

#SWEET-TOOTH

Easy-to-Make Desserts

If you are organizing a New Year's Eve party at your home and are worried about what to cook for dessert, here we are to your rescue!



2 022 is almost over and it's time to welcome the New Year 2023 with a lot of enthusiasm and zeal. And what can be better than treating your loved ones with some homemade desserts and sweet treats to celebrate the New Year's Eve. Well, we have curated some easy-to-make desserts, which can be made with simple kitchen ingredients. So, whip up some fun cakes and bakes in the kitchen.

Chocolate Dipped Apple Rings

- Preheat oven to 120 C. Core 1 kg apples and cut crosswise into thin slices. In a shallow bowl, mix 1.5 cups sugar and 2 tsp. cinnamon. Dip apple slices in sugar mixture to coat both sides. Arrange in a single layer on parchment-lined baking sheets.
- Bake for 1 hour, turn and bake again for 60 minutes until apples are dry. Remove from pans to wire racks to cool completely.
- In the top of a metal bowl over simmering water, melt 350 gm. semisweet chocolate; stir until smooth. Dip apple slices in chocolate, place on parchment paper and decorate with sprinkles. Let stand until set and serve.

Creamy Butter Cups



- If you are in a jiffy and want to make something delicious, then you can try this simple butter cup, which can be made in just a few minutes. Take a large bowl, whisk chilled fresh cream, mix it with honey, add sweetened cocoa powder and melted peanut butter.
- Pour this blend and mix it with fresh fruits, dry fruits and mixed berries, refrigerate and enjoy.
- Strawberry Sorbet
- Place 1/4 cup lemon juice, 2 cups powdered sugar and 3.5 cup fresh strawberries in a blender or food processor; cover and process until smooth.
- Transfer to a freezer container; freeze until firm and serve.



Oreo Boozy Balls

- To make this quick and effortless dessert, take 10-12 oreo biscuits. Separate oreo cookies and the white cream.
- Take a blender and add in the oreo cookies, 1 cup melted milk chocolate, 1/2 cup dry fruits soaked in 1/2 cup rum, and make a thick paste.
- Next, take a bowl and using the double boiler method melt 1 cup white chocolate along with white oreo cream. Now make small oreo balls and dip it in the white chocolate mix. Place on parchment paper and refrigerate.
- Serve.

Spiced boozy Chocolate Balls

- If you are a fan of boozy delights, then treat your loved ones with these quick desserts, take 1 cup crushed dark chocolate, mix it with 2 tablespoon condensed milk, 1cup desiccated coconut and 3 tablespoons of spiced rum.
- Mix it all together and roll small balls.
- Refrigerate and garnish with chocolate powder.



It is important for the nation to understand the BF.7 mutant of Covid-19. At the cost of repetition it is emphasised that this variant is a mutation of the Omicron variant. It has been there in a limited form for nearly three months. Its main variation is that it has a very short incubation period and that it has the ability to infect a large number (1 to 16) of people. There has been a lot of confusion about the symptoms. Fake messages in the social media have claimed that it is symptomless and the condition is not identified until it takes its full-fledged form. This is not true. It behaves like any other Covid infection and presents itself with high fever and persistent cough. RT-PCR test done in these patients require a complete genome sequencing to identify it.



