

DEAR ABBY

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



Dear Abby: I just got engaged, and I couldn't be happier. But my fiancé is referred to by the entire town as the "bad guy" because of his past. He's changed a lot, and I really want this to work out, but people come to me and say he's not marriage material, and they try to make us break up (one of his exes in particular).

He told me about his past, and I don't judge him for it because everyone has a past. He really wants to get married. How can we have a wedding without everyone knowing about it, especially our family?

— *Marriage-Bound in West Virginia*

Dear Marriage-Bound: If the whole town — including your family — thinks that marrying your fiancé is a bad idea, it may be time to hit the pause button. Marriage is something you want to do only once. The chances of it being successful will be better if you don't go rushing off to the altar.

Make your engagement long enough that your fiancé has time to prove to your parents and the community that he is a changed man. No one can "make" you break up, but it would be in your interest to listen to those exes (including the one in particular) and compare what each has to say. If the stories they each tell are similar, it may be your Mr. Right is the wrong man for you.

Dear Abby: My confident 17-year-old daughter had an uncomfortable experience today, and when she shared it, I didn't have answers for her. She was waiting outside a

take-out place when she was approached by a grandfatherly man. He started chatting with her about her shoes, but proceeded to stare at her legs. He then loudly announced, "I may be 80 years old, but I can appreciate a great pair of legs!"

She understands that there are generational differences and that he may have intended it as a compliment, but the blatant staring made her feel objectified, uncomfortable and unsafe. It also made her question her (very appropriate for a teenager) outfit.

What should we have said to her? She was disgusted and upset, but my husband and I had no words of wisdom.

— *Mom Without Answers*

Dear Mom: You should have thanked your daughter for telling you and validated her feelings about the incident because her instincts were 100% accurate. The individual who harassed her — and that is what it was — was out of line and extremely inappropriate.

Dear Abby: My husband of 30 years, whom I love dearly, has started singing all the time. I mean ALL THE TIME. If he's not on the phone or involved in a TV show or conversation (and sometimes when he is), he's singing the same few songs over and over, and not well. I don't feel I have a right to ask him to stop. What should I do?

— *Karaoke All Day*

Dear Karaoke: Tell your husband (sweetly) it's time to expand his repertoire because his playlist is getting repetitive. Good luck!

Science

Continued from A1

Raising the maximum number of outdoor diners from 50 to 100 per establishment:

"Since the start of the pandemic, the evidence that this virus is hard to transmit outdoors has been very strong," Chi said. Fences, tents, and canopies can increase the chances of the virus transmitting, and it's still important to wear a mask when you aren't eating or drinking.

Limiting capacity at gyms, pools and other indoor sports facilities:

"When you exercise, your metabolism is much faster," Chi said. "If you are a carrier, then potentially there will be more virus exhaled in the air."

Limiting capacity at outdoor pools and other outdoor sports facilities:

Relatively speaking, it's safer to do sports outside than it is to do them indoors, but sports still represent a high risk.

"For the kind of sports that involve very close physical contact, a mask is very important. Even though it's outdoor," Chi said. It's important that spectators are kept far apart. Like running, cheering for your favorite team puts out a lot of virus.

Take it outside:

The most dangerous activities involve chanting, yelling, singing, exercising, and playing wind instruments. Wearing masks and taking those activities outside makes them much safer.

"Last year I was following the continuous protests in the Portland area," Chi said. "The vast majority were wearing masks, and the cases did not rise."

Masks, masks, everywhere:

The CDC recently released new mask guidelines for the vaccinated and unvaccinated. In other states, it can mean big changes. But in Oregon, where public spaces have been open for much of the pandemic, not much has changed. If you are indoors, in most cases the CDC recommends everyone wear a mask. If you are outdoors and it is not crowded, you probably don't need a mask.

Cases are going down in the U.S. Why are they going up here?

This is difficult to say. There are a lot of potential factors.

For much of the pandemic, the prevalence of COVID-19 in Oregon has been low, compared to other states. That means that fewer unvaccinated Oregonians have some level of immunity to the COVID-19 virus. Simply put, there could be more people here to infect.

