

## Appendix 3-G

### Information Sheet for SARS Patients

#### SARS

This fact sheet gives information about the illness and important instructions for preventing the spread of severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS). SARS is a viral respiratory illness caused by a coronavirus, called SARS-associated coronavirus (SARS-CoV). SARS was first reported in Asia in February 2003.

#### The 2003 SARS outbreak

According to the World Health Organization, during the SARS outbreak of 2003, a total of 8,098 people worldwide became sick with SARS; of these, 774 died. In the United States, there were 192 cases of SARS, none of which were fatal. Most of the U.S. SARS cases were among travelers returning from other parts of the world with SARS. There were very few U.S. cases among close contacts of travelers, including health-care workers and family members. SARS did not spread more widely in the community in the United States.

#### Symptoms of SARS

In general, SARS begins with a high fever (temperature greater than 100.4°F [ $>38.0^{\circ}\text{C}$ ]). Other symptoms may include headache, an overall feeling of discomfort, and body aches. Some people also have mild respiratory symptoms at the outset. About 10 percent to 20 percent of patients have diarrhea. After 2 to 7 days, SARS patients may develop a dry cough. Most patients develop pneumonia.

#### How SARS spreads

The main way that SARS seems to spread is by close person-to-person contact. The virus that causes SARS is thought to be transmitted most readily by respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. Droplets from the cough or sneeze are propelled a short distance (generally up to 3 feet) through the air and may be deposited on the mouth, nose, or eyes of persons who are nearby. The virus also can spread when a person touches a surface or object contaminated with infectious droplets and then touches his or her mouth, nose, or eye(s). In addition, it is possible that the SARS virus might spread more broadly through the air (airborne spread) or by other ways that are not now known.

#### Steps to protect yourself and the people around you

If you have SARS follow these instructions:

#### If you have SARS, you should:

- Cover your mouth and nose with tissue when coughing or sneezing. If you have a surgical mask, wear it during close contact with other people. A mask can reduce the number of droplets coughed into the air.
- Follow the instructions given by your health-care provider.

**If you have SARS and are being cared for at home, in order to help prevent your close contacts from getting sick, you must follow the instructions below while you have symptoms and for 10 days after your fever has disappeared and your respiratory symptoms (cough, shortness of breath, or difficulty breathing) have improved.**

- **You must not leave your home (go to work, school, out-of-home childcare, or other public places) for 10 days after your fever has disappeared and respiratory symptoms have improved.** One exception is if you need to see your doctor (see next bullet).
- If you need to go to the doctor's office, be sure to contact your doctor before you visit and tell the doctor you have been diagnosed with SARS. Wear a surgical face mask on the way to see your doctor.

- **Do not have visitors** to your household for 10 days after your fever has disappeared and respiratory symptoms improved.
- While at home, limit your contact with household members. If possible, sleep in separate rooms or at least a separate bed. Avoid close contact such as kissing.
- If possible, wear a surgical mask when around other people in your home. If you can't wear a mask, the members of your household should wear one when they are around you.
- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water, particularly after contact with body fluids (coughing/sneezing/blowing your nose, going to the bathroom). An alcohol-based hand rub is also acceptable.
- Cover your mouth and nose with tissue when you sneeze or cough. Put used tissues in the garbage and wash your hands immediately with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand rub.
- Don't share silverware, towels, or bedding with anyone in your home until these items have been washed with soap and hot water. Do not share toothbrushes, drinks, or cigarettes.
- Clean surfaces (counter or tabletops, door knobs, bathroom fixtures, etc.) that have been contaminated by body fluids (sweat, saliva, mucous, or even vomit or urine) from the SARS patient with a household disinfectant used according to the manufacturer's instructions. Wear disposable gloves during all cleaning activities. Throw these out when you are done. Do not reuse them.
- Maintain contact with the local health department regarding your symptoms.

Please contact \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_ if you have any questions or concerns or if you are feeling worse and require medical care.

**YOU MUST FOLLOW THESE INSTRUCTIONS TO PREVENT OTHERS FROM BECOMING ILL.**