Dr Goutam Sen
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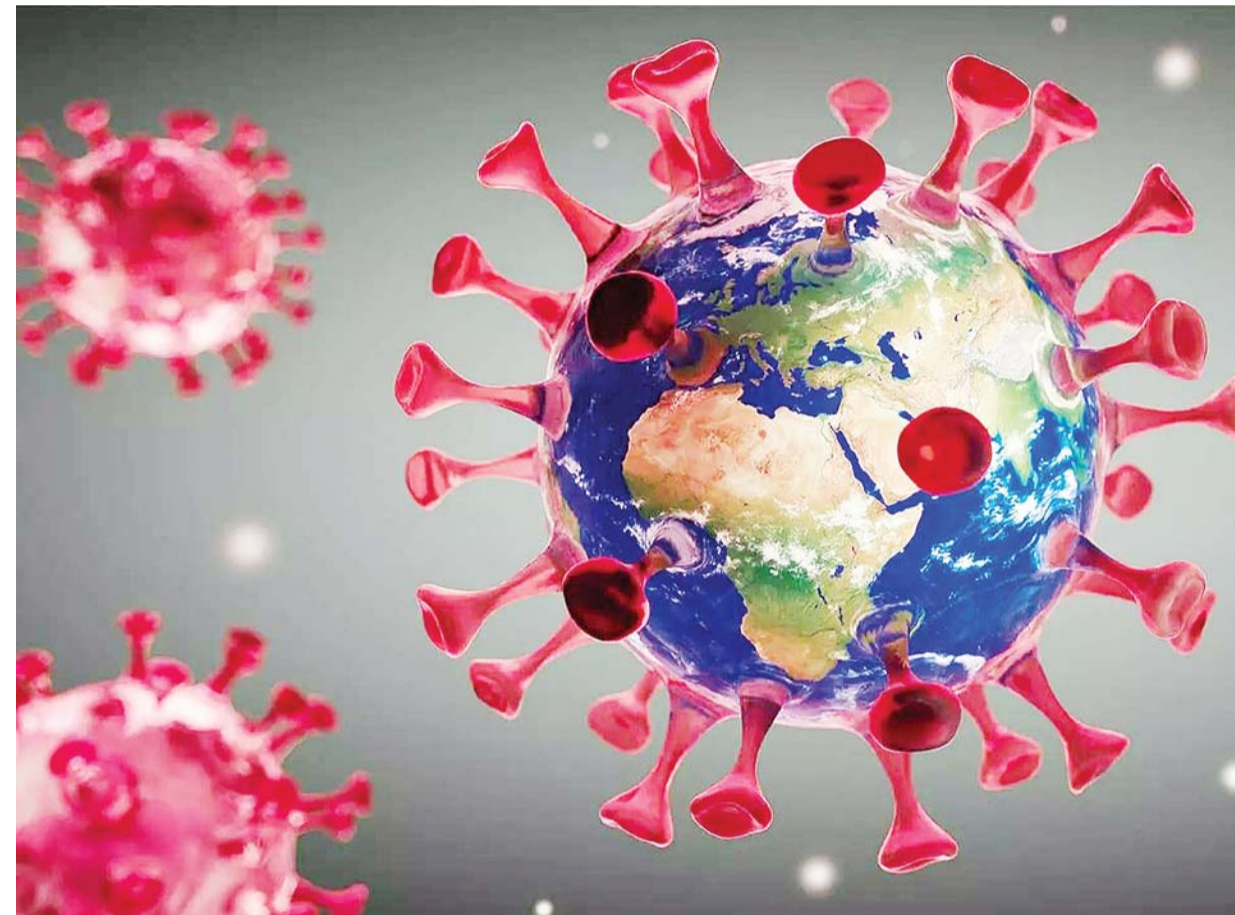
Is Covid Back?

My heart goes out to the people of China. For the last three years they have suffered the throes of the pandemic for no fault of theirs. A small group of ambitious leaders with the wish to dominate

the world caused this probably due to a failed bioweapon experiment in Wuhan. The scourge of the pandemic spread further throughout the world due to irresponsible and delayed information by China. Today probably every nation is suffering as a result. The continuous lockdown in China for the last three years was done in apprehension, so that the pandemic not spread had an inverse effect. The people when they came out into the crowds had no immunity and quickly succumbed to the Covid infection. The Chinese (CoronaVac and Sinopharm) programme has been successful in vaccinating more than one million people with two doses but the effect of immunisation is already regressing. It has also been alleged that both these vaccines did not have a powerful immune response. The approximate death toll is predicted to be a horrendous one million deaths in the next three years!

Some nations like the USA, Japan, and South Korea have shown an unprecedented rise in the incidence. There is roughly six lakh people reported suffering from Covid on a daily basis. The number of weekly deaths has increased across three WHO regions: the African region (+975%), the region of the Americas (+37%) and the

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eastern Mediterranean region (+81%). It is astounding that Japan has reported more than two lac new cases. This is a nation which is habitually following masking, sanitisation and social distancing. There must be some other reason why it is having such a large incidence of Covid-19 new variant infection. The original Covid-19 has gradually mutated through many strains to now being dominated by Omicron with a small fraction of 2.5% being BE7. It is recognised as a sibling of BE5. The changes of symptomatology seen are a short incubation time (as little as 5 hours) and extreme infectivity (A ratio of one patient infecting sixteen patients).

A Gregarious Nation

In India, after the pandemic settled down in August 2022 to nearly a minimal endemic state, the nation has become complacent. We quickly abandoned the irksome use of masks, sanitisation and social distancing. We are a gregarious nation. We love to throng in the

#PANDEMIC

markets and enjoy our marriages and festivals in large numbers. Although there are only four BE7 cases reported in the country this may not reflect the correct numbers. Most of the cases of Covid in India are being identified by home kits or the tests are even ignored because the symptoms have been mild, particularly in the vaccinated patients. The RT-PCR test is required to do genome sequencing and identify the variant. In this case we are looking for BE7. We have been able to administer 220 crore vaccine doses and it is approximately 66% of the total population. We have not been as successful in third 'precautionary' dose. It must also be remembered that these doses are nearly one year old. It is possible that the immunity is waning.

