

COVID-19 and the holidays

UB experts weigh in on how to stay safe

By the University at Buffalo

As the holiday season kicks into high gear, University at Buffalo physicians and scientists have recommendations for how people can stay safe and healthy this holiday season amid some increasingly concerning signs.

Thomas Russo, M.D., SUNY Distinguished Professor and chief of the division of infectious disease in the Jacobs School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences at UB, notes that this fall's unusually high incidence of respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) and flu infections among both children and adults has had an impact.

"It's been a tough fall for respiratory viruses," he says. "We had a big RSV wave affecting children and older adults, and now we're seeing a huge flu wave affecting children and adults. This is largely due to the fact that the measures we took to minimize COVID-19 for the two prior fall/winter seasons also minimized the prevalence of flu and RSV infections. That expanded the population that never saw these viruses, such as young children; it also resulted in immunity in the adult population waning over time. That made the viral susceptibility pool larger than usual, causing more infections and causing those who are more at risk to land in the hospital."

While there is much to learn about how viruses interact, the other viruses have probably contributed to the lower incidence of COVID-19 so far this fall.

"But COVID-19 is still smoldering here, it has not gone away," he says.

'No Question We Will See a Bump'

"I think there's no question that we will see a bump in COVID-19 infections," Russo says. "They will result in some cases in more severe disease, hospitalizations and bad outcomes. The magnitude remains unclear. But I'm concerned, since only a third of senior citizens nationwide have received the most recent boosters."

Those boosters, which became available early in the fall, decrease the likelihood of infection, decreasing transmission as well as severe disease, hospitalization and bad outcomes.

"Immunity against the SARS-CoV2 virus is not only about the antibody response, it's also about the immune system's T-cell response, which the boosters enhance," he says.

"Early Centers for Disease Control and Prevention surveillance data show that people vaccinated with the updated bivalent booster have lower rates of dying from COVID-19 compared to people vaccinated but who had not received an updated booster dose," said Gale Burstein, M.D., Erie County commissioner of health and clinical professor of pediatrics in the Jacobs School. "Though the majority of adults in Erie County have some level of protection against COVID-19 from a primary vaccine series or previous infection, that protection consistently wanes over time. We continue to encourage completion of the primary COVID-19 vaccine series and a new bivalent booster dose for all eligible ages."

The Food and Drug Administration authorized the updated COVID-19 boosters for children

6 months and older earlier this month, extending protection to an even broader swath of the population.

New Variants Detected

Protection from vaccines is particularly important in light of the recent detection in Western New York of the more transmissible omicron variants. According to Jennifer Surtees, Ph.D., an associate professor of biochemistry in the Jacobs School who leads the sequencing effort, both BQ1 and BQ1.1 made up about 20% of the sequences from the first half of November. Those numbers are likely higher now since these two are currently the dominant variants in the U.S. She said that a significant number of BF.7 cases also have been detected in Western New York and are spreading quickly.

The sequencing effort led by Surtees is in the genomics and bioinformatics core in UB's New York State Center of Excellence in Bioinformatics and Life Sciences, one of five labs chosen statewide in 2021 as part of a \$20 million sequencing partnership between the state Department of Health's Wadsworth Center and external laboratories.

From a scientific perspective, Surtees said it is fascinating that omicron is the variant that has persisted for about a year now.

"We've not had any other variants for that long," she says. "It's a remarkable amount of evolution within omicron that has made it dominant. There is a tremendous amount of genetic diversity within the omicron variant."

Unfortunately, she adds, it's that diversity that has such neg-

ative impacts for public health.

"The BQ variants are very immune-evasive and don't respond to monoclonal antibody treatment," says Surtees, adding that Evusheld, the monoclonal antibody that has protected immune compromised people from earlier variants, is also not effective against these new variants. However, antiviral medications, such as Paxlovid, are still effective.

"We have fewer therapeutic options now," Surtees says, "so the best thing to do is to try to avoid getting infected. People who haven't gotten their boosters should get them now. There is good evidence that they do protect against severe disease. And if your holiday plans include seeing vulnerable people, such as older or immune compromised people, wear a mask for a week before you see them. Be thoughtful about whom you are interacting with and test before you gather with others."

