



SEVERE ACUTE RESPIRATORY SYNDROME (SARS)

WHAT IS SEVERE ACUTE RESPIRATORY SYNDROME?

SEVERE ACUTE RESPIRATORY SYNDROME (SARS) IS A SERIOUS TYPE OF PNEUMONIA, CAUSED BY A VIRUS SIMILAR TO THE COMMON COLD. INFECTION WITH THE SARS VIRUS CAUSES SEVERE BREATHING DIFFICULTY AND SOMETIMES DEATH.

HOW IS SARS SPREAD?

SARS IS SPREAD BY DROPLET CONTACT. WHEN SOMEONE WITH SARS COUGHS OR SNEEZES, INFECTED DROPLETS ARE SPRAYED INTO THE AIR. THE VIRUS MAY LIVE ON HANDS, TISSUES, AND OTHER SURFACES FOR UP TO 6 HOURS IN THESE DROPLETS AND UP TO 3 HOURS AFTER THE DROPLETS HAVE DRIED.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF SARS?

THE SYMPTOMS OF SARS ARE FEVER, COUGH, DIFFICULTY BREATHING, OR OTHER RESPIRATORY SYMPTOMS. OTHER SYMPTOMS INCLUDE CHILLS AND SHAKING, MUSCLE ACHES, AND HEADACHE.

HOW SOON AFTER INFECTION DO SYMPTOMS APPEAR?

SYMPTOMS USUALLY APPEAR TWO TO TEN DAYS AFTER INFECTION.

HOW IS SARS TREATED?

A DOCTOR SHOULD CHECK OUT PEOPLE SUSPECTED OF HAVING SARS IMMEDIATELY. MEDICATION IS GIVEN AND BREATHING SUPPORT IS SOMETIMES NEEDED.

WHEN AND FOR HOW LONG IS A PERSON ABLE TO SPREAD SARS?

PEOPLE WITH ACTIVE SYMPTOMS OF ILLNESS ARE ABLE TO SPREAD IT TO OTHERS, BUT IT IS NOT KNOWN HOW LONG A PERSON MAY BE ABLE TO SPREAD THE DISEASE BEFORE OR AFTER SYMPTOMS APPEAR.

ARE THERE POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS?

POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS INCLUDE RESPIRATORY, LIVER, AND HEART FAILURE.

WHAT CAN BE DONE TO PREVENT THE SPREAD OF SARS?

STAYING AWAY FROM PEOPLE WITH SARS CAN STOP THE SPREAD OF THE DISEASE. THOROUGH HAND WASHING, COVERING THE MOUTH AND NOSE WHEN SNEEZING OR COUGHING, AND NOT SHARING FOOD, DRINK, OR UTENSILS, WILL ALSO PREVENT THE DISEASE.