

Miller Family Celebrates 100 Years in Business

By Michael Ortoski

BANGOR - The Miller family thru a big party for their 100 year in business this past weekend for customers, friends and the community at their Miller Paint and Wallpaper Store. Beth Duyssen Dir. of Slate Belt Chamber hosted a ribbon cutting ceremony for the family, inviting dignitaries from the Slate Belt.

In attendance were: Tom Giovanni, County Commissioner, Brian Fenstermaker, Slate Belt Rising, Megan Beste, Congresswoman Wild's Office, Kurt Derr, State Senator Lisa Boscola's Office, State Representative Ann Flood, Marek Tomanek, Deputy DCED Director,



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New More Infectious Covid Subvariant Spreading

By Sam Kennedy

BETHLEHEM - Although we may have emerged from the pandemic stage of COVID-19, the virus continues to evolve and be active. The CDC reports over 13,000 reported cases a day and over 1,000 COVID related deaths per week.

The Omicron variant, which emerged in November 2021, has been responsible for many subvariants. The latest is XBB 1.16, more commonly known as Arcturus, which is also the name of the brightest star in the northern sky. Compared to previous strains, this subvariant is more infectious but not more fulminant, meaning that it does not cause worse illness.

Currently, Arcturus is responsible for 10% of the COVID-19 cases in the United States and is rapidly increasing. Since outbreaks have been reported in California, Washington, Virginia, Texas, as well as our bordering states of New Jersey and New York, it can be assumed that it is present in Pennsylvania, said Dr. Jeffrey Jahre, St. Luke's senior vice president of medical and academic affairs and section chief emeritus of infectious diseases.

Patients who become ill with this strain more frequently have fevers. In addition, there appears to be an increased association with conjunctivitis an inflammation of the outer membrane of the eye that is more commonly known as pink eye causing localized redness, blurriness, itching and a feeling of grittiness.

Prior to the emergence of this variant, COVID conjunctivitis was seen in previous strains up to 3% of the time. There are reports that COVID conjunctivitis is more frequently seen in children, including babies. In addition to COVID, conjunctivitis usually is caused by bacteria, other viruses such as Adenovirus an agent of the common cold and particularly at this time of year allergies.

"Differentiating viral conjunctivitis, including COVID-19, from allergies, may be difficult and may require evaluation by an eye specialist," Jahre said. "If a fever is present, it is more likely to be COVID. If another individual in the family has diagnosed COVID, then anyone else in the family experiencing conjunctivitis symptoms should assume that he/she may also have COVID and take appropriate health measures and precautions to avoid affecting others."

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