The weather is another possibility. "People have spring fever and want to get outside," Brett Tyler said. Tyler is a principal investigator at Oregon State University's TRACE project, and the director of OSU's Center for Genomic Research and Biomedical Computing. TRACE has been conducting randomized studies to estimate the prevalence of COVID-19 in different Oregon communities since the early months of the pandemic.

But there's another possibility, and it's also something TRACE monitors: different, more infectious COVID-19 variants.

What versions of the virus are making Oregonians sick right now?

When the U.S. first documented new COVID-19 variants circulating, Oregon was somewhat spared. While cases on the East Coast and in the Midwest surged because of the more infectious and more deadly B.1.1.7 variant first found in the United Kingdom, the West Coast saw its own, homegrown variants emerge. The two Californian variants, B.1.427 and B.1.429, are only slightly more infectious than the original virus.

But in March, that started to change. And by the first week of April, B.1.1.7 had become the most common coronavirus variant circulating in Oregon.

"The fraction in the sequence cases in Oregon reported to are going up very sharply for B.1.1.7," Tyler said. "It went up from 10% (of cases sequenced in Oregon) to 60% from March 14 through April."

It's not clear what caused B.1.1.7 to take off so rapidly. It is among the most contagious COVID-19 variants found so far. It's also possible, Tyler said, that spring travel could have brought more cases of B.1.1.7 to Oregon. Data for April is still incoming.

The good news: all vaccines available in the U.S. are very effective against B.1.1.7. Other variants — like P1, first identified in Brazil and B.1.351, initially detected in South Africa — do appear to be a bit better at getting around vaccines, but have been much less common.

"They're both here, they make up about 2-to-6% of cases, but it's not dramatically increasing in any way," Tyler said. Because vaccines may not be as effective against them, "we're keeping a very close eye on them."

Who is getting sick?

In Oregon and across the country, hospitals have seen a big shift in the types of patients they're treating. Throughout most of the pandemic, the most severe cases of COVID-19 have

been in older adults and people with underlying conditions.

Most people in those groups are now fully vaccinated, so they're much less likely to catch COVID-19. Ideally, that would mean hospitals would be seeing very few cases, since younger adults were less prone to severe infection.

But that's changed in the last few weeks. In Oregon, more and more young people are getting seriously ill from COVID-19.

"In the past few weeks we are caring for more patients with COVID in our (intensive care units) who are sicker, younger, and without underlying medical conditions," Oregon Health & Science University Chief Medical Officer Dr. Renee Edwards said in a press conference April 23.

The idea that B.1.1.7, and potentially other variants, could be behind these severe cases in young, healthy adults is supported by anecdotes from around the world. Michigan also saw intensive care units full of youthful patients, as did the U.K. late last year.

Right now B.1.1.7 and another variant have been implicated in the outbreak in India.

"The current wave of COVID has a different clinical behavior," Dr. Suraj Shad, a senior cardiac surgeon at Sir Ganga Ram Hospital in India, told the New York Times, "It's affecting young adults. It's affecting families. It's a new thing altogether. Two-month-old babies are getting infected."

What is the latest research on vaccine efficacy?

These vaccines work. A vaccine is the best way — besides never getting exposed — to prevent hospitalization from COVID-19. And even though some vaccines are less effective against some variants, they make you much less likely to be hospitalized or die.

A study released on Wednesday by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that adults over 65 who received both doses of either the Pfizer or Moderna COVID-19 vaccine were 94% less likely to be hospitalized than unvaccinated people of the same age.

It also appears that people vaccinated for COVID-19 are significantly less likely to spread the disease.

Is one shot enough? Can I just be half-vaccinated?

One-shot confers some protection, so once you get it, you can breathe easier. But you can't let your guard down. The same CDC study found that a single dose of either vaccine made adults just 64% less likely to be hospitalized.

YOUR HOROSCOPE *By Madalyn Aslan*

Stars show the kind of day you'll have

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

MOON ALERT: There are no restrictions to shopping or important decisions today. The Moon is in Aquarius.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY FOR MONDAY, MAY 3, 2021: You are well spoken, practical, persistent and ever the optimist! As your new personal year begins, you are entering a time of hard work, building and construction. Shore up the framework of your world. Be dogged and persistent. Similarly, you can increase your own body strength through physical exercise and other activities. You'll be pleased with the results.

