

## **General Questions and Answers**

**Q: What is SARS and what are the symptoms?**

**A:** It is suspected that Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) is caused by a virus that affects the respiratory and immune systems. The most common symptoms of SARS include a high fever (>38 C or 100.4 F), followed by mild respiratory symptoms such as dry non-productive cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing.

**Q: How is SARS spread and what are the risk factors?**

**A:** The susceptibility and risk is based on two main factors: current health status of the immune system and reducing the effects of stress, worry and fear. People in a weakened immune state, older persons, or person currently dealing with other health concerns (e.g. diabetes, cardiovascular disease, respiratory problems) are at the greatest risk. If you are at high risk you are encouraged to follow the recommendations below and to work with your health care provider or Naturopathic Doctor to determine what specific steps you should follow to strengthen your immune system. If you are not at high risk it is unlikely that you will be a good 'host' for the virus. It is also important to remember that fear and worry can adversely affect health and weaken the immune system. The following basic guidelines are designed to maintain overall immune support and aid in fighting off viruses or external pathogens.

## **Guidelines for General Immune Support**

- Ensure adequate rest and sleep.
- End showers with cold water to boost the immune system.
- Avoid aerobics or intensive exercises and instead focus on light exercises and stretching to ensure that the body is not exhausted.
- Burn essential oils in a diffuser, such as thyme, eucalyptus, sandal wood, lemon grass or Solvarome (by Genestra) to fight off viral

infections or apply some to a tissue or cotton ball and place inside your shirt to clean the air you breathe.

- Use a humidifier to ensure that your home is not too dry, as SARS appears to survive in dry heat.
- Wash hands with antibacterial soap often throughout the day and avoid touching your face with your hands, especially if around others.

## **Nutritional Aspect**

- At least 4 servings of fresh fruit and vegetables a day to ensure adequate fibre.
- Avoid sugar, caffeine and alcohol, which depress immune function.
- Avoid dry, hot, oily or heavy foods and eat smaller meals about 3-5 times a day.
- Drink 6-8 glasses of water a day to ensure that toxins are easily removed from the body.
- Do not start a fast or detoxification diet until the risk of SARS has been lifted.

**If any symptoms appear consult your health care provider, naturopathic doctor or the CAND for a referral.**

## **Contact:**

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