

SEVERE ACUTE RESPIRATORY SYNDROME (SARS) LOS ANGELES COUNTY UPDATE

8-13-03



SARS CASE IDENTIFICATION ENDS!

Overview: Now that several incubation periods have passed without the identification of new SARS cases in areas with community transmission of SARS, the travel criteria for US SARS case identification have ended. With the removal of Taiwan on July 25, no areas remain, and as such, the identification of US SARS cases resulting from travel has ended. Nonetheless, the CDC will continue to consider cases of pneumonia with unknown etiology on a case-by-case basis. Among the 22 potential SARS cases investigated in LA, none has been confirmed as positive for SARS coronavirus infection and more than half (n=13) have been excluded due to an alternative diagnosis or from negative convalescent serologies. As reported previously, no secondary illness occurred among healthcare workers who treated the LA cases, and there was no evidence of community acquired transmission or SARS deaths locally or nationwide.

Updated SARS case definition – all areas removed from travel criteria:

Travel advisories and alerts have been lifted for all SARS-affected areas, and as of July 25, no areas remain on the list for travel criteria for SARS case identification. The CDC will continue to consider suspect cases of pneumonia with unknown etiology. The current and full CDC SARS case definition is available at <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/sars/casedefinition.htm>

For questions regarding case identification, call ACDC at 213-240-7941.

SUMMARY OF LAC SARS CASES (8-13-03):

CDC guidance permits reclassification of SARS cases if: 1) another diagnosis is made that fully explains the patient's condition; or 2) a convalescent serologic test is negative for SARS-Coronavirus (SARS-CoV) antibodies.

Thirteen (59%) of the LA cases have been reclassified as not SARS.

One case was reclassified as not SARS due to diagnosis of another disease (tuberculosis), while 12 cases (6 probable and 6 suspect) were reclassified as not SARS due to negative convalescent SARS-CoV antibodies.

Test information cannot be completed for many of the cases (41%, n=9).

Most (n=7) are foreign cases who were identified while visiting in Los Angeles County, but have now returned to their home countries. The remaining 2 suspect cases are local residents who refused to submit final specimens. Of these cases, the acute specimens for most (n=8) were negative, one did not submit acute specimens.

None of the 22 potential SARS cases has had a specimen that was positive for SARS-CoV infection.

	Probable SARS (n=7)	Suspect SARS (n=15)	Total SARS Cases (n=22)
Classification completed	7	6	13
Other diagnosis	1	0	1
Negative SARS-CoV convalescent Ab	6	6	12
Classification unable to be completed	0	9	9
Foreign resident, final tests unavailable	0	7	7
Testing incomplete, refused	0	2	2
Classification pending final tests	0	0	0
Confirmed SARS-CoV	0	0	0