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TO: ALL RCDSO MEMBERS

Monday, April 21, 2003 (update of April 16, 2003)

## NEW SARS SCREENING TOOL

This is the fourth bulletin prepared by the College on Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) to share the most current information received from the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC). The College has been monitoring the information available about SARS from sources including the MOHLTC, Health Canada (HC), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Centres for Disease Control (CDC). **This bulletin is an update of our third bulletin posted on this topic on our Web site at [www.rcdso.org](http://www.rcdso.org). Updated information is in bold and italics.**

### What questions should we ask patients when booking appointments?

The College recommends that dental offices ask all patients the questions listed on the MOHLTC SARS Screening Tool (below) when booking or confirming appointments *by phone*. See page 5 of this Bulletin for a copy of the Screening Tool that can be photocopied for your use in your office.

For walk-in patients, the screening tool can be completed when the patient attends at the dental office. The results of the screening will determine whether or not dental treatment can be provided safely for patients.

<b>SECTION A</b>			
1. Have you had unprotected contact with a person with SARS in the last 10 days? <b>OR</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<b>Quarantine applies, notify Public Health</b>
2. In the last 10 days have you been to a health-care facility that is closed due to SARS? <b>OR</b>			
3. <b>Are you under quarantine, or have you been contacted by public health and put on home isolation?</b>			
<b>SECTION B</b>			
Have you been to China, Hong Kong, Vietnam, Singapore or Taiwan in the last 10 days?		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>SECTION C</b> Are you experiencing <u>any</u> of the following symptoms?			
• Myalgia (muscle aches) <b>OR</b>	• Shortness of breath (worse than what is normal for you) <b>OR</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
• Malaise (severe tiredness or unwell) <b>OR</b>	• Feeling feverish, or have had a fever in the last 24 hours		
• Severe headache (worse than usual) <b>OR</b>			
• Cough (onset within 7 days) <b>OR</b>			
<b>SECTION D</b> Please record the temperature if answer to C is yes.			
Temperature	°C	(Is the temperature above 38°C?)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

**If the patient answers NO to all sections A through C**, then the person may be seen in the dental office for routine dental treatment.

**If the patient answers YES to only section B**, the College recommends delaying elective dental treatment until more than 10 days have elapsed since the patient's return from travel to an affected area. Affected areas are updated periodically and are included in the suspect case definitions found on the HC Web site. Asymptomatic patients returning from travel to affected areas who have questions regarding SARS can be referred to a physician or can call the telephone numbers listed at the end of this Bulletin for information.

**If the patient answers YES to only section C**, the College recommends referring the patient to a physician's office for an assessment and delaying elective dental treatment until the patient's symptoms have resolved.

**If the patient answers YES to section A**, quarantine applies and public health should be notified if the patient has broken quarantine and attended the dental office. The patient should NOT be seen for dental treatment in the dental office during the period of quarantine unless the dental condition will pose a medical threat to the patient and the condition can not be managed by pharmacological means alone. The emergency dental treatment for such patients must be planned in coordination with public health authorities and should be provided using infection control precautions as outlined below.

**If the patient answers YES to section A or B and has symptoms as in sections C or D**, the patient should be given a surgical mask and directed to a hospital emergency department (not by public transportation) for an assessment after calling ahead to ensure appropriate isolation and precautions. If no close contact\* has occurred during the patient's attendance at the dental office then no extraordinary measures are required. You may call the local public health unit for advice regarding dental office staff and other patients who have had contact with the patient in the waiting room.

**If the patient answers YES to sections C and D**, dental treatment should also be delayed and the patient should be referred to a physician for assessment.

The symptoms listed above are consistent with the HC suspect case definition and definition of persons under investigation. These are revised periodically and can be found on the HC Web site.

*\* Close contact is defined by HC as having cared for, lived with or had face-to-face (within 1 metre) contact with, or having had direct contact with respiratory secretions and/or body fluids of a person considered or suspected to have SARS.*

**What infection control precautions should we take when providing emergency dental treatment for patients under quarantine or patients with SARS-like symptoms, or patients with risk factors for exposure to SARS?**

Dental treatment for such patients should be delayed unless the dental condition will pose a medical threat to the patient if left untreated. For true emergencies (severe pain or infection) which cannot be

## NEW SARS SCREENING TOOL

managed by pharmacological means alone, the minimum emergency treatment should be provided. Wherever possible, a referral to a hospital dental clinic is recommended.

HC recommends routine, airborne and contact precautions when treating patients suspected or considered to have SARS.

In the dental office this means:

- handwashing before and after any direct contact with the patient, after contact with body fluids or respiratory secretions, after contact with items known or likely to be contaminated with respiratory secretions, before donning gloves, and after removing gloves;
- personal barrier protection including clean non-sterile gloves, long-sleeved gown, mask (N-95 mask preferably) and eye protection during all treatment;
- ***gloves and masks should be worn by front desk personnel who are required to screen patients who present in the office without prior screening;***
- minimizing aerosol and splatter by use of antimicrobial rinse, rubber dam, high volume suction, hand instrumentation where possible;
- treating these patients when no other patients are present;
- treating these patients in a room with a closed door if possible or preferably in an isolation room with negative pressure relative to the surrounding area and ventilation to the outside;
- disinfecting all surfaces that may have come into contact with respiratory secretions with a high-level (hospital grade) disinfectant between patients;
- routine precautions for handling soiled linen and clinical waste following municipal/regional requirements;
- gowns should be removed before leaving the operatory.

