

WashU Med COVID-19 Update

Sept. 30, 2021

Information for School of Medicine faculty, staff and students

Our numbers

COVID-19 hospitalizations

Barnes-Jewish Hospital

51 inpatients confirmed

2 suspected

St. Louis Children's Hospital

5 inpatients confirmed

0 suspected

WashU Med

Active cases

15 employees

1 student

Key announcements



CDC advisory says pregnant people need COVID-19 vaccine

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has issued a health advisory that [strongly recommends COVID-19 vaccination](#) either before or during pregnancy because the benefits of vaccination for both pregnant people and their fetus or infant outweigh known or potential risks. Although the overall risk of severe illness is low, [pregnant and recently pregnant people](#) are at an increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19 when compared with non-pregnant people. Additionally, pregnant people with COVID-19 are at increased risk of preterm birth and might be at increased risk of other adverse pregnancy outcomes, compared with pregnant people without COVID-19.

While WashU Med strongly recommends that employees with temporary exemptions due to pregnancy or lactation consider getting vaccinated, at this time we have no intention of revoking these exemptions.

Self screening continues for employees and students

BJC HealthCare and Washington University are no longer conducting in-person screening at building entry points. **However, all employees reporting to campus are required to continue using the [online screening tool](#) to monitor for [COVID-19 symptoms](#) daily before coming to work.** If you have questions about or need to report possible COVID-19 symptoms, contact the employee COVID-19 Exposure/Illness Hotline at 314-362-5056. Patients and visitors will continue to undergo in-person screening when entering buildings on the Medical Campus.

CDC expands Pfizer booster eligibility to include health-care and at-risk workers

On Sept. 24 the CDC [issued new guidance](#) recommending the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine booster dose for specific populations who previously received the Pfizer vaccination — including health-care and at-risk workers. The booster dose should be administered at least six months after completion of the primary series. **These recommendations do not apply to those who have received Moderna or Johnson & Johnson/Janssen vaccines.** Booster vaccinations are not currently required by WashU Med.

Booster vaccination appointments are readily available at most public clinics or retail pharmacies. Occupational Health is also offering Pfizer booster doses to all employees and trainees who work on the Medical Campus. Boosters can be scheduled by emailing occupationalhealth@wustl.edu or by calling 314-362-3528, although short-term scheduling availability will be limited due to WashU Med's focus on providing required flu shots. (Details on flu shots to come soon.)

Other news

Free symphony tickets available

The St. Louis Symphony Orchestra (SLSO) is offering free tickets to health-care workers and first responders as a thank you for their continued commitment to our community. Those eligible will receive two tickets to attend one of four weekend concerts to be held Oct. 9-10 and Oct. 15-16. Reserve your free tickets by visiting the [SLSO website](#).

Media coverage

[Podcast: Boosters? Vaccines for kids? Where do we stand heading toward winter?](#)

(WashU Med News, Sept. 30, 2021)

Infectious diseases experts Victoria Fraser, MD, chair of the Department of Medicine, and Bill Powderly, MD, the Larry J. Shapiro Director of the Institute for Public Health and co-director of the Division of Infectious Diseases, discuss where we are and where we're headed with COVID-19.

[With concerts returning, Washington University infectious disease expert offers COVID precautions](#) (FOX2, Sept. 23, 2021)

With an inherent risk of COVID-19 in crowds, WashU Med infectious diseases physician Joseph Cherabie, MD, advises wearing a mask during indoor concerts. For venues requiring a negative test to enter, he suggests self-testing using an over-the-counter test — available at local pharmacies — or getting tested at an urgent care center.

Resources

- [MO/Notify](#) exposure notifications
- [Online screening tool](#)
- Exposure & illness hotline: 314-362-5056
- Work-life support/Employee Assistance Program (24/7): 844-365-4587
- [BJC COVID-19 policies & procedures](#)
- [Washington University Physicians COVID-19 policies & procedures](#)
- [Medical Campus policies & updates](#)

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