

Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) / Atypical Pneumonia

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The winter, 2002, epidemic called 'SARS' can serve as a rehearsal for the Natural Health Practitioner to be prepared to help people overcome both old and new strains of viral pathogens by teaching the laws of natural health to prevent the susceptibility to disease as well as assisting the innate healing processes by applying effective natural health remedies.

What is SARS?

SARS stands for Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome. This new-version illness is an acute respiratory infection (pneumonia) of “unknown etiology” but most likely caused by a mutated coronavirus possibly in conjunction with a paramyxovirus. Thus, it is a new viral configuration whose replication causes life-threatening pneumonia through the secondary involvement from its toxic metabolic by-products. [The Lancet, Volume 361 Issue 9364 Page 5000.]

What causes a new virus?

The most probable cause of this new, mutated strain of virus can be found in the Asian (in this case, Chinese) practice of using live corona virus in their vaccines for livestock animals. As evidenced by the creation of AIDS, viruses are known to mutate and “jump species” to other hosts—thus it moves from farm animals to the human frequency. Regardless, 276 people have died so far at this beginning stage of SARS, which began in Hong Kong and Shanghai and it has spread globally through Viet Nam and Singapore via air travel. The United States is demanding quarantine of those diagnosed with SARS as it is a contagious, airborne disease.

How contagious is SARS?

Though spreading globally to more than 25 countries, SARS appears to be less infectious than influenza. Experts believe it spreads through close contact with an infected person, such as between family members or between patient and doctor.

Researchers have also investigated sanitation issues and insects as proliferating agents. Thus, SARS is a major concern as a contagious disease because, while it appears to be only moderately contagious, it has proven itself to be a slow but unrelenting pandemic.

The wearing of surgical masks as seen on T.V. seems a bit futile to stop a virus which passes right through the pores of the gauze. Unless the SARS virus is attached to a larger molecule such as an airborne cough discharge, wearing masks will not prove to be an effective deterrent against viral agents.

What are the symptoms of SARS?

The primary symptoms of SARS are high fever, dry cough, and shortness of breath or breathing difficulties. Changes in the lungs consistent with pneumonia are revealed by chest x-rays. SARS may also be associated with other symptoms, including sore throat, headache, muscular aches and stiffness, and loss of appetite, deep fatigue and lethargy, confusion, rashes, and diarrhea. Death occurs in a small percentage of cases due to respiratory failure.

Thus SARS symptoms are similar to flu and viral upper respiratory infections. Thus, the natural therapeutics come from the ranks of already-established protocols that have already proven themselves to be effective.

How serious is SARS?

- According to the World Health Organization (WHO), as of April 25, 2003, there have been over 276 deaths out of 4,642 confirmed cases worldwide. Many more cases exist that have not been confirmed by the few official labs that can diagnose the virus.
- There are 180 confirmed cases in the USA to date.
- The highest number of cases are in Guangdong, China, Hong Kong and Singapore.
- 6% of cases are fatal - many of these have had a pre-disposing condition such as diabetes, heart disease, cigarette use, or other immune system impairment.
- 8% of cases are severe.
- 90% of cases experience full recovery after a week of mild to moderate symptoms.

How is SARS diagnosed?

As of April 24, 2003, a quick and simple lab test to detect SARS is available. Developed by German doctors, this new test ends the life-disrupting quarantine placed on people with non-SARS respiratory complaints and provides a diagnosis within two hours.

How is SARS being treated, medically?

There is no specific medical treatment for SARS at this time, but there is much that can be done by Natural Health Practitioners (homeopaths, acupuncturists, herbalists). Standard antiviral drugs and antibiotics are not effective although some patients in Hong Kong have shown favorable response to a cocktail of drugs including the antiviral drug Ribavirin® and steroids.

Prevention and Herbal Support of Atypical, Viral Pneumonia-like conditions.

Considering the limitation of conventional medicine in treatment of viral disorders and the lack of specifically-effective treatment for SARS patients, it is advantageous that alternative treatments be employed including herbal traditions (Systemic and Chinese), acupuncture, and homeopathy.

The fundamental adaptability of a person's immune system coupled with an inherent terrain that does not provide a suitable environment for viral replication is the first-line defense for survival. When a therapy is needed to assist the body in its adaptive efforts, Systemic formulas excel in 1) providing natural support to assist in restoring an inherently resistant terrain, 2) stimulating the immune system to be effective, and 3) helping the body impede viral conditions.

Protocol Programs

Here are protocol programs that can help the body address viral, respiratory, and related symptoms. They have been designed by a team of herbalists with consensus of natural health doctors who have treated recent cases of viral complaints

Prophylaxis – for people in contact with someone with SARS, and for air travelers.

