



## COVID-19 and Mental Health



**Dr. Shama Faheem is the Chief Medical Officer for the Detroit Wayne Integrated Health Network.**

### ASK THE DOC Q & A

Q: In doing my research regarding the effects of the vaccine and fertility, I have not found any results of the number of new pregnancies that happened after vaccination, and/or results of successful pregnancies and the effects on fetuses or newborns. The information given is that "there is no proof of infertility." Are there statistics that show these results?

A: Vaccine affecting fertility is a myth. During the COVID-19 clinical trials, participants were asked to not get pregnant. Despite this request, 23 women became pregnant after receiving the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine as part of the clinical trials. No adverse effects were reported by those women.

Pfizer recently launched a separate clinical trial involving healthy pregnant women to continue to gather evidence on safety and efficacy. Also, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has developed a site to collect information on COVID-related side effects. 136,543 pregnant women have been vaccinated and 5,103 are enrolled in a registry where they will be contacted to answer more detailed questions about their pregnancy and medical history. Per the last report, in the enrolled population, there have been 275 completed pregnancies, including 232 live births. The first report from the registry released in June did not indicate safety concerns among pregnant persons who received mRNA Covid-19 vaccines and did not show a difference in miscarriage, stillbirth, pregnancy complications, or neonatal outcomes between background rates and pregnant vaccinated individuals. Vaccine safety data will continue to be collected for pregnant women, and follow-up is planned for the first year of infant life.

The following links can be really helpful to understand this. The 1st link is a 3-minute video that provides some statistics.

- <https://www.chop.edu/centers-programs/vaccine-education-center/video/do-covid-19-vaccines-cause-infertility>
- <https://www.muhealth.org/our-stories/does-covid-19-vaccine-affect-fertility-heres-what-experts-say>
- <https://www.henryford.com/blog/2021/04/fertility-rumor-covid-vaccine>
- <https://www.cincinnatichildrens.org/patients/coronavirus-information/vaccines/fertility>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/safety/vsafepregnancyregistry.html>

**You can submit COVID-19 related questions to: [AskTheDoc@dwihn.org](mailto:AskTheDoc@dwihn.org)**



## COVID-19 and Mental Health

### BURNOUT AT WORK

The word burnout is commonly associated with a number of terms that elicit feelings of despair such as exhaustion, helplessness and frustration. To better understand how to prevent burnout, we need to know what it is and how it happens.

Burnout is included in the 11th revision of the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-11) as an occupational phenomenon. It is not classified as a medical condition. Burnout is defined as follows:

“Burnout is a syndrome conceptualized as resulting from chronic workplace stress that has not been successfully managed. It is characterized by three dimensions:

- feelings of energy depletion or exhaustion;
- increased mental distance from one’s job, or feelings of negativism or cynicism related to one's job; and
- reduced professional efficacy.

Burnout refers specifically to phenomena in the occupational context and should not be applied to describe experiences in other areas of life.”

Job burnout is a multifaceted experience that results from chronic workplace stress. It results not only from an individual’s own stress levels but also from the context of an unhealthy work environment. If you aren’t sure whether or not your stress amounts to burnout, start keeping track of your symptoms and look back at your notes after a few days. You can take a free, confidential and anonymous online mental health assessment on the DWIHN website ([www.dwihn.org](http://www.dwihn.org)) which includes a general well-being screen:

<https://screening.mentalhealthscreening.org/DWIHN>



## COVID-19 and Mental Health

A recent survey conducted by FlexJobs and Mental Health America found that 75% of people have experienced burnout at work, with 40% saying they've felt it specifically during the pandemic. Between job-loss worries, work-from-home challenges and feeling overworked, it's easy to understand why the fallout from the pandemic is taking such a toll. A study found that many workers underestimate the seriousness of their struggles where only 30% of employees said "they feel burned out" at work, but 64% reported symptoms of burnout such as feeling emotionally and/or physically drained; mentally checked out at work; excessive pressure to succeed and the need to hide personal concerns while at work.

