

SEPSIS

What is sepsis?

Sepsis is a life-threatening emergency caused by overwhelming infection of the bloodstream by toxin (poison) producing bacteria. If left untreated, it will result in death.

Waiting for obvious symptoms to develop can often be too late to stop the progression of the infection.

What causes sepsis?

Sepsis can be caused by an untreated bacterial infection or one that is not responding to treatment. Common places where those infections may occur are:

- kidneys
- liver or gall bladder
- bowel
- skin
- bladder
- lungs

What are the symptoms of sepsis?

Early signs:

- reduced mental alertness or feeling very tired
- hyperventilation (greater than 30 breaths per minute)
- fever (temperature > 100.4)

Advanced signs:

- very high fever (greater than 102) or low temperature (hypothermia)
- chills
- shaking
- warm skin
- rapid heart rate (greater than 90 beats per minute)
- decreased urine output
- skin rash
- confusion or delirium
- nausea and vomiting
- diarrhea
- low blood pressure
- low or high white blood cell count
- organ or system failure

If the individual develops signs of sepsis, call 911 or seek emergency care immediately.

