

Understanding SARS

Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome



US Naval Hospital, Okinawa

15 May 2003

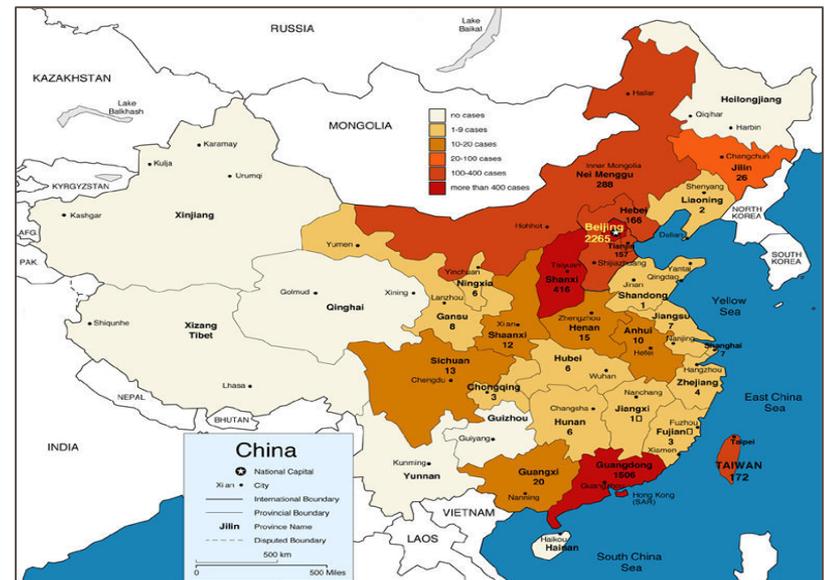


SARS background

- SARS first appeared in China in Nov 2002 but wasn't reported until February 2003
- In Mid-March the World Health Organization issued:
 - Global Health Alert
 - Emergency Travel Advisory/Alert
- Initially involved Mainland China (Guangdong Province), Hong Kong, Vietnam (Hanoi), Singapore.

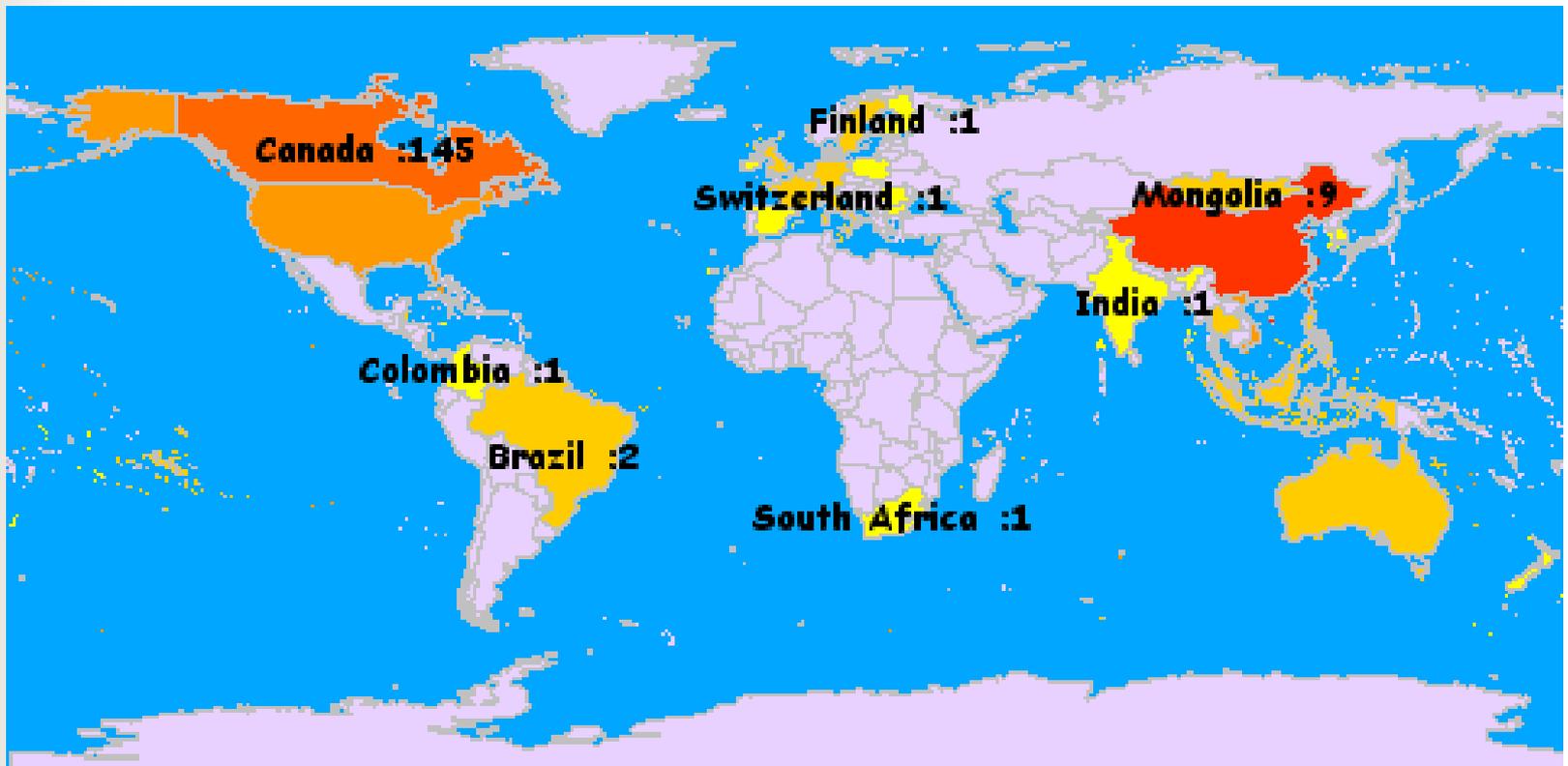
SARS areas- China

- Now more provinces affected including: Shangxi, Beijing, Guangdong, Inner Mongolia, Tianjin, Hong Kong, Taiwan,



SARS areas- World

- Over 30 different nations affected.





