

WashU Med COVID-19 Update

Nov. 18, 2021

Information for School of Medicine faculty, staff and students

Our numbers

COVID-19 hospitalizations

Barnes-Jewish Hospital

28 inpatients confirmed

3 suspected

St. Louis Children's Hospital

4 inpatients confirmed

3 suspected

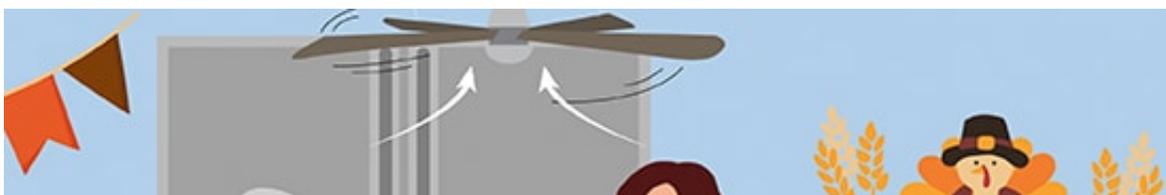
WashU Med

Active cases

13 employees

0 students

Key announcements





Holiday safety tips from WashU Med infectious diseases specialist

As we approach the holiday season, WashU Med infectious diseases specialist Steven Lawrence, MD, says it's important to keep in mind that COVID-19 activity remains high, with case numbers rising in the region and much of the country.

Vaccines, now available for children as young as 5 years old, reduce the risk of infection and dramatically reduce the risk of serious illness and death. In addition to getting vaccinated, Lawrence suggests:

- Mask when indoors, particularly when transmission is high
- Stay home if sick with any symptoms consistent with COVID-19
- Get tested if you have symptoms before engaging in group or work activities
- Have events outdoors when possible, or in a space with [good ventilation](#)
- Create safer eating situations by allowing for distancing, having smaller groups and groups who live together
- Avoid crowds (i.e. at a buffet line or bar)
- Test prior to gathering to reduce the risk of having an asymptomatic or presymptomatic person at the event

Taking multiple precautions is especially important in higher risk situations, such as hosting unvaccinated or immunocompromised guests, or [living in a community with high transmission](#). Use additional layers of protection if traveling to areas with very high levels of transmission or coming in contact with visitors coming in from such areas.

Visit the [WashU Med coronavirus website](#) for more holiday safety tips.

Updated visitor policy now in effect on Medical Campus

BJC HealthCare has [updated its visitor restrictions \(PDF\)](#) for inpatients at Barnes-Jewish Hospital and St. Louis Children's Hospital, including in intensive care units. Two visitors will now be allowed in these settings. In addition, two dedicated visitors are welcome in the waiting room during outpatient surgeries/procedures. Please note that this update only applies on the Medical Campus.

Visitors for end-of-life patients in semi-private rooms are also reminded to close privacy partitions and may be asked to step out of the room to control room capacity or during procedures.

WashU Med, FPP receive federal grant for telehealth services

WashU Med and its Faculty Practice Plan (FPP) have been approved for a \$737,000 grant by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) for telehealth services and connected devices needed to provide critical patient care in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This funding was granted for expenses related to WashU Med's telehealth practice during the first 12 months of the pandemic that enabled patients to receive health-care services in their homes. The application, submitted by the FPP, was one of 75 programs funded with \$42 million from the FCC as part of a variety of federal initiatives during the pandemic to assist in health-care delivery.

Room capacities on Medical Campus back to 100%

Elevator, restroom and meeting room capacities on the Medical Campus are back to 100%, according to Operations & Facilities Management. Masking requirements remain in effect, so please continue to mask up in those spaces. Physical-distancing requirements remain in effect when unmasked in dedicated dining spaces. Please review the [updated campus activity guidelines](#) that went into effect Nov. 5.

COVID-19 vaccinations for kids age 5 and up continue

WashU Med and BJC have provided approximately 1,750 pediatric COVID-19 vaccinations to Missouri and Illinois residents on the Medical Campus. Parents and legal guardians can [schedule appointments online](#) for the Pfizer vaccine for kids ages 5-17 at BJC vaccine clinics. Appointment availability is limited. Find additional vaccine resources at vaccinatestl.org or vaccines.gov.

Other news

[Podcast: What's up with boosters?](#) (WashU Med News, Nov. 18, 2021)

WashU Med infectious diseases specialist Rachel M. Presti, MD, PhD, and rheumatologist Alfred Kim, MD, PhD, discuss the expanding availability of booster vaccines in the fight against COVID-19.



[School of Medicine receives grant aimed at retaining clinical scientists](#) (WashU Med News, Nov. 17, 2021)

WashU Med is one of 22 medical schools chosen to receive grant funding aimed at helping medical schools retain clinical scientists through the COVID-19 Fund to Retain Clinical Scientists competition.

Media coverage

[As holidays approach, take coronavirus precautions, head of pandemic task force urges](#) (St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Nov. 16, 2021)

Clay Dunagan, MD, BJC HealthCare's chief clinical officer and WashU Med infectious diseases specialist, stressed that vaccines, boosters and wearing masks in public are necessary steps to prevent the continuing spread of COVID-19 during the holidays.

[When should you get a COVID-19 booster shot?](#) (Wall Street Journal, Nov. 17, 2021)

The antibodies that a booster shot produces won't be gone in a couple of months, even if their levels decline slightly, says Ali Ellebedy, PhD, an associate professor of pathology and immunology.

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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