**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>