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County health administrator says little known about variant

Little is known about a new variant of Covid-19 - named Omicron - according to Doug Toole, Vermilion County Public Health Administrator.



Photo contributed

Giving back

Sandy Lewis, right, Hoopeston Area Women Making a Difference treasurer, presents a check to Tricia Free-land, Hoopeston Public Library director. The group raises funds throughout the year and make donations to various groups.

"We do not have all of the answers right now," Toole said in information distributed to area media. Omicron has already been found in more than 20 countries and is "probably already in the U.S.," he said.

Health officials do not know how transmissible the new variant, but early reports indicate it has the potential to be very transmissible.

While believed to be easily spread, thus far, Toole said, Omicron seems to only cause mild symptoms.

Officials do not know how effective current vaccines will be on the variant, nor do they know how
 See VARIANT on other side

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Variant continued from other side

effective current antibody treatments will be at easing symptoms of those who contract the new strain.

The Centers for Disease Control is studying this, and is updating State health departments, which in turn update local health departments, Toole said

Hospitals are being encouraged to submit COVID-19 samples of patients for sequence-testing to determine variants. Wastewater-treatment plants are also being encouraged to submit samples for analysis to determine which variants are present in their commu-

nities (although COVID-19 quickly becomes non-infectious in wastewater, small pieces of RNA can be identified for several days.)

“So for now, it’s business as usual,” he said, repeating precautions which have become familiar since Covid-19 arrived:

- Wash hands frequently.
- Stay home if sick.
- Get tested if symptoms develop.
- Masking and social distancing can help to slow the spread of many communicable diseases.
- Strongly consider getting vaccinated.

According to the World Health Organization, (WHO) Omicron is one five current “variants of concern.” Named after the 15th letter of the Greek alphabet, the variant was first reported to WHO from South Africa on November 24. It and the Beta strain were first identified in South Africa.

Correction

In Court Dispositions printed Monday, Eric S. Gaffney was listed as a defendant in a case. Mr. Gaffney was misidentified and is not a defendant.

Other strains include Alpha, first found in the United Kingdom; Gamma from Brazil and Delta, first detected in India.

Variants of concern are those that increases in spreading or detrimental change in Covid-19 epidemiology or increase in virulence or change in clinical disease presentation; or decrease in effectiveness of public health and social measures or available diagnostics, vaccines and therapeutics.

Not all variants are cause for concern. Several strains discovered have not made headlines, including Epsilon, Zeta, Eta, Theta, Iota, Kappa, Lambda and Mu.

Briefly

Christmas in the Village

Rossville will hold its annual Christmas in the Village event this weekend.

A bake sale will be held from 9 a.m.-noon Friday. On Saturday, the parade will kick off at 6 p.m., followed by the lighting of Christman Park.

WMD winners

November winners in the Women Making a Difference drawing are: \$50, Zachary Witvoet, \$30, Dane Nicholls, and \$20, Lynne Harnsberger.

Court Dispositions

October 13

Karla A. Cassidy, Hoopeston, failed to appear at initial appearance for unlawful acts constituting disorder, found guilty by default, fined \$180; status hearing November 10.

Justin Shelato, Danville failed to appear at status hearing for general nuisance, found guilty by default, fined \$180 plus per-day fines will be assessed; status hearing November 10.

Gregory P. Readdy, Dwight, failed to appear at initial appearance for disobeying police, found guilty by default, fined \$230; status hearing November 10.

Weather

Chance of rain, then mostly sunny today. High 50. Tonight, partly cloudy. Low 42. Tomorrow, mostly sunny. High 59, low 37.

For real time Hoopeston weather, visit justthefacts.net/weather/.

Classifieds

HELP WANTED

NAPA Hoopeston is looking for a full time Counter/Delivery person. Successful candidate will be very knowledgeable about automotive/truck parts and computers, able to answer phones and wait on customers. Must do daily and monthly paperwork and be capable of doing all activities the store manager does in case of his absence. ASE certified counter person preferred but not required. If interested, pick up a application at NAPA 226 E Main St. Hoopeston.

Looking for a great job in the medical field? Interested in natural healthcare? Busy chiropractic office needs a team-oriented person with good customer service and phone skills. Candidate will be trained to assist with patient care. Robinson Chiropractic has 4 locations in Illinois: Danville, Hoopeston, Westville, and Watseka. Please send resume to trina.keller@robchiro.com.

Full-Fill Industries in Henning is hiring for 1st Shift Waste Handlers, \$18/hour. Apply at www.full-fill.com/em_ploymentopportunities Applications available onsite. EOE

Hub City Media is hiring! We’re looking for an entry level Technical Specialist and an experienced Lead Systems Engineer in our Rossville office. Learn more and submit your resume via www.hubcitymedia.com/careers.

East Lynn Fertilizer is seeking a full time applicator. Call 217-375-4225 or stop by 41284 S Main St., East Lynn, IL for more details.

Silver Brothers is looking for part-time mixer drivers. Hours will vary. Must have Class B CDL, pass a drug test, be able to climb a ladder, and lift 75 lbs. Pay will be \$20/hour to an experienced driver. Perfect opportunity for a retired person wanting some extra money. Stop by 105 E. Washington, Hoopeston for application.

Dogtown Heating, Air, & Plumbing is in search of an experienced HVAC technician to help serve our customers in the area. Pay based on experience. Health insurance, Life insurance, and 2 weeks paid vacation. We have a family atmosphere that serves our customers with honesty and integrity. Email brad.dogtown@gmail.com

Aquality Solutions is looking for full-time delivery drivers skilled in efficiency, organization, and flexibility. Delivery Drivers will deliver bottled water and bagged salt to commercial and residential customers and must have knowledge or be willing to learn maintenance operations when not driving. Apply in person at 102 N 1st St. in Hoopeston or call us at 855-692-7824.

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