



VISITING NURSES

Sepsis: A Guide

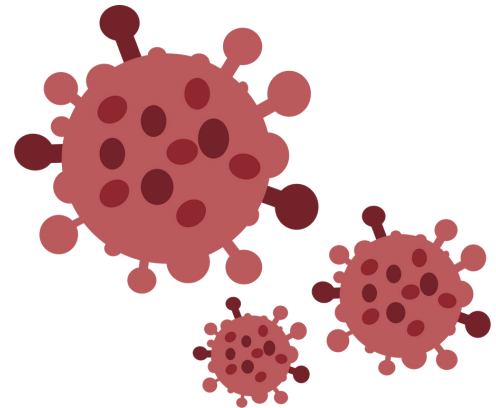
What is Sepsis?

Sepsis is a life-threatening medical emergency caused by the body's extreme response to an infection. It can lead to tissue damage, organ failure, and death if not treated promptly.

Causes of Sepsis

Sepsis occurs when an infection spreads and triggers a harmful immune response. Common infections that can lead to sepsis include:

- **Pneumonia**
- **Urinary tract infection**
- **Abdominal infections (appendicitis, gallbladder infection, diarrhea)**
- **Catheter-related infections**
- **Skin and soft tissue infections**
- **Meningitis**
- **Bloodstream infections**



Who is at Risk?

- Adults over 60
- Individuals with chronic conditions (diabetes, obesity, cancer, kidney disease)
- Those with weakened immune systems
- People with severe injuries, burns, or wounds
- Individuals with catheters, ports, or IV lines
- People recovering from a recent surgery or hospitalization.

Stages of Sepsis

Stage One: Sepsis

The body's inflammatory response to infection.

Stage Two: Severe

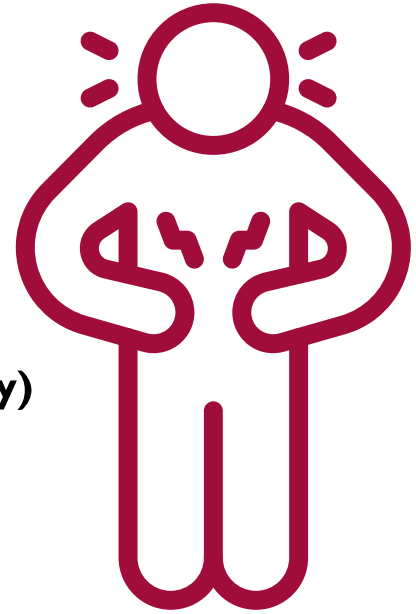
Sepsis Organ function is affected.

Stage Three: Septic

Shock A critical stage that can cause multiple organ failure and death.

Signs and Symptoms

- **Fever, chills, or feeling very cold**
- **Rapid breathing**
- **Extreme pain or discomfort**
- **Pale, mottled, or clammy skin**
- **Confusion, disorientation, or extreme sleepiness**
- **Elevated heart rate**
- **Urinary issues (reduced urination or urgency)**
- **Sepsis rash**



Prevention

- Practice good hygiene, including handwashing
- Keep wounds clean and covered
- Stay up-to-date on vaccines
- Manage chronic health conditions
- Watch for signs of infection, such as abnormal temperature changes or mental decline
- Seek medical attention if an infection is suspected

Treatment

Sepsis requires immediate medical care. Treatment typically includes:

- Antibiotics to fight infection
- Medications to stabilize blood pressure
- Insulin to control blood sugar
- Steroids to reduce inflammation
- Pain relievers for discomfort

Recovery from Sepsis

Rehabilitation begins in the hospital with gradual movement and self-care activities. The goal is to restore health as much as possible. Recovery may take time and may include:

- Shortness of breath
- Weakness and fatigue
- Difficulty sleeping or moving
- Dry, itchy skin or hair loss
- Changes in appetite or weight loss

Sepsis is a medical emergency requiring urgent care. Symptoms such as fever, chills, rapid heart rate, confusion, and difficulty breathing should never be ignored. Seek immediate medical attention if sepsis is suspected, especially if an infection is present.