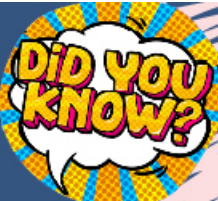


In This Week's Newsletter, You'll Find Fun Facts, Important Happenings in the News, and Relevant Info for **Expectant Moms & Parents of Babies and Toddlers**. There's Something for Everyone!

## Fun Fact



Did you know that **peanuts** aren't really nuts? Yup, it's true! They're actually legumes (edible seeds enclosed in pods). This means that peanuts are in the same family as peas, lentils, and beans.

**Tree nuts**, on the other hand, ARE nuts. Examples of tree nuts include almonds, cashews, and pecans. As the name implies, tree nuts grow on trees.

### What Does This Have to Do With Pediatrics?

It means that a child who is allergic to peanuts won't automatically be allergic to nuts, and a child who is allergic to nuts won't automatically be allergic to peanuts (or other legumes).

## In the News



### How COVID Variants (and Subvariants) are Named...

As you know, SARS-CoV-2 (the original COVID-causing virus) first came on the scene in the U.S. in early 2020. Since then, the virus has mutated many times in an effort to evade our immune systems. Viruses (like all life forms) are just trying to survive and they do so by adapting and changing their appearance and the way they enter our cells.

Over the past few years, words such as Omicron, Beta, Alpha and (most recently) the "Kraken" have become household names. While these names may seem random, there's actually a concrete naming system that the World Health Organization (WHO) follows.

## Gimme Me the Details...

In the early days of COVID-19, the World Health Organization classified the COVID-19 variants (and their subvariants) by their location. For example, Omicron was initially called the "South African" variant. The World Health Organization decided to move away from this naming system, however, to prevent the countries of origin from becoming stigmatized.

In July 2021, the WHO announced a new naming system for the COVID-19 variants & their subvariants. This new naming system (which is still in place today), names the variants after the letters of the Greek alphabet (think: Omicron, Alpha, Beta, Delta, etc.).

## Umm...I Don't Remember "Kraken" Being a Letter in the Greek Alphabet?

Yup, you're right! Although the World Health Organization is still the official "namer" of the COVID variants & subvariants (and is still using the Greek Alphabet Naming System), scientist Ryan Gregory has started to (unofficially) nickname the subvariants using Greek Mythology terms.

For example, as mentioned in last week's newsletter, the new subvariant on the block (XBB.1.5) has been nicknamed the "Kraken." Other names that Ryan Gregory has used include Centaurus, Triton, and Basilisk (hello Harry Potter!). Many experts think these nicknames are easier to remember than terms such as XBB.1.5, whereas others think the nicknames sound too ominous and are unnecessarily freaking people out.

## The Bottom Line

Although the World Health Organization is still in charge of naming the COVID-19 variants & subvariants, Ryan Gregory is adding his own flair to the naming process.

To learn more about the alphabet soup of COVID-19 variants & subvariants check out [this article](#) on the PediaWise website.

## Hot Topics



### Pregnancy

## Why Can't I Eat Hot Dogs During Pregnancy?

Hot dogs are off limits during pregnancy because of the concern for Listeria.

### What's Listeria?

Listeria is an illness caused by the bacterium, *Listeria monocytogenes*. *Listeria monocytogenes* likes to hide in processed deli meats (think: Hot Dogs & Salami), soft

cheeses (like Brie), unpasteurized milk & juices, and pâté (among other things).

Although *Listeria* infections typically cause a mild, flu-like illness in pregnant women, they can have serious consequences for the developing fetus (think: miscarriage, stillbirth, and preterm labor). No thank you!

For these reasons, Hot Dogs (and other foods susceptible to contamination with *Listeria monocytogenes*) are on the naughty list during pregnancy.

**Get Wise(r) About *Listeria* and Pregnancy [Here](#).**

### Baby (0-1 Years)

#### **Why Can't Babies (Under 1 Year) Eat Honey?**

Doctors tell parents not to give babies (under 1 year) honey, because they're worried about "infant botulism."

#### **What's Infant Botulism?**

It's a rare neurological disorder that causes babies to have a weak cry, a floppy body, constipation, poor feeding, and trouble breathing. Although infant botulism is more prevalent in babies 3 weeks to 6 months of age, it can affect any baby under 1 year.

#### **What Does Infant Botulism Have to Do With Honey?**

Infant botulism is caused by a toxin that's released by the bacterium *Clostridium botulinum*. *Clostridium botulinum* lives in dust particles in the soil and is known to contaminate honey and certain, minimally processed canned foods (think: home-canned goodies). Babies under 1 year can develop infant botulism if they consume honey or canned goods that contain the *Clostridium botulinum* toxin.

### Toddler (1-3 Years)

#### **Can Toddlers Eat Honey?**

Yes. Kids over 1 year (and adults) aren't affected by the *Clostridium botulinum* toxin in **honey** because their digestive tracts are more mature.

**Heads Up:** It's a different story with contaminated canned goods, however. Canned goods contaminated with *Clostridium botulinum* can cause botulism in both kids & adults.

#### **Signs That a Canned Food is Contaminated With the *Clostridium botulinum* Toxin Include:**

1. The can appears deformed, dented, or badly rusted.
2. Liquid spurts out of the can when you open it.
3. The food in the can looks or smells spoiled.

## Stay Healthy & See You Next Week!

p.s. Just a friendly reminder that the information in this newsletter (and on the PediaWise website) is meant for informational purposes only and shouldn't act as a substitute for going to your child's pediatrician or any other medical provider.

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