

DEAR ABBY

Write to Dear Abby online at dearabby.com or by mail at P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069



Dear Abby: My husband and I have had a total of six miscarriages — one before our miracle son and five since we began trying for a second child more than two years ago.

I always wanted a boatload of children, but my husband and I agreed on two before we got married. Now he wants to call it quits. He doesn't want to keep trying because he sees the emotional toll each loss has on me. I want to get a second opinion from a fertility specialist who helped a friend with similar issues.

The only way I know how to describe the way I feel is that it feels as though "someone" is missing from our family. I ache and long for and miss that person, even though I've never met them. I know deep in my soul that they are supposed to be here. Missing them doesn't mean I love my husband and son any less. But as much as I love those two, I also miss that person. What should my husband and I do?

—Challenged in Texas

Dear Challenged: Please accept my heartfelt sympathy. Clearly you have been through a wrenching time, and your loving husband is reluctant to see you continue to suffer as you have been. You and your husband should talk to the fertility specialist who helped your friend. However, if more treatment is unsuccessful, it will be time for you to seek a referral to a licensed psychotherapist who can help you cope with your disappointment and loss.

Because you can't escape

the feeling that someone is missing, perhaps you might consider using a surrogate, fostering or adopting a child who needs a loving home and family.

Dear Abby: I have been single for almost three years. I recently started dating a man who, I have realized over the past few weeks, has a problem with me spending time with friends without him. I have explained that it is a healthy and normal thing to have friends and to go do things with them. I have explained that he has nothing to worry about because I am respectful of our relationship and a faithful girlfriend. I have also begun to notice that he has no friends.

I have told him he is coming across as controlling. I don't want this to be a problem with him, and I don't know how to get him to see that it's normal for people to go and have fun as friends. My friends are classmates of mine, both male and female, and younger than I am. One of them is gay. I have explained that as well to my boyfriend. Am I overthinking this as a potential problem or is this truly a red flag?

—Catching It Now in California

Dear Catching It: You are not overthinking anything, and yes, this is a red flag — not a potential one. The person you have described appears to be so insecure that any activity you have that doesn't include him is perceived as a threat. The longer you remain involved with this person, the harder he will try to socially isolate you. Please do not allow that to happen. End it now.

Risk

Continued from A1

Brown said the waivers were possible because of advances in vaccination numbers and a drop in severe cases of COVID-19, along with fewer deaths. But she said new variants that are able to morph inside infected bodies could prove a future challenge. Some of the variants have been shown to be more contagious and lethal than the version that appeared in the United States early last year.

"As we face more contagious variants and increased spread of COVID-19 in our communities, the best way to protect yourself and others is to get vaccinated," Brown said. "Until you, your family, your friends, and your neighbors are fully vaccinated, it's also critical that we all continue to wear masks, maintain physical distance, and stay home when sick."

The new risk list that goes into effect Friday has no counties at extreme risk, 23 at high risk, three at moderate risk and 10 at lower risk.

The levels are determined by the measure of new cases, cases per 100,000 people and positive test rates. As the levels rise, so does the severity of limits on activities, events, dining, and shopping.

But a mandate from Brown is keeping 11 counties from going into the extreme-risk category even if the county level data suggests they should be. On April 6 she ordered that no county be put in extreme risk if the statewide number of hospitalized COVID-19 patients remained under 300 and didn't rise by more than 15% in a week.

With 25% of state resi-

Risk-level designations for Oregon counties beginning April 23

LOWER RISK (10)

- Gilliam
- Grant
- Harney
- Lake
- Malheur
- Morrow
- Sherman
- Union (moved from moderate)
- Wallowa
- Wheeler

MODERATE RISK (3)

- Curry (moved from high)
- Hood River (moved from lower)
- Umatilla

HIGH RISK (23)

- Baker* (moved from lower)
- Benton
- Clackamas*
- Clatsop (moved from moderate)
- Columbia* (moved
- Coos
- Crook* (moved from lower)
- Deschutes*
- Douglas
- Jackson*
- Jefferson (moved from lower)
- Josephine*
- Klamath*
- Lane (moved from lower)
- Lincoln

- Linn*
- Marion*
- Multnomah
- Polk* (moved from moderate)
- Tillamook
- Wasco (moved from lower)
- Washington (moved from moderate)
- Yamhill (moved from lower)

EXTREME RISK (0)*

*This county qualifies for extreme risk but is placed at High Risk because the statewide hospitalization trigger for Extreme Risk was not met.