'Upward Trend is of Concern'

With so many people doing home testing, it's harder now to get a true picture of the prevalence of COVID-19 infections in Western New York.

Peter Winkelstein, M.D., executive director of UB's Institute for Healthcare Informatics, said that whereas a few weeks ago the number of positive PCR tests being reported to the state in Western New York was about 100 per day, it is now around 200 per day.

"That's still less than the 300 per day we had in September and October," he notes, "but since it doesn't include at-home testing, it is hard to tie 'cases' to the prevalence in the com-

munity. The upward trend is of concern, however."

He adds that, as of last week, the number of patients in Erie County hospitals who have tested positive for COVID-19 has been holding steady at about 120.

"This is much more than we had over the summer, but not anywhere near the big spikes we have seen," he says. "Thankfully, we did not get a big rise at the beginning of November, which is when we got hit in the past two years."

Winkelstein, Surtees and Russo agree: The best advice is to get the booster if you haven't, strongly consider wearing a mask indoors and, if you have symptoms, get tested and stay home – even if your test is negative.

"If you do test positive for COVID-19, most people should take Paxlovid and start treatment as soon as possible, the same with Tamiflu if you get the flu," advises Russo. "If you're gathering for the holidays, it's also a good idea to go back to the strategy of everyone taking an at-home test beforehand, especially if someone who is vulnerable will be joining the festivities."

"We have the tools to minimize the risk of influenza and COVID and its consequences, but," he cautions, "people are underutilizing them: Get your boosters; mask up in busy, indoor settings; test as soon as you have symptoms; and, if you do test positive, contact your health care provider to discuss treatment options."

"We've got the players, let's put them in the game!"

PUBLIC NOTICE

Send notices to legalnotice@wnypapers.com

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice of Formation of Black Forest Property Solutions LLC. Art. Of Org. filed Sec'y of State (SSNY) 11/7/2022. Office Location: Niagara County. Street Address of principal business location: c/o The Limited Liability Company, 4965 Ridge Road, Lockport, NY 14094. SSNY shall mail copy of process: c/o The Limited Liability Company, 4965 Ridge Road, Lockport, NY 14094. Purpose: any lawful purpose.
Tribune/Sentinel
December 16 and 23 and January 6, 13, 20 and 27, 2023

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice of Formation of Jen's Magical Memories, LLC. Articles of Organization filed with the Secretary of State of New York on 12/12/22. Office Location: Niagara County. WNY Accounting & Tax is designated as agent of LLC upon whom process may be served. Mail process to: PO Box 367, Hamburg, NY 14075. Purpose: any lawful activity.
Tribune/Sentinel
December 16 and 23 and January 6, 13, 20 and 27, 2023

LEGAL NOTICE

NEW LLC FORMED Name: NIAGARA PUMPKIN FARM LLC; Filed: 11/09/2022; Niagara County, NY; Process Address: 5368 Townline Road, Lewiston, NY 14132; Service: NY Secty/State/copy to LLC at above address; Purpose: Any lawful purpose permitted for LLCs under NY Limited Liability Company Law.
Tribune/Sentinel
December 9, 16 and 23 and January 6, 13 and 20, 2023

LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE OF FORMATION OF A DOMESTIC LLC
POPPICORN LLC Filed with SSNY on: 12/5/2022 Location: Niagara County SSNY designated as agent for service of process & shall mail to: POPPICORN LLC, 1647 Youngstown Wilson Rd, Youngstown, NY 14174 Purpose: Any Lawful

Tribune/Sentinel

December 9, 16 and 23 and January 6, 13 and 20, 2023

LEGAL NOTICE

Coffin Dreams LLC. Filed 7/27/22. Office: Niagara Co. SSNY desig. as agent for process & shall mail to: 423 3rd St, Youngstown, NY 14174. Registered Agent: United States Corporation Agents, Inc., 7014 13th Ave, Ste 202, Bklyn, NY 11228. Purpose: General.
Tribune/Sentinel
December 2, 9, 16 and 23 and January 6 and 13, 2023

