



# STATE OF NEW YORK DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Wadsworth Center - DLQC  
Laboratory Response Network

Empire State Plaza, P.O. Box 509  
6 Tower Place, Room 205

Executive Park  
Albany, NY 12201-0509

Antonia C. Novello, M.D., M.P.H., Dr. P.H.  
*Commissioner*

Dennis P. Whalen  
*Executive Deputy Commissioner*

April 4, 2003

## **Re: Laboratory Safety Guidelines for SARS Specimens**

**Please share these documents with your laboratory staff, particularly those involved with handling and/or processing specimens from suspect SARS cases using routine hematology, chemistry and microbiology procedures.**

Dear Laboratory Director:

The goal of this distribution is to provide you with important information regarding interim laboratory biosafety guidelines for handling and processing specimens associated with severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS). The CDC has posted these guidelines at: [www.cdc.gov/ncidod/sars/sarslabguide.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/sars/sarslabguide.htm). They are also included in this distribution.

Up-to-date information and CDC guidance documents with respect to SARS can be found at: CDC's SARS website <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/sars/>  
NYSDOH secure HPN website <https://commerce.health.state.ny.us/hpn/>  
NYSDOH public website <http://www.health.state.ny.us/nysdoh/sars/consumer.htm>

If a patient meets the clinical criteria for SARS outlined in the NYSDOH update distributed earlier, the health care provider should follow the instructions in the update to report to the local health department (LHD) or the NYSDOH. Upon consultation with the CDC and confirmation that the case should be managed as a SARS case, the NYSDOH will help you determine where the laboratory specimen should be sent for testing. The attached guidance can be used to properly handle specimens.

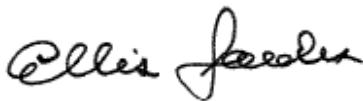
In addition, for your information, there will be a CDC Broadcast today, April 4, 2003, titled "Preventing Spread of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS)." Information regarding that broadcast is also attached.

This distribution is being sent to you by the NYSDOH Laboratory Response Network (LRN). The LRN is a statewide clinical and environmental laboratory network intended to prepare for and provide a coordinated, timely and effective response to public health threats and emergencies.

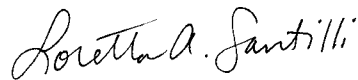
If you have any questions, or if you require further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact the Laboratory Response Network staff at (518) 457-9795 or via electronic mail: [LRNexec@health.state.ny.us](mailto:LRNexec@health.state.ny.us)

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,



Ellis Jacobs, Ph.D., DABCC, Director  
Clinical Laboratory Evaluation Program



Loretta A. Santilli, M.P.H., Coordinator  
Laboratory Response Network

Attachments

## CDC BROADCAST

A Public Health Training Network Satellite Broadcast (webcast and audiobridge available)

### **"Preventing Spread of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS)" Friday, April 4, 2003**

- 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM ET**
- 2:00 - 3:30 PM ET (Rebroadcast)**

For information about viewing sites in NYS regions contact:

Capital Region: Tracey Camilli ~ 518-408-5264

Central Region: Ray Thielke ~ 315-477-8491

Metropolitan Area: Ellen Poliski ~ 212-268-7185

Western Region: Claudia Lee ~ 716-847-4302 (Buffalo)  
Jacquelyn Ranches ~ 585-423-8090 (Rochester)

#### PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

This broadcast sponsored by the World Health Organization (WHO) and supported by Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) will provide information on Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) reported in patients in Asia, North America, and Europe. This global broadcast will discuss the latest findings regarding the SARS outbreak and prevention of transmission in healthcare settings. The faculty will include representatives from WHO, CDC, and several affected countries who will report their experiences with SARS.

#### GOAL

To provide the public health and clinical communities basic information regarding the SARS outbreak and guidance to prevent transmission. Upon successful completion of the program, participants will be able to:

- Describe the current outbreak of SARS
- Describe strategies to prevent transmission in hospitals and healthcare facilities
- Recognize the need for international cooperation to stop the spread of SARS

#### INTENDED AUDIENCES

Clinicians, healthcare providers, and public health advisors in countries reporting cases of SARS and others who want knowledge of SARS transmission prevention strategies

For broadcast/webcast/audiobridge information: <http://www.phppo.cdc.gov/PHTN/sars>

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**UNABLE TO VIEW THE BROADCAST LIVE?**

An archived version of the webcast will be available after April 4, 2003. You may view the archived webcast at <http://www.phppo.cdc.gov/PHTN/sars>.

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**FOR THE LATEST AUTHORITATIVE INFORMATION ON SARS**

World Health Organization (WHO)

<http://www.who.int/csr/sars/en/>

Provides the public and professionals global information about Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) from WHO, which is coordinating the international investigation of this outbreak. Updated daily to ensure that the most current information is available.

Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS),  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/sars/>

Contains the latest SARS information including CDC guidelines and recommendations for clinicians, health departments, laboratories, travelers, air travel workers, and others. Provides links to WHO and other international resources.

Frequently Asked Questions (CDC)

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/sars/faq.htm>

Answers questions about SARS and its origin and spread. Addresses questions about CDC recommendations for individuals, travelers, households, and health care settings.

**ADDITIONAL TRAINING AND INFORMATION RESOURCES**

MEDLINEplus - Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome

National Library of Medicine

<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/severeacuterespiratorysyndrome.html>

Contains links to SARS news reports from the U.S. media and around the world. Click on the "Search MEDLINE" feature to find recent research articles on SARS. Also offers links to fact sheets, organizations, and images.

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**CDC ASKS FOR YOUR ONLINE FEEDBACK ABOUT THE BROADCAST**

Registration and evaluation via the CDC/ATSDR Training and Continuing Education Online System at <http://www.phppo.cdc.gov/phtnonline> is encouraged. Participants who register for and evaluate the satellite broadcast or webcast program by May 4, 2003 will be awarded a certificate of attendance.

In addition, CDC invites all viewers to submit a short review on TrainingFinder.org. Your feedback will help to improve these programs and can be seen by other interested professionals. Posting a review is easy. First, click on the course listing on TrainingFinder.org at

[http://www.trainingfinder.org/search.cgi?action=view\\_course&course\\_id=11241](http://www.trainingfinder.org/search.cgi?action=view_course&course_id=11241)

Then go to "Write an online review." Follow the instructions to enter your overall quality rating (1-5 stars) and text review.

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