

Facts About:

SARS

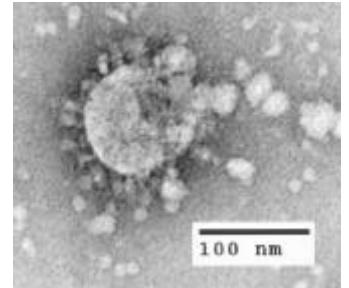
Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome



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A New Disease Called SARS

Severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) is a respiratory illness that has recently been reported in Asia, North America, and Europe. The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the World Health Organization (WHO) are investigating this recent outbreak of SARS.



Coronavirus under Microscope

Scientists at CDC and other laboratories have detected a previously unrecognized coronavirus in patients with SARS. This new coronavirus is believed to be the leading cause of SARS. Generally, coronaviruses, an identifiable group of viruses, are a common cause of mild to moderate upper respiratory illness in humans.

Symptoms of SARS

In general, SARS begins with a fever greater than 100.4°F. Other symptoms may include headache, an overall feeling of discomfort, and body aches. Some people also experience mild respiratory symptoms. After 2 to 7 days, SARS patients may develop a dry cough and have trouble breathing. People who have traveled to or have had close contact with people who have traveled to affected countries may be at risk.



In order to be considered a suspect SARS case, persons must have a fever (greater than 100.4°F), plus respiratory symptoms plus travel history to affected countries or contact with an ill person with a history of such travel. If you have these symptoms, or believe you may have come into contact with someone who has SARS, consult your physician.

How SARS Spreads

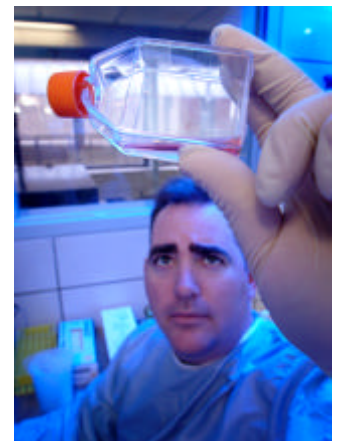
The primary way that SARS appears to spread is by close person-to-person contact. Most cases of SARS have involved people who cared for or lived with someone with SARS, or had direct contact with infectious material (for example, respiratory secretions) from a person who has SARS.

Protective Measures

CDC has issued recommendations and guidelines for people who may be affected by this outbreak. Generally careful hand washing with soap and water, covering the mouth and nose with a disposable tissue when coughing or sneezing, and disposal of the tissue afterwards is recommended.

For more information about protective measures and other issues, please click on the following links below. The sites are updated daily, and contain information for the following people:

- individuals who think they might have SARS
- family members caring for someone with SARS
- health care workers
- individuals considering travel to affected countries



The CDC SARS Web site
The WHO SARS Web site

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/sars/>
<http://www.who.int/csr/sars/en/>