LEGAL NOTICE

DeFazio Chiropractic PLLC. Filed 10/26/22. Office: Niagara Co. SSNY desig. as agent for process & shall mail to: 5504 Hartford Dr, Lockport, NY 14094. Purpose: Chiropractor.
Tribune/Sentinel
December 2, 9, 16 and 23 and January 6 and 13, 2023

LEGAL NOTICE

GC CAPITAL ENTERPRISE LLC. Filed 5/14/22. Office: Niagara Co. SSNY desig. as agent for process & shall mail to: Robert Johnson, 314 Schenck St, North Tonawanda, NY 14120. Purpose: General.
Tribune/Sentinel
December 2, 9, 16 and 23 and January 6 and 13, 2023

LEGAL NOTICE

Green Star Group LLC. Filed 10/20/22. Office: Niagara Co. SSNY desig. as agent for process & shall mail to: c/o Marlos A. Vasselai, 2605 Fairway Dr, Niagara Falls, NY 14305. Purpose: General.
Tribune/Sentinel
December 2, 9, 16 and 23 and January 6 and 13, 2023

LEGAL NOTICE

Kristie And Santana's Palace, LLC. Filed with SSNY on 11/18/2022. Office: Niagara County. SSNY designated as agent for process & shall mail to: 360 Rainbow Blvd Niagara Falls NY 14303. Purpose: any lawful

Tribune/Sentinel
December 2, 9, 16 and 23 and January 6 and 13, 2023

LEGAL NOTICE

LOCKPORT DB HOLDINGS, LLC. Filed 11/4/22. Office: Niagara Co. SSNY desig. as agent for process & shall mail to: 6189 Royalton Center Rd., Akron, Tribune/Sentinel
December 2, 9, 16 and 23 and January 6 and 13, 2023

LEGAL NOTICE

PL Century, LLC. Filed 11/14/22. Office: Niagara Co. SSNY desig. as agent for process & shall mail to: 7145 Kinne Rd, Lockport, NY 14094. Purpose: General.
Tribune/Sentinel
December 2, 9, 16 and 23 and January 6 and 13, 2023

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice of Formation of Swaggin-N-Baggin Cornhole Club LLC a domestic Limited Liability Company (LLC). Art. of Org. filed with the SSNY November 2, 2022. Office location: 79 Rochester Rd, Middleport, NY 14105. SSNY is designated agent upon whom process against the LLC may be served. The SSNY shall mail a copy of any process to Cornell Johnson, 50 Main St Apt 1, Middleport, NY 14105 COUNTY OF FORMATION: Niagara PURPOSE: To engage in any lawful act or activity.
Tribune/Sentinel
December 2, 9, 16 and 23 and January 6 and 13, 2023

LEGAL NOTICE

NIAGARA SEED, LLC has been formed as a limited liability company (LLC) by filing a certificate with the NY Secretary of State (NYSS) on 11/9/22. Office located in Niagara County. NYSS designated as agent upon whom process against LLC may be served. NYSS shall mail process c/o the Company, 6732 Ward Rd., Niagara Falls, NY 14304. Purpose of LLC is to engage in any lawful purpose.
Tribune/Sentinel
November 25 and December 2, 9, 16 and 23 and January 6, 2023

LEGAL NOTICE

Standby Generator Solutions, LLC filed Articles of Organization with the New

York Department of State on November 21, 2022. Its office is located in Niagara County. The Secretary of State has been designated as agent of the Company upon whom process against it may be served and a copy of any process shall be mailed to PO Box 104, Gasport, NY 14067. The purpose of the Company is general.
Tribune/Sentinel
November 25 and December 2, 9, 16 and 23 and January 6, 2023

LEGAL NOTICE

6694 Lincoln Ave LLC filed w/ SSNY 10/18/22. Off. in Niagara Co. SSNY desig. as agt. of LLC whom process may be served & shall mail process to the LLC, 210 Golden Pheasant Dr, Getzville, NY 14068. Any lawful purpose. Tribune/Sentinel
November 18 and 25 and December 2, 9, and 16, 2022

