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*Two-Thirds (66%) Believe Travellers Arriving In Canada From
SARS Hot Spots Should be Quarantined and Canadians Should
Not Be Allowed to Travel To These Regions*

Millions of Canadians Changing Habits to Protect Themselves



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***Two-Thirds (66%) Believe Travellers Arriving In Canada From SARS
Hot Spots Should be Quarantined and Canadians Should Not Be
Allowed to Travel To These Regions***

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Toronto, ONTARIO (Friday, April 4th, 2003) – As the mysterious new ailment, Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) spreads throughout the world, Canadians try to come to grips with this possible epidemic disease. Being one of the first locations outside of China to be hit with a SARS outbreak, six in ten (61%) of Canadians express concern about contacting the disease. In fact, three in ten (27%) are very concerned about contacting SARS. This according to a new Ipsos-Reid/CTV/Globe and Mail poll released this evening.

With the fast expansion of SARS around the world and the mystery of how it is exactly spread, 66% of Canadians say that individuals arriving in Canada from areas in the Far East that are experiencing outbreaks of SARS should be quarantined or not allowed into the country and that travel to these regions by Canadians should not be allowed. This compares to 29% of Canadians who feel that with proper medical procedures and screening in place, individuals arriving in Canada from SARS hot spots should be allowed into the country without being quarantined and that Canadians should be allowed to travel to these regions if they wish.



As for what Canadians are doing to avoid contacting the disease here in Canada, four in ten (39%) say they are washing their hands more often during the day, while 14% (approximately 3.4 million adult Canadians) say they are avoiding places where there is a large gathering of people such as sporting events, movies, theatre or restaurants. Other precautions Canadians are doing to protect themselves against SARS include cancelling travel plans (11%), cancelling appointments at doctors offices or in hospitals (9%), avoiding public transit (9%), wearing gloves in public to avoid touching handles, doors etc. that others may have touched (4%), avoid talking to people in person (4%), while 2% (approximately 500,000 adult Canadians) say they are wearing protective masks in public.

These are the findings of an Ipsos-Reid/CTV/Globe and Mail poll conducted between April 1st and April 3rd, 2003. The poll is based on a randomly selected sample of 1,001 adult Canadians. With a sample of this size, the results are considered accurate to within ± 3.1 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what they would have been had the entire adult Canadian population been polled. The margin of error will be larger within regions and for other sub-groupings of the survey population. These data were statistically weighted to ensure the sample's regional and age/sex composition reflects that of the actual Canadian population according to the 2001 Census data.

Six in ten (61%) of Canadians express concern about contacting the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS). In fact, three in ten (27%) are very concerned about contacting SARS. This compares to 39% who are not concerned about contacting the disease.

- Residents of Ontario (69%) lead the pack in terms of concern, followed by residents of Atlantic Canada (64%), Saskatchewan/Manitoba (58%), Alberta (57%), Quebec (56%) and British Columbia (53%).



- More women (70%) than men (52%) are concerned about contracting SARS.
- Canadians without (70%) or with just a high school diploma (67%) are more concerned about contracting SARS than are Canadians with some university or other post-secondary education (60%) or a university degree (55%).
- Canadians from lower income households (66%) are more likely than those in upper income households (57%) to be concerned about contracting SARS.

With the fast expansion of SARS around the world and the mystery of how it is exactly spread, 66% of Canadians say that individuals arriving in Canada from areas in the Far East, which has experienced the greatest level of outbreaks of the new virus, should be quarantined or not allowed into the country and that travel to these regions by Canadians should not be allowed. This compares to 29% of Canadians who feel that with proper medical procedures and screening in place, individuals arriving in Canada from SARS hot spots in the Far East should be allowed into the country without being quarantined and that Canadians should be allowed to travel to these regions if they want.

- Canadians who feel that there should be greater control over travel to and from SARS hotspots are more likely to be from Saskatchewan/Manitoba (73%) and Quebec (70%), followed by those in Alberta (62%), Ontario (66%), Atlantic Canada (66%) and British Columbia (57%).
- Older (74%) Canadians are more likely than either their middle aged (64%) or younger (60%) counterparts to feel that people arriving from SARS hotspots should be quarantined or not allowed in the country.
- Women (69%) are more likely than men (62%) to hold this position.

- Canadians without (77%) or with a high school diploma (73%) are more likely than those with some university or other post-secondary education (63%) or a university degree (59%) to say that individuals arriving in Canada from regions that are experiencing SARS outbreaks should be quarantined or not allowed in the country.
- This position is also more likely to be shared by Canadians in lower income households (71%) when compared to their counterparts in middle (65%) or upper (62%) income households.

As for what Canadians are doing here in Canada to avoid contracting SARS, four in ten (39%) say they are washing their hands more often during the day, while 14% (approximately 3.4 million adult Canadians) say they are avoiding places where there is a large gathering of people such as sporting events, movies, theatre or restaurants. Other precautions Canadians are doing to protect themselves against SARS include cancelling travel plans (11%), cancelling appointments at doctors offices or in hospitals (9%), avoiding public transit (9%), wearing gloves in public to avoid touching handles, doors etc. that others may have touched (4%), avoid talking to people in person (4%), while 2% (approximately 500,000 adult Canadians) indicate they are wearing protective masks in public.

- Ontario, with the largest outbreak on SARS in Canada, leads the other regions in changes to behaviour. Half (50%) of Ontarians say they are washing their hands more often compared to the next highest region, British Columbia (40%).
- One-fifth (22%) of adult Ontarians say they are avoiding public places where there is a large gathering of people. This compares to Alberta (14%), the next highest region.



- Ontarians (17%) are more than twice as likely as the next highest region, Alberta (7%), and three times as likely as Saskatchewan/Manitoba (5%), Quebec (5%) or Atlantic Canada (5%) to indicate that they have cancelled appointments at hospitals or doctors offices. Just 2% of British Columbians indicate they have done this.

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