



Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS)

What is SARS?

SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) is a respiratory illness that has recently been reported in People's Republic of China, Hanoi, Vietnam, Singapore, North America, Canada and Europe. For additional information, check the World Health Organization's (WHO) SARS Web site or visit other pages on CDC's (Centers for Disease Control) SARS Web site www.cdc.gov/ncidod/sars.

What do I do if I have recently traveled to a country where cases of SARS have been reported?

You should monitor your own health for 10 days following your return. If you become ill with a fever of over 100.4°F [$>38.0^{\circ}\text{C}$] that is accompanied by a cough or difficulty breathing you should call the University Health Center at 346-2770 or your health care provider as soon as symptoms develop.

What are the symptoms and signs of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS)

The illness usually begins with a fever (measured temperature greater than 100.4°F [$>38.0^{\circ}\text{C}$]). The fever is sometimes associated with chills or other symptoms, including headache, general feeling of discomfort and body aches. Some people may also experience mild respiratory symptoms. After 2 to 7 days, SARS patients may develop a dry, nonproductive cough that might develop into more serious breathing problems.

If I were exposed to SARS, how long would it take for me to become sick?

The incubation period for SARS is typically 2-7 days; however, isolated reports have suggested an incubation period as long as 10 days.

What medical treatment is recommended for patients with SARS?

CDC currently recommends that patients with SARS receive the same treatment, including antibiotics and/or antiviral agents, that would be used for any patient with serious community-acquired pneumonia of unknown cause. Several treatment regimens have been used for patients with SARS, but there is insufficient information at this time to determine if they have had a beneficial effect.

How is SARS spread?

The principal way SARS appears to be spread is through droplet transmission; namely, when someone sick with SARS coughs or sneezes droplets into the air and someone else breathes them in. It is possible that SARS can be transmitted more broadly through the air or from objects that have become contaminated.

How long is a person with SARS infectious to others?

Information to date suggests that people are most likely to be infectious when they have symptoms, such as fever or cough. However, it is not known how long before or after their symptoms begin that patients with SARS might be able to transmit the disease to others.

Who is most at risk of contracting SARS?

Cases of SARS continue to be reported primarily among people who have had direct close contact with an infected person, such as those sharing a household with a SARS patient and health care workers. SARS has also occurred among air travelers to and from Hong Kong, Hanoi, Singapore and Mainland China.

Is there a test for SARS?

No "test" is available yet for SARS; however, CDC, in collaboration with WHO and other laboratories, has developed 2 research tests that appear to be very promising in detecting antibodies to the virus. CDC is working

to refine and share this testing capability as soon as possible with laboratories across the United States and internationally.

What should I do if I think I have SARS?

If you are ill with a fever of over 100.4°F [$>38.0^{\circ}\text{C}$] that is accompanied by a cough or difficulty breathing you should call the University Health Center (346-2770) or your health care provider for further instruction regarding care. To help your health care provider make a diagnosis, tell him or her about any recent travel to regions where cases of SARS have been reported and whether you were in contact with someone who had these symptoms.

Are there travel restrictions related to SARS?

WHO and CDC issued an advisory recommending that travelers consider postponing non-essential trips to Hong Kong or Guangdong Province, China, Hanoi, Vietnam and Singapore. The recommendation does not apply to passengers simply transiting through international airports in these locations. WHO has said that this recommendation is temporary, it will be reassessed in the light of ongoing developments, and the possibility exists that it may be extended to other locations affected by SARS, if deemed advisable.

Daily Update:

CDC www.cdc.gov/ncidod/sars or University Health Center <http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~uoshc/>

Clinic: What is SARS?: JDC/SJH: 4/2/03: kmb

UNIVERSITY HEALTH CENTER · Appointments & After Hours Nurse: 346-2770

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