

Protect your residents from **sepsis**.



What is **sepsis**?

Sepsis is the body's extreme response to an infection. It is a life-threatening medical emergency. Sepsis happens when an infection you already have triggers a chain reaction throughout your body. Infections that lead to sepsis most often start in the lung, urinary tract, skin, or gastrointestinal tract. Without fast treatment with antibiotics, sepsis can quickly lead to tissue damage, organ failure, and death.

How can I **get ahead of sepsis**?

- **Know sepsis signs and symptoms** to identify residents early and get them immediate treatment.
- **Act fast** if you suspect sepsis. Communicate signs and symptoms of infection to the doctor, physician assistant, nurse practitioner, or nurse overseeing the resident's care.
- **Prevent infections** by following infection control practices (e.g., hand hygiene, cleaning and disinfection) and ensuring residents receive recommended vaccines.
- **Educate your residents and their families about:**
 - Preventing infections
 - Keeping cuts and wounds clean until healed
 - Managing chronic conditions
 - Recognizing early signs and symptoms of worsening infection and sepsis and seeking immediate care if they are present

What should I do if I **suspect sepsis**?

Know your facility's existing guidance for diagnosing and managing sepsis. Immediately alert the doctor, physician assistant, nurse practitioner, or nurse overseeing the resident's care. In most cases, a resident who is suspected to have sepsis, or who may be developing sepsis, will need to be transferred quickly to a hospital to receive intensive evaluation and treatment.



Sepsis is a medical emergency.

You play a critical role.

Protect your residents by
acting fast.



**GET AHEAD
OF SEPSIS**

KNOW THE RISKS.
SPOT THE SIGNS.
ACT FAST.

Who is at risk for sepsis?

Anyone can develop sepsis, but some people are at higher risk for sepsis:

65+

Adults 65 or older



People with recent severe illness, surgery, or hospitalization



Children younger than one



People with weakened immune systems



People who survived sepsis



Women who are pregnant or post-partum



People with chronic conditions, such as diabetes, lung disease, cancer, and kidney disease

What are the signs and symptoms of sepsis?

Be alert to the signs and symptoms of infection and sepsis and to any changes in your residents' baseline. A resident with sepsis might have one or more of the following signs or symptoms:



Clammy or sweaty skin



High heart rate or low blood pressure



Extreme pain or discomfort



New onset or increased confusion or disorientation



Fever, shivering, or feeling very cold



Shortness of breath

What causes sepsis?

Infections put your residents at risk for sepsis. Bacterial infections cause most cases of sepsis. The most frequently identified bacterial pathogens among people with sepsis include *Staphylococcus aureus* (*S. aureus*), *Escherichia coli* (*E. coli*), and some types of *Streptococcus*. Sepsis can also be a result of other infections, including viral infections, such as COVID-19 or influenza, or fungal infections. Infections that lead to sepsis most often start in the:



Lung



Urinary tract



Skin



Gastrointestinal tract

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Learn more at
cdc.gov/sepsis