"As we face more contagious variants and increased spread of COVID-19 in our communities, the best way to protect yourself and others is to get vaccinated."

— Gov. Kate Brown

dents immunized, including 75% of those 70 and older, the upswing in infections hasn't always been followed by increases in hospitalizations and deaths.

The Oregon Health Authority reported Tuesday that 270 people are hospitalized with COVID-19 in Oregon, below the threshold.

That means residents of the 11 counties don't have to go all the way back to the harshest curbs of the pandemic. They top out at the rules associated with the high-risk level.

Under an earlier plan adopted by Brown, counties that moved to a lower risk level only to boomerang back up were held at the lower level of restrictions and given two

weeks to get their virus numbers back down.

Three Eastern Oregon counties were listed at risk levels lower than their numbers would suggest: Umatilla County will remain at moderate risk instead of moving to high risk. Grant County will stay at lower risk instead of high risk. Malheur County will stay at lower risk instead of moderate risk.

Brown's cap only extends to the extreme level. Seven counties moved from either lower or moderate to high. All will have to follow the stricter guidelines that go with their new risk-level status.

Amid the stampede of counties moving to higher risk levels, two were exceptions, with

dropping infection numbers leading to a drop in restrictions. Curry County went from high to moderate, while Union County stepped down from moderate to low.

The rising county numbers reflect statewide statistics. Oregon recorded 8,276 cases between April 4 and April 17. The statewide measure of cases per 100,000 residents is 195.4 and the test positivity rate is 5.1%

For comparison, if Oregon were a county, it would be on the lip between high and extreme risk levels. For larger counties, 200 cases and above per 100,000 people is the trigger for an extreme-level rating. The test positivity is just slightly above the highest rate the state has said will keep the infection rate flat.

The next risk level adjustment will be announced May 4 and take effect May 7.

Updates are posted to coronavirus.oregon.gov.
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YOUR HOROSCOPE *By Madalyn Aslan*

Stars show the kind of day you'll have

★★★★★ DYNAMIC | ★★★★★ POSITIVE | ★★★ AVERAGE | ★★ SO-SO | ★ DIFFICULT

HAPPY BIRTHDAY FOR WEDNESDAY, APRIL 21, 2021:

Practical, stubborn and compassionate, opportunities follow you wherever you go. This year, you contribute your unique talents to a day job or a creative venture after hours. Do what you love and make time for it all without shortchanging friends and family. Money flows steadily, though watch for unexpected expenses. If single, get involved with groups. If attached, let your partner take you out of your comfort zone. LEO is assertive.

ARIES (March 21-April 19) 5

★★★★ Your playful mood might spill over into making jokes and wisecracks at inopportune moments. You can't play hooky, so keep your mind focused. When the workday ends, scoot out the door and do something physical. Tonight: Takeout from your favorite restaurant.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

★★★★ Reconnect with relatives you have not seen in awhile. Mend fences and move forward from disagreements that resulted in stretches of silence. Invite them to your neck of the woods. Ask children and grandchildren for tips on social media. Tonight: True crime docuseries.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

★★★★ Pace yourself to make time for networking events. These online gatherings are important due to contacts you acquire. Let family know that you might be missing in action. Reassure them that you will make it up to them. Tonight: Play word games.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)

★★★★ Investing in home improvements and renovations are long overdue. Take advantage of your stable financial situation. The desire for a comfortable living space where you can invite family and friends to stay over can now take shape. Tonight: School reunion planning.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

