enabling a return to in-person learning. These strategies include providing COVID-19 vaccine for children who are eligible, as well as masking, social distancing and consistent hand hygiene.

Podcast: New threats from highly contagious delta variant
The latest episode of the “Show Me the Science” podcast focuses on how a variant of the COVID-19 virus is wreaking havoc in Missouri and around the country and what we can do to slow this new wave of infections. Guests include infectious disease physicians Hilary Babock, MD, and Clay Dunagan, MD, as well as Philip R.O. Payne, PhD, WashU Med’s chief data scientist. They discuss the need to get more people vaccinated as quickly as possible, and to enforce other public health measures while waiting for those vaccines to provide more immunity to more people.

Preparing for a safe return to campus

With many employees preparing to return to the Medical Campus in the coming months, it’s important for everyone to continue following the preventive measures that help reduce the spread of COVID-19.

- Follow all current masking and distancing guidelines.
• Wash your hands frequently.
• Remember to cough and sneeze into your elbow.
• Avoid touching your face.
• Complete your **daily screening**.
• Stay home if you are sick.

Thank you for your continued efforts to keep our campus community healthy.

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**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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