

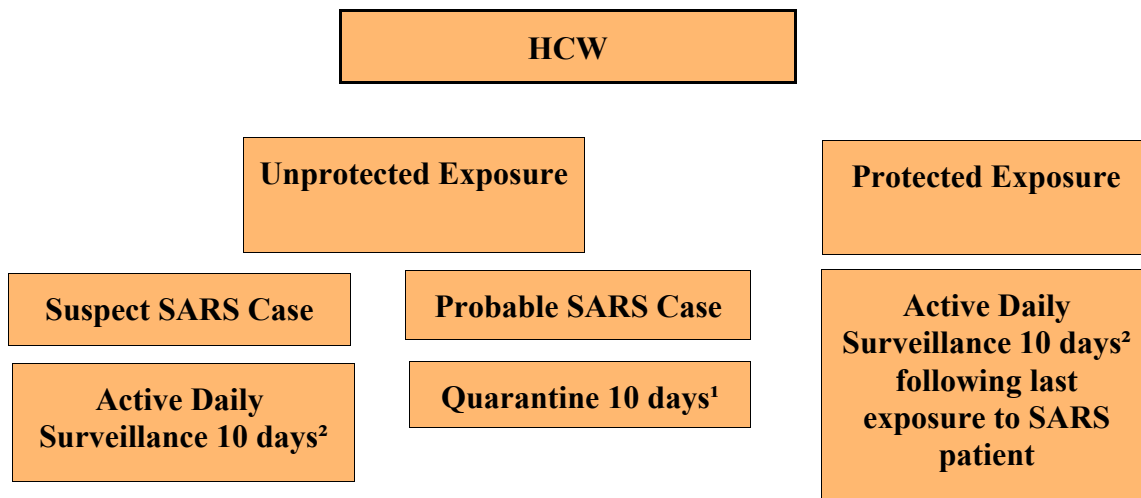
Infection Control Guidance for HCWs Working With SARS Patients **SEVERE ACUTE RESPIRATORY SYNDROME (SARS)**

The following fact sheet has been developed to assist the health care worker (HCW) prevent the transmission of SARS. Please be advised that as more details about the cause of this illness become available, the information below may change.

HCWs Caring For SARS Patient(s)

The directives of the occupational health department of the health care facility and the local public health authority should be followed. HCWs caring for SARS patients should be instructed regarding symptoms to watch for and action to take if they start to feel ill. They need to be made aware that if they become ill, SARS will need to be ruled out, and that they should put on a mask and leave work as soon as they begin to feel ill. If the HCW becomes symptomatic, notification of public health and all health care facilities in which the HCW worked, should occur.

Asymptomatic HCWs caring for SARS patient(s):



1. HCWs who have had unprotected exposure to a probable SARS patient should remain in quarantine until 10 days following the unprotected exposure. When on home quarantine, restrict all activities outside of the home, self-monitor for symptoms, and report the onset of any prodromal symptoms to local public health and to the Occupational Health Department. (For more information refer to *Public Health Management of SARS Cases and Contacts Interim Guidelines* on sars.gc.ca website.)

2. HCWs who have had protected exposure to SARS patients (i.e., using appropriate infection control precautions), and HCWs who have unprotected exposure to a suspect SARS patient, should have Active Daily Surveillance for temperature and symptoms for 10 days after the last exposure (may be single or repeated exposures). If the suspect SARS case (that the HCW had unprotected exposure to) becomes a probable SARS case, treat as for probable. The HCW should be immediately excluded from work should any symptoms develop. Active Daily Surveillance: can work, monitored twice a day for 10 days following the last contact with a SARS patient, temperature and symptoms should be monitored, information sheet filled in, and information sheet filed in the Occupational Health Department at the end of the 10 day period. An example of a HCW Active Daily Surveillance Sheet is appended. When at home the worker should self-monitor for symptoms and report the onset of any prodromal symptoms to their local public health authority and to their Occupational Health Department.

HCW who has had SARS

HCWs who have recovered from SARS can be considered for return to work 10 days after the resolution of fever (without antipyretic therapy) with resolving cough.

Pregnant or immunocompromised HCWs

All current evidence indicates that the infection control measures for health care workers that have been recommended by Health Canada, when appropriately and consistently followed, are effective in preventing transmission of SARS. It is unknown whether or not the risk is higher for pregnant or immunocompromised HCWs caring for SARS patients. There is insufficient evidence to support a recommendation to restrict pregnant or immunocompromised health care workers from caring for SARS patients. These individuals, like all HCWs, must be vigilant about following the recommended infection control procedures at all times when caring for SARS patients.

Immunocompromised HCW who has had SARS

Immunocompromised HCWs who have had SARS may shed the virus longer than individuals with normal immune response capability. There is no evidence to determine when it would be safe to redeploy these HCWs. Therefore, redeployment for such HCWs should be deferred for at least 10 days after the resolution of fever (without antipyretic therapy), with resolving cough. Consultation with an infectious disease specialist should be obtained to determine if this period needs to be extended on a case-by-case basis.

EXAMPLE

**HCW Active Daily Surveillance Sheet
Following Caring for SARS Patient(s)**

You have indicated that you cared for patients with SARS. Therefore, you are advised to monitor your health for any signs of illness for 10 days following your last contact with a SARS patient. At the end of the 10 days give this sheet to the Occupational Health Department where it will be filed. The table below, which lists the signs and symptoms of SARS, will be filled out by you to track your health status.

Date of last contact: ____ / ____ / ____ ; **10 days after last contact:** ____ / ____ / ____

Date	Time	Malaise (Feeling Tired) (Y/N)	Myalgia (Muscle aches) (Y/N)	Severe Headache (worse than usual) (Y/N)	Cough (onset within the past 7 days) (Y/N)	Shortness of Breath (worse than normal) (Y/N)	Temp (°C)
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	pm						
	am						
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INSTRUCTIONS

- This form should be completed twice per day, at the beginning and end of each work shift.
- If you are able to answer “NO” to all symptoms, AND your temperature remains below 38°C, you may continue to go about your business, including going to work as scheduled.
- If you answer “YES” to any of the questions concerning symptoms, BUT your temperature remains below 38°C, you cannot work. You should **stay home** and monitor your symptoms closely for the next 72 hours. Under these circumstances, you are on “home quarantine” and you should contact the City Public Health Department for further directions.
- If your temperature rises above 38°C, a doctor should examine you. Call your doctor and/or the City Public Health Department for advise on how to seek medical attention.

GENERAL INFORMATION ON SARS:

Health Canada SARS Hotline 1-800-454-8302 Internet: www.sars.gc.ca
 Telehealth Ontario 1-866-797-0000 Ontario Health InfoLine 1-888-668-4636