★★★★ Continue to research obscure subjects even if friends are baffled. Seek out likeminded people who share your passion and are interested in what you have to say. Come out of the woodwork and get noticed. Tonight: Learn a meditation technique.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

★★★★ Focus on your creative expression. Value "me" time so you can practice and maintain discipline. Family and friends will respect your privacy. The more confident you become, the more likely you can show others what you produced. Tonight: Time for love.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

★★★★ Explore forming your own business. You can be your own boss and promote ideas or products that you care about. Exchange ideas with friends who speak from their own experience. You could find a partner. Tonight: Walk in the park.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

★★★★ Unexpected career opportunities arise. A group with exciting ideas could ask to join your team or ask you to be part of theirs. This will lead you in a direction that has permanent possibilities. Tonight: Air concerns to loved ones.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

★★★★ Catch up on reading material. Make a list of classics you always wanted to read. Go to the library or purchase a paperback or e-book you can view on your device. Publish your thoughts on a blog. Tonight: Watch a game show.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

★★★★ Check your financial statements thoroughly. An automatic charge you meant to cancel may still appear. Straighten that out and cut down on other unnecessary subscriptions and products. Enter a fun contest that tests your brain power. Tonight: Home-cooked meal.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

★★★★ Mark off dates for a much-needed getaway with your partner or group of friends. Find a place you can explore together and laugh at each other's jokes. If you start researching now, you may find wonderful deals. Tonight: Purchase workout gear.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

★★★★ Allergies or lack of sleep could make you feel under the weather. Take it easy today and avoid strenuous activities. If the weather permits, walk among greenery, enjoy the sunshine and breathe fresh air. Tonight: New music for your playlist.

Tax

Continued from A1

Historically, that has meant things like a convention center — a physical structure that would, in theory, bring people to town, said Carolyn Eagan, the city's economic development director.

But years of conversation around how transient room tax dollars should be spent has shifted, with more communities arguing that it's not just convention centers or sports complexes that bring tourism to an area, Eagan said. For the Oregon Coast, it's the beach. In Bend that often means trails or outdoor recreation areas.

"We don't necessarily need a convention center," Eagan said Tuesday. "We do need trail maintenance, and we do need better parking facilities."

This effort from the tourism industry to have more money go toward maintaining tourism facilities is somewhat recent in Bend. While other cities have allowed this money to go toward this purpose for years, Bend's tourism industry advocated to keep this revenue toward promotion alone when the transient room tax legislation was first adopted in 2003, Eagan said.

This was in part because a leader of the industry at the time, who owned the Riverhouse Convention Center, did not want competition, Eagan said. But now, with new ownership at The Riverhouse, as well as a significant increase in the number of people using Bend's surrounding trail systems, the conversation has changed.

The city receives roughly \$10 million in transient room tax revenue, Eagan said. According to state law, 70% of it goes to the city's general fund to pay for things like police or firefighters. The other \$3 million is reserved for tourism related purposes.

Because the Bend Park & Recreation District maintains trails within the city limits, the improvements would likely focus more on areas right outside of Bend, Eagan said.

The idea is that at least a portion of that \$3 million could go toward the upkeep or improvement of high-use recreational areas like Phil's Trail or the Tumalo Falls Trailhead, said Kevney Dugan, the CEO of the tourism agency Visit Bend.

While the tourism industry hasn't heard a large number of complaints about the con-

dition of popular areas like these, it is agreed that it is important to be proactive, Dugan said.

"One of the things COVID-19 has done is driven more people to outdoor recreation," he said. "COVID in some ways has enlightened

the need to take this step, and think about what the tourism facilities are in Bend and how we invest in them."

It would be structured so organizations like the Central Oregon Trail Alliance, Discover Your Forest and other nonprofits could apply for

money for specific projects, Dugan said. The community would have a voice in what projects get funded.

The City Council is expected to vote on this ordinance at 7 p.m. Wednesday.

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