Our nation handled the second Covid surge well, having learnt from the devastation of the first

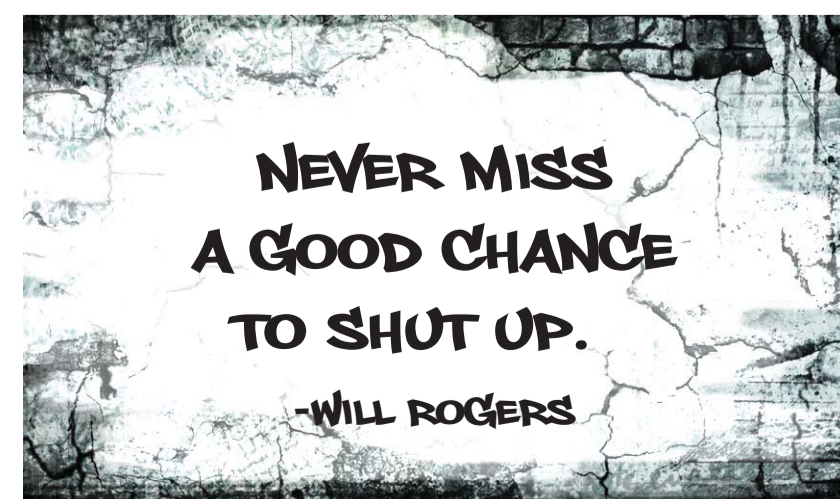
one. The recent awakening of the central government is rather sudden but welcome all the same. The warnings that we may face another pandemic soon are not false. It is based on the data arriving from affected nations which have had a rapid increase in numbers of Covid infection. In fact, in my opinion the reinstatement of Covid prevention norms is very mild. People tend to ignore such warnings. The government should enforce all the precautions in a much more forceful manner. The wearing of masks and sanitisation should become mandatory. Gathering of large numbers needs to be curbed. Making such issues political (Like asking the Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Yatra to take precautions or close down) has led to people thinking that warnings are a 'Tamasha'.

Pandemic Prevention Programme

The suggestions have to be done in a more widespread manner as we have done in the past. Random evaluation of 2% of incoming international travellers is arbitrary and may not be really informative. In fact, today's newspaper reports indicate that the government is having second thoughts and now advocating RT-PCR testing of all passengers arriving from China, USA, Korea, Japan and Thailand. Self-quarantine too has been suggested. It is important for the nation to understand the BE7 mutant of Covid-19. At the cost of repetition it is emphasised that this variant is a mutation of the Omicron variant. It has been there in a limited form for nearly three months. Its main variation is that it has a very short incubation period and that it has the ability to infect a large number (1 to 16) of people. There has been a lot of confusion about the symptoms. Fake messages in the social media



THE WALL



BABY BLUES



By Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott

ZITS



By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman



Universal Hour of Peace

etention and focus by building peaceful relations locally, nationally and internationally on this day and throughout the year. Get the year started off on the right foot by observing and paying heed to the Universal Hour of Peace. Beginning just 30 minutes before the clock strikes twelve on New Year's Eve and ending at 12:30am on January 1, the Universal Hour of Peace is celebrated in each time zone, rendering it a full 24 hour day of celebration all throughout the world.



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Social distancing will be the most difficult practice to implement. Meeting in small groups may be safe at the moment but it would be prudent to avoid large gatherings. While advocating this practice I wonder if it's right to do so. After all there has been no repercussion after the more than one million gathering in Qatar during the world cup.

have claimed that it is symptomless and the condition is not identified until it takes its full-fledged form. This is not true. It behaves like any other Covid infection and presents itself with high fever and persistent cough. RT-PCR test done in these patients require a complete genome sequencing to identify it.

Is India fully prepared to face the BE7? Most experts say 'Yes'. The reason for this confidence is that we have learnt our lessons from the second surge which ended in August 2022.

We have equipped our hospitals with the enough supply of oxygen and ventilators that may be required.

Most of the people in the urban areas have received at least two doses of the vaccine but may require a precautionary dose to ward off the BE7. One of the points that has been made by experts is that the booster dose should be of a bivalent vaccine. The presently available vaccines in India are not so. The recent permission given to the Bio-Tech produced nasal vaccine may be a way out of this situation. The Phase III trials are ongoing and an emergency permission for its use as a booster has been given this week. This vaccine has been created in collaboration with the experts from Washington University and is expected to be bivalent.

The next three months will show



whether we are correct in presuming that the Indian population has better immunity because of the way we have managed our Covid pandemic prevention programme.

Since there is no specific protocol devised as yet for prevention of BE7 infection we have to fall back on the well tried and tested measures of the last two years.

Covid Appropriate Measures are:

Masking: Preferably a N-95 mask in the vulnerable areas like hospitals and congested places. The mask needs to be replaced within five days to remain effective. Cloth mask as a routine will also help and should be worn in all public places.

