

SARS
(Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome)

I. DEFINITION

SARS is an acute viral respiratory disease which originated in China and has spread worldwide. As of July 29, 2003, 159 "**probable**" cases have been diagnosed in the United States. According to the CDC, 33 "**suspected**" cases have been reported, 14 of which are in Texas. There are no confirmed cases in Texas.

II. SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

SARS begins with a fever greater than 100.4 F. and is associated with headache, body aches, dry cough, and shortness of breath.

III. SPREAD

The disease is spread by close contact between people. The most likely mode is cough droplets in the air, which are inhaled. It is possible that SARS can be spread through the air from poorly ventilated or confined areas (such as airplanes, buses, movie theaters, etc.) or from contaminated surfaces.

IV. RISK FACTORS

Cases continue to be reported among people who have had direct close contact with an infected person, such as those sharing the same household or health care workers who did not use infection control procedures (masks, handwashing, etc) while caring for SARS patients. There is no indication of community spread in the U.S., at this time, the mortality rate is 9.83% world-wide.

V. PRECAUTIONS

IF YOU SUSPECT THAT YOU MAY HAVE SARS or are caring for someone with SARS:

- " Consult your healthcare provider!
- " Cover your mouth and nose using tissue or a surgical mask, if possible
- " Wash your hands often and well
- " Don't share silverware, towels, bedding, cups, utensils, or make-up
- " Maintain clean surfaces with disinfectant
- " Wear disposable gloves when cleaning or caring for SARS patients

VI. TREATMENT

Follow the instructions of your healthcare providers
Though specific diagnostic tests and vaccines are being devised, the major treatments involve supportive measures (Intravenous Fluids (IV.'s), antiviral and/or antibiotic medications, and perhaps steroidal medications)

We at the Health Center will be happy to help you.



Healthfully yours,

Dr. Healthberry

For questions or comments you can;

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