ARIES (March 21-April 19)

★★★★ Whether it's your earnings or how you want to spend your money today, you feel discouraged. You feel blocked in some way. Possibly, you don't have enough money or the means to meet the obstacles you face. Courage. "Even a hurricane lasts only a day."

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

★★★★ Today the Sun is in your sign at odds with stern Saturn at the top of your chart. This means that dealings with bosses, parents, teachers, VIPs and the police won't be easy. Avoid authority figures if you can. This is not the day to ask for permission or approval.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

★★★★ Today you feel vaguely discouraged. You might not even know why — it's just a feeling. In part, this is because you have to face rules and regulations and perhaps live up to responsibilities, but you don't want to do this. Get dressed and do something. Small beginnings make a difference.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)

★★★★ This is a poor day for financial discussions about shared property, inheritances, taxes and debt, because you won't get your way. You will encounter obstacles and reasons why you can't do something. Just ride this one out. You know that tough times are character building.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

★★★★ Relations with partners and close friends, especially bosses and parents, will be dicey today. (Incidentally, this includes the police.) Don't be lippy. Do not oppose others — not today. Today you must accept some self-discipline and stay within the guidelines. It is what it is.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

★★★★ We all have to deal with rules and regulations in addition to the laws of the land. That's life. Today your wants and desires will run counter to some kind of authority. It's just a fact. Accept this and don't waste energy fighting it. Live to fight another day!

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

★★★★ You might be disappointed with your fair share of something. This is one reason why this is a poor day to discuss how to divide or share something with someone. Furthermore, you might have to be responsible for the welfare of someone else. Step up to the plate and do it.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

★★★★ Conversations with partners, close friends and older family members won't be easy today. Someone in authority will be demanding or they might restrict your activities. (You need this like a fish needs a bicycle.) Nevertheless, you can't wiggle out of it. Be strong!

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

★★★★ It will be tough to get credit for what you do at work today. Furthermore, work will be tough. (No fair!) It's just one of those days when you have to slog it out and finish the job in front of you. Even health issues will be challenging. "Hard times don't create heroes. Hard times reveal the hero in you."

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

★★★★ Children might be an increased responsibility today. Meanwhile, issues between romantic partners will be discouraging, even difficult. Stay as strong as you can today and be a support to others, because everyone feels challenged today. Factoid.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

★★★★ This is a tough day for family discussions, especially with parents and older relatives. For starters, you might have to assume responsibility for someone or help them. Secondly, someone in authority might shoot down your ideas, which is why you feel discouraged. It's tough.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

★★★★ You feel blocked by others today. Although this is true, you are probably most discouraged by your own state of mind. You're worried. Remember: "Worry is like a rocking chair. It gives you something to do but gets you nowhere."

Zip codes

Continued from A1

This ZIP code also recorded new confirmed or presumed infections of 37 per 10,000 people during the same week, up slightly from the previous week.

97702: Bend

This Deschutes County ZIP code added 136 cases, raising its tally to 2,030. That's the 19th most in Oregon and 128th most per capita since the start of the pandemic.

97301: Salem

This Marion County ZIP code added 134 cases, raising its tally to 3,796. That's the most in Oregon and 35th most per capita since the start of the pandemic.

97233: east Portland/Gresham

This Multnomah County ZIP code added 122 cases, raising its tally to 3,524. That's the second most in Oregon and 16th most per capita since the start of the pandemic.

97601: Klamath Falls

This Klamath County ZIP code added 117 cases, raising its tally to 1,239. That's the 52nd most in Oregon and 69th most per capita since the start of the pandemic.

97701: Bend

This Deschutes County ZIP code added 113 cases, raising its tally to 1,754. That's the 27th most in Oregon and 272nd most per capita since the start of the pandemic.

97045: Oregon City

This Clackamas County ZIP code added 102 cases, raising its tally to 2,337. That's the 15th most in Oregon and 121st most per capita since the start of the pandemic.

97305: Salem

This Marion County ZIP code added 91 cases, raising its tally to 3,355. That's the third most in Oregon and 24th most per capita since the start of the pandemic.

97303: Keizer

This Marion County ZIP code added 90 cases, raising its tally to 2,340. That's the 14th most in Oregon and 63rd most per capita since the start of the pandemic.

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