



Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS)

Definition:

Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) is a viral respiratory disease caused by SARS-CoV (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome-associated coronavirus).

Signs and Symptoms:

Symptoms of SARS include: fever, chills, sweats, headache, and body aches. SARS can require mechanical ventilation. Most patients develop pneumonia.

Transmission:

SARS-CoV is primarily transmitted by close person-to-person contact, most readily by respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. There is currently no known SARS-CoV transmission anywhere in the world. The most recent human cases of SARS were reported in China in April 2004.

Diagnosis:

SARS is diagnosed by clinical symptoms and laboratory tests. Respiratory specimens, serum, plasma, and stool samples may be collected for diagnostic tests.

Role of the School Nurse:

Education

- Federal CDC and world health partners continue to monitor for SARS. During a global outbreak, Maine CDC would require school nurses to monitor and exclude symptomatic students and staff.

Treatment Recommendations

- Symptomatic students and staff should be referred to their primary care providers for care.

Exclusions

- Exclude from school students with diagnosed SARS.

Reporting Requirements

- SARS is reportable by telephone to Maine CDC immediately upon suspicion.

Resources:

- Maine CDC coronavirus website <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/mecdc/infectious-disease/epi/airborne/coronavirus.shtml>
- Federal CDC SARS website <http://www.cdc.gov/sars/index.html>