

**Health, Welfare & Food Bureau**  
**SARS Bulletin**  
**(5 June 2003)**

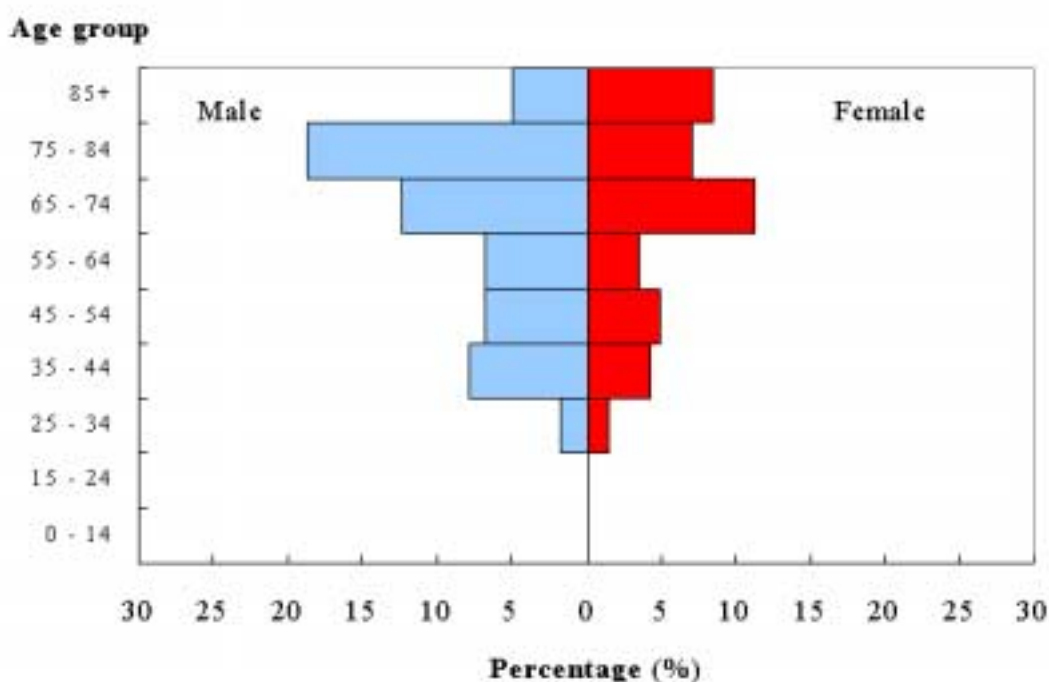
**Summary of Cases**

On 4 June, 13 more patients with Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) have recovered from the disease and been discharged from hospitals, hence increasing the total number of recovered patients to 1,339 (i.e., 76.6% of all 1,748 SARS cases). Out of the 1,748 cases, 386 involved health care workers or medical students. There were 126 SARS patients remaining in hospitals, in which 49 patients were undergoing convalescence before discharge and 24 patients were receiving treatment in the intensive care units. There were also 7 suspected cases under treatment.

2. On 4 June, one more patient was confirmed to have SARS. Since 16 May, the daily number of newly confirmed SARS cases has fallen below 5 for the 20<sup>th</sup> consecutive day, and the average number of newly confirmed cases in the past week was 3 per day.

3. On 4 June, there was no fatal case reported, and the cumulative total number of fatal cases was 283, including eight health care workers (six were staff of public hospitals and two were private practitioners). The distribution of fatal cases by age group and gender is shown in *Figure 1* on page 2. There were no fatal cases among the children and young adults (aged 0 – 24). About 36% of the deceased patients were elderly men aged 65 or above, and 27% were elderly women aged 65 or above. Overall, 59% of the deceased patients were male and 41% were female.

Figure 1



4. *Table 1* below shows the breakdown of fatal cases according to age groups and history of pre-existing illness. 71% of the deceased patients had pre-existing medical illnesses, such as hypertension, heart diseases, diabetes mellitus and stroke. 63% of the deceased were aged 65 or above. Taking into account both of these factors, 79% had either pre-existing illnesses or were aged 65 or above, or both.

Table 1

Age Group	Pre-existing Illness?		Total
	Yes	No	
25 – 34 years old	1%	2%	3%
35 – 44 years old	4%	8%	12%
45 – 54 years old	5%	7%	12%
55 – 64 years old	7%	3%	10%
65 – 74 years old	20%	3%	24%
75 – 84 years old	22%	4%	26%
85 years old or above	13%	1%	13%
<b>Total</b>	<b>71%</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Note: Percentages may not add up to total due to rounding.*

5. For the 283 deceased patients, we have also studied the interval between their dates of disease onset and death. As shown in *Table 2*, such intervals ranged from 3 to 80 days, with a mean interval of 23.8 days and a median interval of 21.5 days. The

difference between males and females was small but the mean and median intervals for the elderly group (65 years old or above) were both about 10 days shorter than the younger age group (25 to 64 years old). We also found that the interval between the dates of disease onset and death among those deceased patients with history of pre-existing illness were shorter than those with good past health, and the mean and median intervals in the former group were both about 10 days shorter than the latter group.

Table 2

Groups	Interval between disease onset and death (Days)		
	range	mean	median
Male	4 – 60	23.4	22.0
Female	3 – 80	24.3	20.0
65 years old or above	3 – 73	20.2	17.0
25 – 64 years old	5 – 80	29.9	26.5
Had pre-existing illness	3 – 58	20.9	18.0
No pre-existing illness	8 – 80	30.9	28.0
<b>Overall</b>	<b>3 – 80</b>	<b>23.8</b>	<b>21.5</b>

## **Ongoing Development**

### *Health Checks at Border Points*

6. Since 29 March, medical posts have been set up at the airport, ports and border points to watch for travellers displaying symptoms of SARS, and all incoming travellers are required to complete a health declaration. To enhance the preventive measures in containing the spread of SARS, temperature checks for all arriving, departing and transit passengers at the Hong Kong International Airport have also been implemented since mid-April. Since 14 April, all close contacts of SARS patients are also barred from leaving Hong Kong during the home confinement period.

7. As regards other control points, arriving passengers via ports and land boundary crossings are subject to temperature screening in addition to health declaration with effect from 26 April. Since mid-May, departing passengers from the Hong Kong Macao Ferry Terminal and the China Ferry Terminal, and all people departing for the

Mainland by through trains from the Hung Hom Station are required to undergo temperature checks before leaving Hong Kong.

8. As at 4 June, two passengers had been confirmed to have SARS since the implementation of all the above health checking measures.

### Home Confinement

9. All household contacts of confirmed or suspected SARS patients are required to undergo home confinement for monitoring and treatment up to a maximum of 10 days. As at 4 June, 16 persons (from 8 households) were under this home confinement requirement. So far, a total of 1,254 persons (from 491 households) had been affected by this requirement, of whom 34 of them were later confirmed to have SARS.

### **Further Information**

10. To empower the public in fighting against the SARS, the Department of Health (DH) has issued advice and guidelines on prevention of the disease for various sectors. Publicity programmes have been made to educate the public on all aspects of the disease, including the symptoms, the mode of transmission, the importance of seeking early treatment and various preventive measures namely personal and environmental hygiene. Health education information is available on the 24-hour pre-recorded hotlines (2833 0111) and has been uploaded onto a designated webpage of DH (<http://www.info.gov.hk/info/sars/eindex.htm>). A hotline (187 2222) has also been provided for public enquiries.

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Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region