

COVID-19 STORIES: MONICA AMEZCUA OF WENATCHEE



Monica Amezcua, 35, is a stay-at-home mother and student. She lives in Wenatchee with her husband and five children, who range from 9 months old to 16 years old. She shares her story of how COVID-19 impacted her entire family.

Q: What can you tell us about your COVID-19 experience?

A: My husband got sick first. He was exposed by somebody at his work. A coworker tested positive and they sent everyone home the next day. My husband was fine, with no symptoms. We went out for dinner for my birthday but he started feeling sick before we even left the restaurant. That was on July 14, 2020. You can be as healthy as you think you are and still get it.

Q: What type of symptoms did you and your family have? How did it affect you all?

A: My body just hurt so badly. Indescribable pain, from the follicles of my hair all the way down to my toenails. I was feeling like I was dying and still had to care for my little ones. My lungs have collapsed twice before so I was concerned about my lungs. I dropped 13 pounds in a matter of 10 days. You just feel hopeless. I've had five kids naturally and lung surgery, and I would have all of that again but not COVID.

My husband was coughing blood for three days, so he had to go to the ER and had an x-ray. They sent him back home. For me it lasted about 12 days. My husband was sick for about 14 days, but it still took him another full week before he could be a full day at work.

My husband is the breadwinner, and we have five kids. I worried about what could happen to us. You start preparing for the worst.

Q: What about your kids?

A: They say that it doesn't affect kids as much. Our kids showed every symptom. I was fearing for my little one's life; I could see the pain in her. I saw my children declining. They were really sick for a week. My 13-year-old wasn't that sick, no symptoms at all.

Q: How did having COVID change the way you look at things now?

A: Now that I've experienced it, I have a whole new level of fear and respect. Even now I go to the store and see people not following the guidelines and I almost want to lash out at them. And I'm almost

resentful for those who aren't taking it seriously and putting us all at risk. My entire family went through a horrible experience, even though we were following the rules and being good citizens.

Now I tell my husband to never take his mask off. Even my 4-year-old daughter has changed. She tells me, "Mami, do you remember when I couldn't breathe at night?" And she points at people at the store when they're not wearing a mask.

Q: What would you tell your community now that you've been through this?

A: This actually happened to my family. Our lives were in jeopardy. Let's not be selfish – be a good community member. We are all on the same team. It's the community against this pandemic and this disease. We all need to work together to stop the spread.

We are not invincible or immune to the disease. You've got to act like you have the disease. Like it's your child who has it. Don't be selfish. Don't think you're doing enough. Follow the rules.