Sanitisation: This practice has disappeared. It needs to be brought back with full force as the people are mingling much more than last year. The Namaste should replace the handshake! Spurious and ineffective sanitisers need to be identified and discarded.

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like marriages and political meetings. While advocating this practice I wonder if it's right to do so. After all there has been no repercussion after the more than one million gathering in Qatar during the world cup. No upsurge specifically related to the world cup has been reported as yet.

In conclusion, the experts advocate that it is better to be cautious and follow the protocols rather than do so later when the incidence of the infection rises. We have done this before and should not be very difficult to do again. It will prevent panic when the pandemic worsens. The preparedness for hospital care is also essential. Space (ICU), oxygen and ventilators are needed on standby. There should be a strong drive to give the booster third dose (Even the fourth dose) for the more susceptible. Young children and the elderly are going to be more vulnerable. The nasal vaccine has become available at the right moment. It will not only be economical but also require less man power to conduct.

Precautions may be irritating but they pay in the long run!!!!

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#AROUND-D-WORLD

Happy (Almost) New Year!

Here's how different countries are ringing in 2023.

As you make your plans to ring in 2023, consider partaking in one of the New Year's traditions from around the world. The past few years have truly been unlike any other, but one thing has been clear-certain practices are now more important than ever, as they keep us grounded and remind us of the future ahead (and what to look out for, if you're following any New Year's superstitions).

Many still can't travel this year, so we've rounded up a few of our favourite New Year's traditions from cultures all over the globe. Pick one that lends itself to virtual celebration, or ask a few friends to join in the fun. We all need all the good luck we can get! May 2023 be a year of good fortune with a generous dose of sanity. And don't forget to make those New Year's resolutions.

United States Watching the ball drop

Millions of Americans gather around their television sets (or on the streets of Times Square, despite freezing temps) to watch the ball drop at the stroke of midnight each year. Kicking off



United States.

in 1907 to ring in January 1908, New York Times owner Adolph Ochs created the event to draw attention to the Times's new headquarters, and it's been an annual spectacle and one of the most popular New Year's Eve celebrations ever since.

Brazil Heading to the beach

In Brazil, as well as other Central and South America countries like Ecuador, Bolivia, and Venezuela, it is thought to be lucky to wear special underwear on New Year's Eve. The most popular colours are red, thought to bring love in the New Year, and yellow, thought to bring money.

India Building a sculpture of an old man and burning it down

"Back in Bombay we'd make an effigy of an old man that symbolized the old year and burn it at midnight," says Stephanie Fernandes, an associate creative director at BBDO San Francisco. The burning symbolizes the passing of grievances from the old year and makes space for a new year to be born. "Everyone would gather around singing 'Auld Lang Syne' and then it would turn into a little party. Bombay is very cosmopolitan and was home to people of various faiths, therefore we'd have a ton of different festivals, but this was one that united across ages and faiths."



Spain: Eating 12 grapes

In Spain, it is customary to eat 12 grapes – one at each stroke of the clock at midnight on New Year's Eve. Each grape represents good luck for one month of the coming year. In bigger cities like Madrid and Barcelona, people gather in main squares to eat their grapes together and pass around bottles of cava.

Japan Eating soba noodles

People in Japan kick off the new year by eating a warm bowl of soba noodles. The tradition dates back to the Kamakura period and is tied to a Buddhist temple giving out the noodles to the poor. Because the long thin

door step, the better off you'll be.

Philippines Serving 12 round fruits

On New Year's Eve, families in the Philippines make sure to serve 12 round fruits, like apples, grapes, and plums, which are believed to represent prosperity due to their shape, which mirrors coins. As for the lucky number, each fruit represents one month out of the year.

Mexico Giving the gift of homemade tamales

In Mexico families gather to make New Year's Eve food-specifically tamales, which are corn dough stuffed with meat, cheese, and veggies all wrapped in husks-and then hand them out to loved ones on New Year's Eve. On New Year's Day, the warm pockets are often served with menudo, a traditional Mexican soup made from cow's stomach.

Greece Hanging an onion outside the door

Not only are onions a kitchen staple, they can also bring you good luck for the new year ahead. In Greece it's tradition to hang an onion outside your door. Believed to symbolize fertility and growth (thanks to its ability to sprout on its own), the onion is hung on the door after church service on New Year's Day. How will you ring in 2023?

France: Feasting with Champagne

While the notion of drinking wine in France is about as groundbreaking as florals for spring, the French up the ante and go all out on Champagne to celebrate the New Year. There is usually plenty of dancing and party hopping. The food choices, however, remain the same: sparkling wines are paired with oysters, turkey, goose, or a Cornish hen.