LEGAL NOTICE

ACE'S WELLNESS AND SMOKE SHOP, LLC filed Articles of Organization with the New York Department of State on 09/09/2022. Its office is located in Niagara County. The Secretary of State has been designated as agent of the Company upon whom process against it may be served and a copy of any process shall be mailed to 5-7 Locust St., Lockport, NY 14094. Purpose is any lawful purpose.
Tribune/Sentinel
November 18 and 25 and December 2, 9, 16 and 23, 2022

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that a liquor license has been applied for by the undersigned to sell beer, wine, cider and liquor at retail for on-premises consumption in a restaurant under the Alcoholic Beverage Control Law: AMO NEIGHBORHOOD SOLUTIONS LLC DBA: TAQUITO LINDO 810 CENTER ST LEWISTON, NY 14092
Tribune/Sentinel
December 16 and 23, 2022

LEGAL NOTICE

Three Boys Travel LLC Arts of Org were filed by the NY Dep't of State on 11/02/2022. Its office location is Niagara County. Its purpose is any lawful purpose. NY's Sec'y of State is designated as agent

upon whom process may be served. The Sec'y shall mail a copy of any process to the LLC at 4596 Thrall Road Lockport NY 14094.

Tribune/Sentinel
November 18 and 25 and December 2, 9, 16, and 23, 2022

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice of Formation of A.Mark Travel, LLC. Articles of Organization filed with the Secretary of State of New York on 9/6/22. Office Location: Niagara County. WNY Accounting & Tax is designated as agent of LLC upon whom process may be served. Mail process to: PO Box 367, Hamburg, NY 14075. Purpose: any lawful activity.
Tribune/Sentinel
November 11, 18 and 25 and December 2, 9 and 16, 2022

LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE OF FORMATION OF A DOMESTIC LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY
Notice of Formation of Limited Liability Company (LLC) Name: BRC Services LLC Articles of Organization filed by the Department of State of New York on: 07/26/2022 Office location: County of Niagara Purpose: Any and all lawful activities Secretary of State of New York (SSNY) designated as agent of LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail a copy of process to: The LLC 6662 Shearman Rd. Lockport, NY 14094
Tribune/Sentinel
November 11, 18 and 25 and December 2, 9 and 16, 2022

LEGAL NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE OF ORGANIZATION OF LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY
The name of the Limited Liability Company is G & S CONCRETE LLC; its Articles of Organization were filed with the Secretary of State on October 25, 2022; the county within New York in which its office is to be located is Niagara; the Secretary of State has been designated as agent upon whom process may be served; the post office address to which the Secretary of State shall mail process is 6163 N. Whitham Drive, Niagara Falls, New York 14304; the purpose of the limited liability company is to carry on any lawful act or activity for which limited

liability companies may be organized pursuant to the New York Limited Liability Company Law.

Tribune/Sentinel
November 11, 18 and 25 and December 2, 9 and 16, 2022

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice of formation of Niagara Pole Barns LLC. Arts. Of Org. filed with Secretary of State of New York (SSNY) on 02/25/2022. Office Location: Niagara County. SSNY designated as agent of LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail process to principal business location: 3470 North Road, Newfane, New York 14108. Purpose: any lawful activity.
Tribune/Sentinel
November 11, 18 and 25 and December 2, 9 and 16, 2022

LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE OF FORMATION OF A DOMESTIC LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY
Name of LLC: Pawz & Clawz, LLC. Date of filing of Articles of Organization with the NY Dept. of State: 07/26/2022. Office of the LLC: 235 Young St, Wilson, Niagara County. The NY Secretary of State has been designated as the agent upon whom process may be served. NYSS may mail a copy of process to the LLC at PO Box 618 Wilson, NY 14172. Purpose of LLC: Provide pet services. No specific duration attached to LLC.
Tribune/Sentinel
November 11, 18 and 25 and December 2, 9 and 16, 2022

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice to Creditors and Others in the Estate of GEORGE A. SIMMONS (also known as GEORGE ALLEN SIMMONS JR.), deceased, late of Wheatfield, NY, who died on August 2, 2022. Take notice that all persons having claims upon the estate of the above named must file with the undersigned Estate Trustee by (60 days after published date), a full statement of their claims and of securities held by them. Estate Trustee: Elaine La Chappelle, 905-332-0189, elachappelle1@gmail.com.
Tribune/Sentinel
December 16, 2023