

## **SARS Patient Information Sheet**

### Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS)

Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome, or SARS, is a severe form of pneumonia. The cause of SARS is still not confirmed, however national and international laboratory testing and collaboration is ongoing.

The main symptoms of SARS include both a high fever (over 38° Celsius) and respiratory problems, including dry cough, shortness of breath or breathing difficulties. A chest X-ray would indicate pneumonia. People with SARS may also experience other symptoms, including headache, muscular stiffness, loss of appetite, malaise, confusion, rash and diarrhea.

The disease is spread from one person to another only through close contact - through droplets from coughing or sneezing, or from direct face-to-face contact. There is no evidence to date that the disease spreads through casual contact, or through the air.

SARS appears to be less infectious than the flu, with an incubation period estimated to range from 2-10 days.

If you do not develop symptoms within 10 days from your last possible exposure to SARS, you are out of the risk period.

#### **Home Quarantine**

For people who may have had contact with SARS, during the 10 days following exposure, you should stay in home quarantine. This means remaining at home, wearing a mask when in contact with other family members, using your own personal items (such as towels, glasses, utensils, etc.), washing your hands often, sleeping in a separate room, and checking your temperature twice daily.

If anyone in your home develops a fever over 38° Celsius, respiratory symptoms (cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing), headache, or feels sick, contact :

your local health unit, or  
**Telehealth Ontario at 1-866-797-0000.**

Otherwise, family members of healthy people who are quarantined do not need to stay home because there is no risk they can transmit SARS.

If the person in quarantine develops signs of SARS, their entire household will be quarantined.

Category	Action	Contact Information
Anyone who visited the <b>Scarborough Hospital, Grace Division</b> on or after March 16, or <b>Markham Stouffville Hospital</b> on or after March 24, and <b>did not wear a protective mask</b>	Home Quarantine for 10 days	Call Telehealth Ontario 1-866-797-0000 for direction.
Anyone who has come into close contact with a person with SARS and did not wear a protective mask	Home Quarantine for 10 days	Call Telehealth Ontario 1-866-797-0000 for direction
Those who have travelled to China, Hong Kong, Singapore, or Vietnam AND who experience symptoms within 10 days of their return.	Home Quarantine for 10 days	Call Telehealth Ontario 1-866-797-0000 for direction.
Anyone in the above categories who ALSO has both Developed a fever (over 38.0 degrees Celsius) AND Developed one or more of the following respiratory symptoms: cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing.	Medical attention	Call Telehealth Ontario 1-866-797-0000 for direction AND/OR cover your nose and mouth with a clean mask or towel and go to your nearest hospital.
Anyone else in Ontario with concerns about SARS and how to protect themselves and their family.	The risk to the general population remains very low. Washing your hands frequently is always the best way to prevent infection from any illness.	People who have general queries about SARS can call Ontario's Health Infoline at 1-888-668-4636 for more information.

Call the ministry INFOLine at 1-800-268-1154

(Toll-free in Ontario only)

In Toronto, call 416-314-5518

TTY 1-800-387-5559

Hours of operation : 8:30am - 5:00pm

E-mail : infomoh@gov.on.ca

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Information provided by the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care