

WashU Med COVID-19 Update

Dec. 30, 2021

Information for School of Medicine faculty, staff and students

Our numbers

COVID-19 hospitalizations

Barnes-Jewish Hospital

114 inpatients confirmed

St. Louis Children's Hospital

17 inpatients confirmed

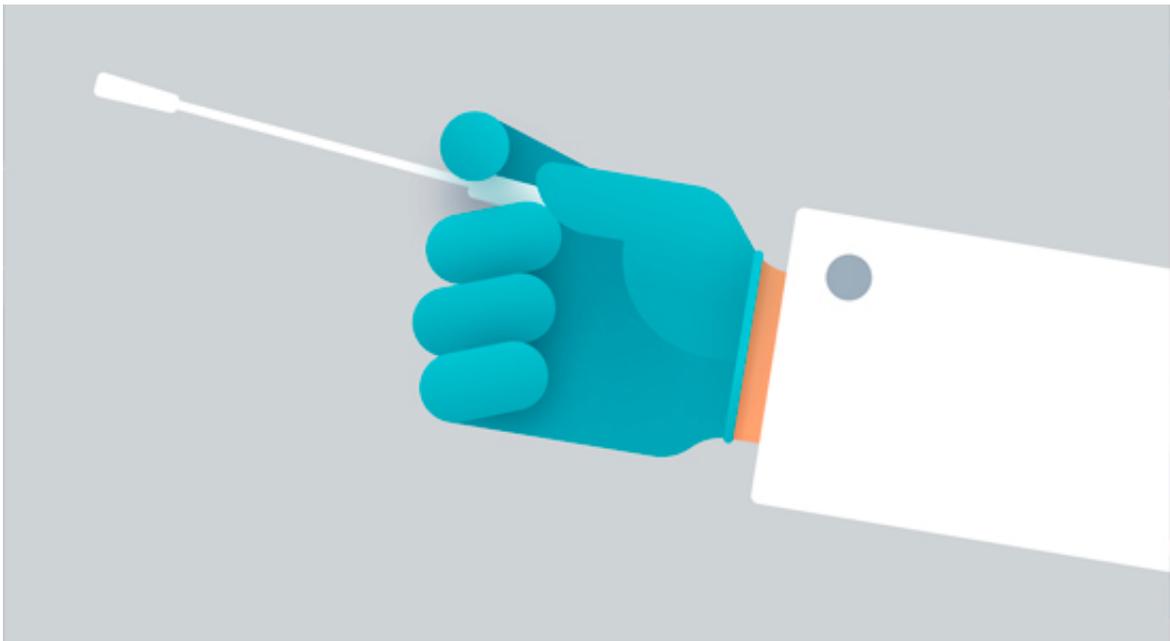
WashU Med

Active cases

156 employees

11 students

Key announcements



WashU Med COVID-19 testing temporarily limited

The COVID-19 Exposure/Illness Hotline is experiencing an overwhelming number of calls. To ensure that we meet our critical health-care workforce needs, effective immediately, the hotline is providing testing for all symptomatic employees but is prioritizing on-campus, patient-facing employees. If you are asymptomatic, please seek testing through your physician, an urgent care center, or a local pharmacy. [Read the full announcement](#) on the covid19.med.wustl.edu website.

Self screening continues for employees and students

As a reminder, 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. Patients and visitors are continuing to undergo in-person screening when entering buildings on the Medical Campus. [Full details on campus-access screening](#) are available on the covid19.med.wustl.edu website.

Employees with COVID-19 symptoms required to stay home, call Occupational Health hotline

COVID-19 infections among WashU Med employees have risen in recent weeks, with nearly all related to exposures at home or in the community. All employees reporting to campus should continue using the [online screening tool](#) daily to monitor for [COVID-19 symptoms](#). These symptoms can be mild and seemingly benign, particularly among vaccinated individuals who become infected. If you are experiencing any symptoms, you are required to:

- Stay home. Leave your workplace if your symptoms develop at work.
- Begin [isolating](#) immediately.
- Notify your supervisor.
- Call the COVID-19 Exposure/Illness Hotline at 314-362-5056 to arrange for testing, and follow the instructions you receive.
- If you test positive, you must isolate for seven days from symptom onset.

Learn more about WashU Med's [exposure and illness procedures](#).

Prohibited: social events and food/drink in business meetings

Effective immediately, to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission, there should be no in-person social events or parties on the Medical Campus, and no university-sponsored off-campus events. In-person business meetings may continue, but food and drink should not be served.

New hospital visitor policy restrictions announced to address surging volumes

For patient safety in response to spiking COVID-19 rates, the BJC HealthCare leadership team has adjusted visitor allowances in our adult inpatient units. At Barnes-Jewish Hospital, effective Friday, Dec. 31, at 8 a.m., patients will be limited to one designated visitor in adult, nonobstetric inpatient units. This change excludes obstetrics patients. The inpatient visitor may not change throughout the day but may change from day to day. One visitor per patient is allowed in the emergency departments and outpatient areas but may need to be temporarily restricted at the discretion of the care team. The [complete BJC visitors policy](#) is posted on the BJC website.

PPE clarification for ambulatory settings

As indicated in our current [PPE guidelines](#), an N95 respirator with eye protection is required when caring for patients with confirmed or suspected COVID-19. In all other instances, an isolation mask, KN95 mask, or N95 respirator may be worn at the discretion of the caregiver.

Given the rising number of cases in our community, in settings where patients are not able to be fully assessed or screened before being seen, patient-facing staff providing direct patient care may consider scaling up from an isolation mask to a fit-tested N95. When upgrading to an N95, eye protection would also be appropriate, particularly if the patients are not masked. The N95 can be worn continuously as source control until removed for any reason, then replaced with a new mask. See PPE toolkit for extended-use details.

Monoclonal antibody treatment may not be available to all who qualify

To address excess demand for monoclonal antibody (mAb) therapy, BJC continues to limit the treatment to qualifying high-risk patients with positive COVID-19 tests. Even with these restrictions, demand continues to exceed our capacity. While we will strive to accommodate every qualifying referral, our clinics cannot guarantee the therapy to all eligible candidates within 10 days of symptom onset – the treatment time frame specified by the FDA. We will continue making every effort to care for all patients referred for mAb therapy and to minimize the instances in which the requests cannot be accommodated.

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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