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RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE

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HUMBOLDT COUNTY RESIDENTS URGED TO BE WATCHFUL OF OMICRON SYMPTOMS

WINNEMUCCA, Nev.— Humboldt County officials are urging local residents to become familiar with the updated symptoms of the highly transmissible COVID-19 Omicron variant.

Humboldt County Health Officer Charles Stringham, MD, said he is hopeful residents can quickly identify those symptoms, get tested, and isolate as necessary, to slow the virus's progression in the community.

"While we don't believe the Omicron has reached Humboldt County yet, we know it's coming and we want to protect residents, and help schools and businesses remain functional in the new year," he said.

Dr. Stringham said since November 24, when Omicron was first detected in South Africa, new information about the variant's symptoms have continued to emerge.

Reports are now surfacing that those infected with the strain may experience loss of appetite (including nausea) and brain fog (such as trouble concentrating).

That's according to a [ZOE study](#) conducted in the United Kingdom that analyzed thousands of COVID symptoms uploaded to an app by the British public.

Overall, the most common symptoms recorded in the ZOE app reveal that Omicron might present like a traditional cold in many ways.

The top five symptoms of the Omicron variant include runny nose, headache, fatigue (both mild and severe), sneezing, and a sore or scratchy throat.

Another seemingly prevalent Omicron symptom are night sweats that may be so pervasive that people may have to change clothes during the night.

Other classic COVID symptoms, including fever, cough and loss of smell or taste, may also accompany the illness, but anecdotal studies suggest they are less widespread.

The Omicron appears to present a milder illness compared to earlier COVID-19 variants, probably because the virus may not attack the lungs like other variants and may instead lodge in the upper airways.

Still, Dr. Stringham said those who test positive may still experience mild to severe illness.

Dr. Stringham said the best way to guard against the Omicron variant is to get vaccinated, including a booster for those who are eligible.

“I also recommend stepping up other precautions that provide protection,” he said, “like avoiding crowds and wearing an N95 mask.”

Dr. Stringham said the single-layer cloth masks that have become popular during the pandemic do not provide enough protection against COVID-19, especially in the face of the omicron variant—although he said any face covering is still better than wearing nothing at all.

Masks labeled as N95, KN95 and KF94 are made with an electrostatically-charged material that actually catches smaller particles—preventing people from inhaling them—and filtering microscopic particles that are just a few nanometers in size.

In comparison, cloth masks can be good at filtering large droplets, but smaller particles and aerosols potentially carrying airborne viruses can still pass through.

Additional information about the Omicron variant is available on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website [Omicron Variant: What You Need to Know](#).

Humboldt County has established a COVID-19 vaccine recorded information line in both English and Spanish. Call (775) 675-6221 to hear the latest about vaccine allocations, local distribution opportunities and changes as they occur. The line is updated with new information every Friday (not including holidays), or as needed. Information is also available by emailing vaccine@humboldtcountynev.gov.

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