SARS statistics

- So far, WORLD-wide there have been
 - 7447 cases of SARS -majority from China (6697/470)
 - 552 deaths from SARS -as of 12 May 03
- Every year in the US alone
 - 114,000 hospitalized from the flu
 - 20-40,000 DIE from the flu
- The reasons SARS was so alarming
 - Unknown agent (now we know it's a virus)
 - Effect of world travel played on spread
 - Death rate of 4% (?)

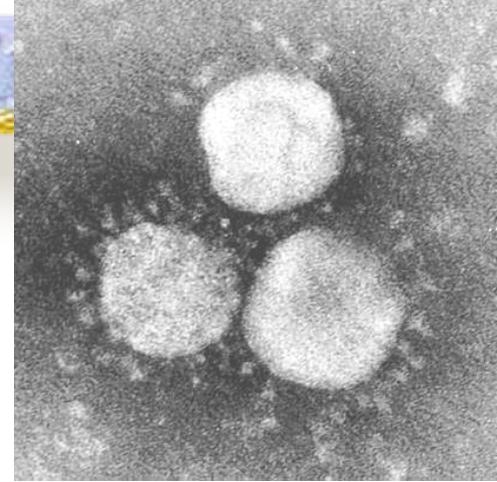


SARS statistics

- So far...
 - No cases of SARS in DoD
 - No cases of SARS in Japan or Okinawa
 - In US, approximately 332 people infected (63 probable cases), with NO DEATHS.
But... numbers may decrease as we decide that a lot of these cases aren't SARS (CDC definition different than WHO)

SARS virus

- SARS is caused by a coronavirus
- Other members of the coronavirus family cause the common cold and flu-like illness
- SARS is a new (newly-discovered?) virus
 - No meds
 - No cure
 - No vaccine (not yet...)
 - Prevention is key!!!
 - **JUST LIKE COLDS.....**





SARS disease

- What are the symptoms?
 - A fever of 100.5° degrees
 - A persistent dry cough
 - Serious shortness of breath

- Who gets SARS?

- 94% ■ People who travel to SARS-affected areas
- 4% ■ CLOSE contact with sick person (family member)
- 2% ■ Healthcare providers of SARS patients



SARS epidemiology

- How do you get SARS?
 - Mainly by respiratory droplets as an infected persons sneezes/coughs and spreads their germs.
 - Potentially, any body fluid is contaminated
 - Incubation period up to 10 days
 - SARS virus survives 3-4 hours* on surfaces



SARS epidemiology

- You don't get SARS from:
 - Casual contact
 - Air Travel*
 - Transiting airports
 - Imported furniture/carpets
- How contagious is SARS?
 - Less contagious than influenza, chickenpox, etc.



SARS epidemiology

- How serious is SARS?
 - Death rate depends upon: definition of SARS, which country, level of healthcare/resources, patient's age & health... **ACCURATE DATA is KEY!**
 - Originally, 20% patients hospitalized, 4% die
 - Now? 15% die overall (?)
 - But...
 - <1% mortality for persons less than 25 yrs
 - 6% mortality for persons 25-44 yrs
 - 15% mortality for persons 45-65 yrs



SARS precautions

- What's being done— General
 - Education of the General Public
 - Precautions for Healthcare providers
 - Isolation of Sick Patients
 - Quarantine of Exposed Individuals



SARS precautions

- What's being done— Travel
 - Individuals screened before boarding
 - Individuals screened upon arrival
 - Anyone with symptoms on the plane is isolated
 - Everyone on the plane is notified if someone was later diagnosed with SARS



SARS precautions

- What's being done— Here
 - AD/GOV travel prohibited to affected areas
 - Advise others not to travel to high-risk areas
 - Mandatory screening upon return
 - Providers educated/aware
 - Medical surveillance for outbreaks
 - System in place to handle SARS patients
 - SARS resources made available on internet:
 - www.med.navy.mil/SITES/NHOKI/PATIENTS/COMMUNITYHEALTH/POPHEALTH/Pages/SARS.aspx



SARS prevention

- Avoid traveling to SARS-affected areas
- Avoid being around anyone with SARS.
- Avoid large crowds, sick/coughing people
- But..... The most important thing:
Wash your hands frequently!!!!!!
- What Else?
 - Maintain a healthy lifestyle
 - *Masks?*



SARS health concerns

- Remember, that many illnesses have fever, cough, aches/pains...
- Unless you've been to an infected area, or know someone who has, ***NOT SARS!***
- If you've recently traveled, monitor your health for 10 days, and inform a provider of your trip if you seek care.
- Regardless, ANY time you have shortness of breath or difficulty breathing seek care!



Other SARS Resources

- CDC Website
 - www.cdc.gov/ncidod/sars
- WHO Website
 - www.who.int/csr/sars
- USNH Website
 - www.med.navy.mil/SITES/NHOKI/PATIENTS/COMMUNITYHEALTH/POPHEALTH/Pages/SARS.aspx
- USNH Preventive Medicine Department
 - #643-7808 or #643-7622