

Guidelines for Protection of Individuals and Family Members
(updated on 15 May 2003)

SARS has been in Hong Kong now for two months. With better understanding of this infection, resumption of many normal activities in our community, and re-opening of schools, we should adopt a life-style that can protect us from the sporadic spread of the infection, while enjoying our life to the full. The following guidelines were revised with this objective:

I. For everyone, adults and children: -

- 1. Avoid going to high-risk places (all hospitals) and SARS outbreak areas. Wear a N-95 or surgical mask if going to cinemas, theatres and concerts. (Surgical mask is more comfortable but must be disposed of when wet. N-95 must be worn properly without any leak. Single layered paper masks are not effective.)**
- 2. Avoid restaurants that are too crowded. Avoid sharing tables with strangers.**
- 3. Keep a mask with you and wear it in crowded places such as public transport vehicles and area full of crowds (lifts/shopping malls/markets). There is no need to wear masks in open space/countryside and areas without any risk of droplets. Masks must be discarded when dirty, or after entering high-risk areas such as hospitals.**
- 4. Wash hands with soap regularly after touching any objects suspected to be contaminated. Wash hands before and after each meal, and avoid touching your eyes, nose and lips with unwashed hand/fingers. Keep a small bottle of antiseptic/alcohol spray or cotton wool swabs with you and use it where hand washing cannot be practised.**
- 5. Children and students should take body temperature every morning, and wear masks to schools and when they go out, but must ensure they do not touch the external surface of the masks, and wash hands after touching them. Adults can also adopt the same practice, and should not go to work or socialize if they are feeling unwell.**
- 6. There is no need to use masks when exercising, practising sports or singing, as it might cause breathing difficulties. Shower and change into clean clothes after all sporting activities. Students should wash hands after each PE lesson even if showers are not available.**
- 7. Use of masks in a small group of people all known to be healthy and afebrile is not really necessary, such as in classrooms, offices, and meetings. Students, co-workers and friends should look after each other well, and all persons with fever must be encouraged to attend medical care.**

II. For individuals with suspected symptoms:

- 1. High fever, muscle aches and chills/shivering are symptoms of significance, and doctors should be consulted if they last more than 24 hours. However, running nose and sore throats are not symptoms of significance.**
- 2. These are more common causes of fever. Patients with symptoms of fever or common cold should not jump to the conclusion of having SARS, but should consult the nearby doctor as soon as possible.**
- 3. If you have prominent symptoms of SARS you should go to the most nearby doctor of your choice, and wear a mask at all times. If SARS is diagnosed, you will be transferred to the designated HA hospital. Also make sure people who accompany or transport you are wearing masks.**
- 4. Take X-Ray chest and blood tests as recommended by the doctor, and also take repeated X-Rays as instructed. Rapid tests are not indicated for everyone, and only prescribed by specialists in special hospitals.**
- 5. If you are suspected to have contracted SARS, your family members and accompanying persons must also wear masks when they are close to you. They would also be contacted by hospitals/Department of Health daily for their health status.**
- 6. Cancel all social engagements and rest at home if SARS cannot be totally ruled out by your doctor.**
- 7. Make a note of your activities in the past 10 days, and the people that got close to you that might have been infected. Inform your doctor accordingly.**
- 8. Keep a list of your close encounters before and after the onset of symptoms, and inform your doctor if the SARS diagnosis were made.**
- 9. Please also follow the guidelines by Department of Health regarding contact with suspected or confirmed SARS patients for your family members.**

Dated 15 May 2003