

CDRS

Communicable Disease Reporting System

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE FACT SHEET SEVERE ACUTE RESPIRATORY SYNDROME (SARS)

Severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) is a viral respiratory illness caused by a coronavirus, called SARS-associated coronavirus (SARS-CoV).

Symptoms

- In general, SARS begins with a high fever (temperature $>100.4^{\circ}$ F).
- Other symptoms may include headache, an overall feeling of discomfort and body aches. Some people experience mild respiratory symptoms at the beginning, while others develop a dry cough after 2-7 days.
- Respiratory symptoms are usually progressive, developing pneumonia by the sixth day and often lymphopenia.
- Some people have diarrhea.

Transmission

- SARS mainly spreads by close person-to-person contact.
- The virus is most readily transmitted through respiratory droplets released when an infected person coughs or sneezes.
- Droplets can be propelled up to 3 feet from a cough or sneeze.
- SARS can also spread when a person touches a surface or object contaminated by infectious droplets, and then touches his or her mouth, nose, or eyes.

Treatment

- No specific treatment recommendations have been made at this time.

Prevention

- Avoid travel to areas where SARS occurrence is known.
- Cover your cough and sneeze using the inner aspect of your elbow
- Use **good handwashing** techniques

Additional Information

- Persons who may have been exposed to SARS should be vigilant for fever (measure temperature twice a day) and respiratory symptoms over the 10 days following exposure.
- Exposed persons should notify their health-care provider immediately if fever or respiratory symptoms develop. In advance of clinical evaluation, healthcare providers should be informed that the individual may have been exposed to SARS so arrangements can be made, as necessary, to prevent transmission to others in the healthcare setting.
- Asymptomatic individuals (no fever or respiratory symptoms) do not have to be isolated.

**All information is general in nature and is not intended
to be used as a substitute for appropriate professional advice.**

Franklin County



Board of Health

Report Disease With Ease - 24 hours a day

www.cdinfo.com

Columbus and Franklin County Communicable Disease Reporting System

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