



## SARS – Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome

**SARS** is a viral respiratory illness. It began in Asia in February 2003 and spread to other countries.

### Signs & Symptoms

- Fever higher than 100.4°F.
- Headache. The body aches all over. Diarrhea may occur.
- Dry cough after 2 to 7 days.
- A hard time breathing and/or shortness of breath. Most persons develop pneumonia.

### Treatment

Medical treatment is needed for SARS. Persons suspected of having SARS should be quarantined in a hospital.

### Cause

SARS is thought to be caused by a certain virus. It is spread by close contact with someone who has the virus. Most likely, this is through coughs and sneezes or from touching objects that have infectious droplets on them.

### Questions to Ask

Do you have a fever, higher than 100.4°F, a dry cough, a hard time breathing, and/or shortness of breath and have you been in close contact with someone who has SARS, might have SARS, or who travelled to a SARS site within the last 10 days?



### Self-Care / Prevention

- Before you travel, check the CDC's Travelers' Health Web site at [www.cdc.gov/travel](http://www.cdc.gov/travel) for updates on SARS.
- If you will be in close contact with a person infected with SARS, follow infection control measures. Wash your hands often or use alcohol-based hand rubs. If you can, wear a surgical mask. Don't share eating utensils, towels, etc. For a more complete list of guidelines, access [www.cdc.gov/ncidod/sars/ic-closecontacts.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/sars/ic-closecontacts.htm).



#### Get more information from:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)  
800.CDC.INFO (232.4636) • [www.cdc.gov/ncidod/sars](http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/sars)

World Health Organization (WHO)  
[www.who.int/topics/sars/en/](http://www.who.int/topics/sars/en/)