- Maintain a healthy work-life balance. Make sure the number of hours spent at work is balanced with the number of hours spent in meaningful relaxation.
- Subscribe to a holistic self-care model that pays attention to aspects of physical, social, mental, emotional, spiritual and vocational wellness.
- Take time for rejuvenating activities that you enjoy—take vacation time.
- Seek out and utilize sources of support. These can include material sources such as training in self-care and human resources such as friends, family and personal counseling.
- Look into employer-provided mental health benefits. Some companies, especially larger ones, are now offering mental health benefits. These include telemedicine screenings, employee assistance programs and stress reduction programs.
- Set limits and establish firm work/life boundaries. Know when it is time to let work go and take a break. When you work from home, it's critical to set healthy boundaries to keep the stress and demands of work from interfering with home life and vice versa. Try to use or create a dedicated workspace and focus on work tasks before personal tasks, especially in the morning so that, later in the day when you need a break, you can squeeze in a personal task, or perhaps some exercise or something fun.
- It's important to clarify expectations with your team. Don't create unnecessary stress for yourself by assuming your manager or co-worker expects you to be available 24/7. Have a conversation to set realistic and humane expectations and address any potential issues before they become a problem. A recent University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign study found that the pings and buzzes of smartphone alerts causes an array of unhealthy effects, including insomnia and increased job stress so consider turning off alerts when you are done with work.
- Ask for flexibility if possible. Flexible scheduling can help you better balance your personal and professional responsibilities. Explain that the flexibility will benefit your employer by allowing you uninterrupted time to focus and be more productive.



## COVID-19 and Mental Health

Above were some short-term solutions that you can implement. To find a long-term solution, you need to get to the root of the stress. Professor Christina Maslach, at the University of California, Berkeley, is the pioneer of research on the definition, predictors and measurement of job burnout. The predictors for risk of burnout fall under six categories, according to Dr. Maslach's research. Below are some questions you can ask yourself to identify whether you are experiencing any of them:

- **Workload.** Are you feeling overworked or unable to complete all your tasks? Is there an imbalance between demands and resources?
- **Control.** How much autonomy do you have over your work? Do you feel constrained or limited?
- **Community.** Are your interpersonal relationships at work functioning effectively? Is there mistrust on either side? Is there a culture of yelling, bullying or fear? Are you afraid to ask questions or make mistakes?
- **Reward.** Do you feel recognized and valued for what you do? Do you think your employer notices and cares about your contributions?
- **Fairness.** Do your colleagues all have an equal shot at success? Are there any glass ceilings or instances of discrimination? Would you consider any of your company's employment practices illegal?
- **Values.** Do you feel like you are making a difference in service of a larger mission? Do you feel motivated and proud to do your work?

Sometimes, a person will experience burnout when there is a mismatch in all of those areas. Other times, it just takes one. If you are feeling overwhelmed by all the concerns to tackle, start small. Think about what you can easily address first. What can you take off your plate? What is obviously not working? What is easy to change? Take smaller steps first before moving onto bigger issues.

# ASK THE DOC



## COVID-19 and Mental Health

### COVID-19 DASHBOARD As of June 29, 2021

**Michigan Confirmed Cases**  
901,683

**Michigan COVID-19 Deaths**  
19,902

**Wayne County Cases**  
(excluding Detroit): 111,567

**Wayne County Deaths**  
(excluding Detroit): 2,746

**Detroit City Cases:** 56,027

**Detroit City Deaths:** 2,460

**7-day average of new cases:** ~ 332

**Michigan case fatality rate:** 2.2%

**Michigan test positivity rate:** 5.11%

### Vaccination Dashboard

**(For > 16 years)**  
**1st dose tracker: 63.2%**

**Michigan (12 years and older)**  
**First dose given: 4,981,575 (58.0 %)**  
**Two doses given: 4,623,302 (53.8 %)**

**Wayne County:**  
**First dose given: 600,698 (65.36%)**  
**Two doses given: 551, 509 (60.01 %)**

**City of Detroit:**  
**First dose given: 222,952 (40.07%)**  
**Two doses given: 184,373 (33.13%)**

On 5/13/2021, the Michigan COVID-19 Vaccination Dashboard began including the population 12 years and older. This increased the population denominator by 497,961 people (from 8,096,917 to 8,594,878) and thus decreased coverage percentage.