(The incubation period is between 55 to 168 hours.) Strengthen the immune system and lungs with herbal formulas:

2 Gt (Thymus), 2 R (Lung), 1 ATAK (Immune Rejuvenator), 2 Tonify Metal.

First Stage – At the onset of flu-like symptoms:

Herbal formulas include:

2 R (Lung), 2 Sedate Metal, 2 VIVI (Anti-Virox), 1 #5 (Stabilizer), 2 ATAK (Immune Rejuvenator).

Second Stage – If/when the symptoms of viral pneumonia are becoming established and drainage support is important:

Herbal formulas include:

2 R (Lung), 2 #4 (Fung Dx), 2 VIVI (Anti-Virox), 1 ACX (Vitamin Detox), 2 ATAK Immune Rejuvenator), 2 Sedate Metal.

Recovery Stage - To help the body rebuild its strength and develop a stronger immune system:

Herbal formulas include:

2 Gt (Thymus), 2 #3 (Bactrex), 2 Metal Tonify, in the morning

2 Gt (Thymus), 2 #6 (Restore), 2 Metal Tonify, in the evening

Case Management

Once diagnosed, SARS patients will be placed in an isolation unit with strict respiratory and mucosal barriers. Some are being allowed in-home quarantine.

Doc Wheelwright's Insights:

The ATAK (Immune Rejuvenator) Formula

Doc Wheelwright, the formulator of Systemic herbal formulas, predicted the rise of many new viruses that he felt would result from the WHO world vaccination program, agricultural vaccinations, biological warfare research, mutations due to the application of allopathic drugs (excessive antibiotic use), and genetic manipulation of foods.

Further, he believed that humanity would become more and more susceptible to pathogenic organisms because of its reliance on nutritionally-inferior fast foods, processed foods, sugar, and the rampant use of artificial ingredients in the food supply. That, coupled with the rising toxicity of the oceans due to chemical dumping, the rising toxicity of food due to pesticides and artificial fertilizers, and rising toxicity of the air due to industrial and petrochemical pollutants, and the increase of radiation exposure (medical x-rays, micro-wave transmissions, and nuclear testings), he felt that the human immune system was being challenged beyond its ability to adapt. The rising incidences of cancer testify to this trend.

Specific to this concern, he believed that the herb, yarrow, would play an important role.

According to his research, yarrow is a poly-ionic herb meaning that it can stimulate and sedate simultaneously making it a difficult herb to properly combine with other ingredients without inhibiting or interfering with its inherent immune- system-supportive action, but one with great properties for helping the immune system.

Through his research of measuring the bio-energy of plants, organisms, and tissues, Wheelwright determined that the best herb to compliment and enhance the properties of yarrow came from the Amazon basin—an herb called tayuya. He further worked to develop a cellular delivery system

based on the action of hydrochloric acid to facilitate proper cellular activity along with the herbs pimpinella, echinacea, and pau d'arco; and a drainage system via the properties of gravel root and yellow dock.

From this research, he developed the ATAK (Immune Rejuvenator) formula to help the body rid itself of intranoidal (mutated, intra-cellular) disease organisms. Thus, the ATAK formula figures prominently in the viral protocols.

The VIVI (Virox) Formula

In the late 1970's, Doc Wheelwright was asked, "What do you do when Echinacea/goldenseal fails to help with the scary infections such as pneumonia, staph infections, hepatitis, flu, and fevers of unknown origin?" To reply, he went to one of the most powerful herbs in the world for viral concerns: the black wild carrot oil known as *Lomatium dissectum* or *Leptotaenia dissectum*.

Thus, Wheelwright designed the VIVI (Virox) Formula. Since that time, the VIVI formula has become known as "the herb that saves lives." Back in 1918, during the deadly influenza A epidemic, Dr. Ernest Krebs brought this Native American remedy into practice and was credited with saving 40,000 lives in that pandemic that took more than 40 million lives worldwide.

Modern science confirms the power of this herb. In many studies, it has been proven effective against both Gram-positive and Gram-negative bacterium as well as hemophilus influenza, streptococcus, diplococcus pneumonia, corynebacterium diptheria, proteus, pseudomonas, and other strains. [Studies by G.A. Matson, published in the *Journal of Clinical Investigation*, Department of Bacteriology and Chemistry, University of Utah and LDS Hospital, Salt Lake City.]

Lomatium has been known for centuries to have potent anti-microbial uses and to be useful as an immuno-stimulant. It protects cells from the Rotavirus—a cause of dysentery. SARS has been linked to symptoms of dysentery in a most cases. *Lomatium* was used by Native Americans as a as a medicine for tuberculosis and other lung infections including its documented, effective use for bronchitis and viral pneumonia.

So it is only fitting that such an herb formula would play a role in the natural maintenance of health during a time of spreading viral pandemics.

Conclusion

It is important for natural health practitioners to respond quickly to flu and respiratory complaints and even more so while the SARS phenomenon is spreading. SARS is considered by many practitioners to be the vanguard or forerunner of more altered and virulent viruses yet to emerge. Herbal formulas in conjunction with natural therapies (homeopathy, acupuncture, chiropractic, naturopathy, herbology) can provide an effective first-line defense role to help protect people in crisis, as well as help the body restore it's innate adaptability and immunity.