



SEPSIS

Information for patients and families

What is Sepsis?

Sepsis is the body's extreme response to an infection. It is life-threatening, and without timely treatment, sepsis can rapidly lead to tissue damage, organ failure and possibly death.

Who is at risk of developing Sepsis?

Anyone can get an infection.

Any infection can lead to sepsis.

Specific groups are at higher risk:

- Adults 65 years of age or older
- Anyone with a weak immune system
- Anyone with chronic illnesses
- Anyone who receives treatments that involve insertion of medical objects into the body like urinary catheters, indwelling vascular lines, implanted devices and others.

What are the signs and symptoms of Sepsis?

Do you have any of the following? Think **S.E.P.S.I.S.**

S SHIVERING You might have chills, fever, clammy skin and feel like you have the flu.

E ELEVATED HEART RATE It might feel like your heart is racing.

P PAIN You might feel new or different pain or discomfort.

S SLEEPY You might feel confused, disoriented or like you have less energy than usual.

I "I FEEL WORSE THAN EVER" You might be sick and worried that you are not getting better.

S SHORT OF BREATH You might feel out of breath or have trouble breathing.

What are treatments for Sepsis?

Sepsis is an emergency and needs to be treated right away.

If you have any of the symptoms and an infection that is not getting better or is getting worse, speak to a healthcare professional right away, or ask your doctor or nurse

"Could this be "Sepsis?"

Each person is different. Blood work, diagnostic tests, antibiotics and intravenous fluids may be urgently needed to treat infection, prevent organ damage, and stop a drop in blood pressure. **Sepsis can get worse over time, so it is best to act early.**

How can you prevent Sepsis?

1. **Hand Hygiene.** Wash your hands thoroughly by using soap and water, or alcohol-based hand rubs. Common infections are spread by hands.
2. **Oral Hygiene and Perineal Care.** Prevent infection of lungs and bladder by having good oral health and personal hygiene.
3. **Managing chronic illnesses, and taking good care of wounds, and indwelling devices.** Remember to take prescription medication as ordered, clean wounds as needed using clean technique, and take care of indwelling devices.
4. **Standard and up-to-date vaccinations.** Make sure you receive all the vaccinations that are recommended for you.

Prevention is key.
Knowing the signs and seeking early
treatment can stop the progression of sepsis.
Better Safe than Septic.



Making better
decisions together
with patients
and families

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