Further information can be found in the following documents available on-line on the HC Web site:

- Routine Practices and Additional Precautions for Preventing the Transmission of Infection in Health Care
- Infection Control Guidance for Health Care Workers in Outpatient Settings: SARS

***Or by contacting RCDSO staff – Dr. Robert Carroll or Dr. Lesia Waschuk. Contact information is at the end of this Bulletin.***

### **Where can we get information regarding quarantine orders?**

At the time of writing, quarantine orders apply to people who have:

- had direct contact with a SARS patient;
- visited Scarborough Hospital, Grace Division in Toronto;
- visited York Central Hospital in Richmond Hill;
- visited Brookside/Hillside Retirement Residence in Richmond Hill;
- visited Highland Funeral Home and Cremation Centre in Toronto.

Information regarding facilities closed due to SARS can be found in the news releases posted on the MOHLTC Web site or by contacting your local public health unit. Members are encouraged to check regularly to ensure current information. Members are also advised that some patients have broken quarantine orders to present for health care. Therefore the assumption should not be made that a patient who presents in the office is not under quarantine restrictions.

**What should we do if we have already treated a patient with a history of contact with a SARS patient or a history of travel to an affected area?**

You may consider contacting the patient to find out whether he/she has developed SARS-like symptoms since his/her appointment in the dental office. If he/she has, you should contact your local public health unit for advice and direction.

**Where can we obtain N-95 masks?**

N-95 masks are masks that filter particles one micron in size and have a 95% filter efficiency and provide a tight facial seal (less than 10% leak). Standard TB masks meet these criteria. The Canadian Dental Association has compiled a list of manufacturers and models of N-95 masks.

The College has been informed that N98 pleated masks are available at Nexus Dental 800-437-5606. Although these masks meet the filtration requirement it may be prudent to wear them in combination with a cone mask to ensure an adequate seal.

**Records**

Members are advised to include the results of their screening protocol for each patient as part of the patient's permanent record.

**CONTACT INFORMATION and LINKS**

- Health Canada documents for the general public and health-care practitioners  
<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/pphb-dgspsp/sars-sras/index.html>
- Ontario's Health Infoline: 1-888-668-4636
- Toronto Public Health Hotline: 416-338-7600
- Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care  
[http://www.health.gov.on.ca/english/public/updates/archives/hu\\_03/hu\\_sars.html](http://www.health.gov.on.ca/english/public/updates/archives/hu_03/hu_sars.html)
- Contact information for local public health units  
[http://www.health.gov.on.ca/english/public/contact/phu/phuloc\\_dt.html](http://www.health.gov.on.ca/english/public/contact/phu/phuloc_dt.html)
- Health Canada SARS case definitions  
[http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/pphb-dgspsp/sars-sras/sarscasedef-0317\\_e.html](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/pphb-dgspsp/sars-sras/sarscasedef-0317_e.html)
- Health Canada definition of persons under investigation  
[http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/pphb-dgspsp/sars-sras/sars-pui\\_e.html](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/pphb-dgspsp/sars-sras/sars-pui_e.html)
- Routine Practices and Additional Precautions for Preventing the Transmission of Infection in Health Care  
<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/pphb-dgspsp/publicat/ccdr-rmtc/99pdf/cdr25s4e.pdf>
- Infection Control Guidance for Health Care Workers In Outpatient Settings: SARS  
[http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/pphb-dgspsp/sars-sras/pdf/sars-outpatient-factsheet-0324\\_e.pdf](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/pphb-dgspsp/sars-sras/pdf/sars-outpatient-factsheet-0324_e.pdf)

**ANY QUESTIONS?**

If you have any further questions, please contact the following College staff:

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# NEW SEVERE ACUTE RESPIRATORY SYNDROME (SARS) SCREENING TOOL

## For All Ontario Healthcare Settings

This screening tool is to be used by all Ontario healthcare settings.

<b>SECTION A</b>	
1. Have you had unprotected contact with a person with SARS in the last 10 days? <b>OR</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
2. In the last 10 days have you been to a health-care facility that is closed due to SARS? <b>OR</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No ↓ <b>Quarantine applies,  notify Public Health</b>
3. <b>Are you under quarantine, or have you been contacted by public health and put on home isolation?</b>	

<b>SECTION B</b>	
Have you been to China, Hong Kong, Vietnam, Singapore or Taiwan in the last 10 days?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

<b>SECTION C</b> Are you experiencing <u>any</u> of the following symptoms?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Myalgia (muscle aches) <b>OR</b></li> <li>• Malaise (severe tiredness or unwell) <b>OR</b></li> <li>• Severe headache (worse than usual) <b>OR</b></li> <li>• Cough (onset within 7 days) <b>OR</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shortness of breath (worse than what is normal for you) <b>OR</b></li> <li>• Feeling feverish, or have had a fever in the last 24 hours</li> </ul> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

<b>SECTION D</b> Please record the temperature if answer to C is yes.	
Temperature	°C (Is the temperature above 38°C?) <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

<p><b>ROUTINE DENTAL TREATMENT CAN BE PROVIDED</b>  if the response is NO to all sections A through C.</p>
<p><b>THE COLLEGE RECOMMENDS DELAYING ELECTIVE DENTAL TREATMENT</b>  if the response is YES to only section B, or only to section C.</p>
<p><b>NO DENTAL TREATMENT SHOULD BE PROVIDED PENDING MEDICAL ASSESSMENT AND/OR CONSULTATION WITH PUBLIC HEALTH</b>  if the patient answers YES to section A <b>OR</b>  if the patient answers YES to 2 or more of sections B, C or D.</p>