



Why business travelers need this information?

The threat to public health from severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) appears to be small at this time. However, if you have staff traveling to areas currently reporting cases of SARS, they are at a higher risk of exposure to the disease. Though we have not seen any cases in the United States, increased vigilance is important for the protection of your staff.

What is SARS?

SARS is caused by a previously unrecognized coronavirus, called SARS- associated coronavirus. Another member of the coronavirus family is the common cold.

What are the symptoms?

The illness usually begins with a fever and possibly mild respiratory symptoms. Chills, a headache, a runny nose and an overall feeling of discomfort with accompanying body aches may accompany a fever greater than 100.4°F. As the disease progresses, pneumonia-like symptoms occur, producing acute respiratory distress.

How is it spread?

Transmission of SARS occurs when a person with SARS has close person-to-person contact with another person. Coughing, sneezing or speaking can disperse the virus into the air where other people can inhale it. The virus also may spread when a person touches a surface that has been contaminated and then touches their nose, eye or mouth. Research is ongoing to identify other means of transmission.

How is it treated?

SARS has no specific treatment. Treatment options may be influenced by the severity of the illness. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) currently recommend the same treatment used for any patient with serious pneumonia of an unknown cause.

What should I do if I think I have SARS?

If you are ill with a fever greater than 100.4°F (>38.0°C) and have a cough or breathing difficulty, you should consult a health care provider. Information about any recent travel to regions with reported cases of SARS or close contact with anyone who has traveled to an area where SARS has been reported should be shared with your health care provider. In addition, you need to tell your provider about contact with anyone who had the symptoms.

Where can I get more information?

People with general public health questions should call 817-321-4700. You can visit us online (<http://health.tarrantcounty.com>), or call our Epidemiology and Health Information division at 817-321-5350. You may also contact the CDC at 1-888-246-2675 or online (www.bt.cdc.gov).