**[Click Here to Find a Vaccination Site Near You](#)**



## COVID-19 and Mental Health

### Latest COVID-19 News

- The rapid spread of the highly transmissible Delta variant has resulted in a new wave of coronavirus hospitalizations, particularly in states with low vaccination rates. Covid-19 related hospitalizations in Michigan were declining for several weeks until last week, with a slight uptick in inpatients was reported. Test positivity rates have increased.
- CDC Director Dr. Rochelle Walensky announced that the agency now recommends that people in areas with “high” or “substantial” Covid-19 transmission should resume wearing masks indoors and this has been updated at the CDC website. Nearly two-thirds of US counties have high or substantial transmission of Covid-19, according to CDC data; 46% of counties have high transmission and 17% have substantial transmission. CDC Director cited new scientific data from a recent outbreak investigation, as well as data from other countries, to defend the agency’s decision to urge vaccinated people to return to wearing a mask in some parts of the country. She said the data show the delta variant “behaves uniquely” from past strains of the virus. The data indicate that on “rare occasions, some vaccinated people with the delta variant ... may be contagious and spread the virus to others. This new science is worrisome and unfortunately warrants an update to our recommendations,” she said.
- CDC added information that fully vaccinated people might choose to wear a mask regardless of the level of transmission, particularly if they are immunocompromised or at increased risk for severe disease from COVID-19, or if they have someone in their household who is immunocompromised, at increased risk of severe disease or not fully vaccinated.
- CDC added a recommendation for fully vaccinated people who have a known exposure to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 to be tested 3-5 days after exposure and to wear a mask in public indoor settings for 14 days or until they receive a negative test result.
- CDC recommends universal indoor masking for all teachers, staff, students, and visitors to schools, regardless of vaccination status
- In Michigan, 97 percent of COVID hospitalizations are among unvaccinated people and 99.5 percent of COVID-related deaths are in unvaccinated individuals—a trend that has been seen from state to state. Though it is not good to patronize those individuals about vaccines, most of the patients often leave the hospital wishing they had gotten the vaccine before their infections.
- Testing has dropped to around 10,000 diagnostic tests reported per day on average, with positive rate near 5%.



## COVID-19 and Mental Health

### Latest COVID-19 News

- Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) issued a Stop-Use and Stop-Removal Order for Purell brand hand sanitizer after finding the products do not protect the public and do not comply with the standards in the Michigan Weights and Measures Act, 1964 Public Act 283.
- Pfizer and Moderna are expanding the size of their COVID-19 vaccine studies in children ages 5 to 11 at the recommendation of the Food and Drug Administration. It is intended to detect rare side effects in young people under the age of 30, such as myocarditis (inflammation of the heart muscle) and pericarditis (inflammation of the outer lining of the heart). The original size of the studies was considered smaller to detect those rare side effects.
- After Henry Ford Health System, Trinity Health also announced COVID-19 vaccine mandates for its employees and contractors.
- Everyone 12 years of age and older is now recommended to get a COVID-19 vaccination. Get a COVID-19 vaccine as soon as you can. Widespread vaccination is a critical tool to help stop the pandemic. Please visit [www.Michigan.gov/COVIDvaccine](http://www.Michigan.gov/COVIDvaccine) for the latest information about vaccination. You can find vaccination sites near you by using: <https://vaccinefinder.org/search>. You can also find vaccine locations near you by texting your zip code to 438829.

### Mental Health Help

- Behavioral health – which includes mental health, substance use, and more – is a key part of your overall well-being. The COVID-19 pandemic has left many people feeling anxious or depressed. The DWIHN website offers a free and anonymous assessment to help you determine if you or someone you care about should connect with a behavioral health professional. <https://screening.mentalhealthscreening.org/DWIHN>
- Another excellent digital tool to support mental health is myStrength, an app with web and mobile tools designed to support your goals and wellbeing. myStrength's highly interactive, individually-tailored resources allow users to address depression, anxiety, stress, substance use, chronic pain and sleep challenges, while also supporting the physical and spiritual aspects of whole-person health. Visit the DWIHN website to learn more.
- Additionally, if you're feeling emotionally distressed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, get free, confidential support from a Michigan Stay Well counselor. Dial 1-888-535-6136 and press "8". The Stay Well counseling line is available 24/7. [www.Michigan.gov/StayWell](http://www.Michigan.gov/StayWell)