

GET AHEAD OF SEPSIS

KNOW THE RISKS. SPOT THE SIGNS. ACT FAST.

FOR PATIENTS AND FAMILIES

PROTECT YOURSELF AND YOUR FAMILY 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 timely treatment, sepsis can rapidly lead to tissue damage, organ failure, and death.

IS SEPSIS CONTAGIOUS?

You can't spread sepsis to other people. However, an infection can lead to sepsis, and you can spread some infections to other people.

WHAT CAUSES SEPSIS?

Infections can put you or your loved one at risk for sepsis. When germs get into a person's body, they can cause an infection. If you don't stop that infection, it can cause sepsis. Bacterial infections cause most cases of sepsis. Sepsis can also be a result of other infections, including viral infections, such as COVID-19 or influenza.

WHO IS AT RISK?

Some people are at higher risk for sepsis:

Anyone can get an infection, and almost any infection, including COVID-19, can lead to sepsis. In a typical year:

- At least **1.7 million** adults in America develop sepsis.
- Nearly **270,000** Americans die as a result of sepsis.
- **1 in 3** patients who dies in a hospital has sepsis.
- Sepsis, or the infection causing sepsis, starts outside of the hospital in nearly **87%** of cases.

65+

Adults 65
or older



People with
weakened
immune
systems



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



People with
recent severe
illness or
hospitalization



Sepsis
Survivors



Children
younger
than one

HOW CAN I GET AHEAD OF SEPSIS?

As a patient, you can take specific steps to reduce your risk of sepsis, including caused by COVID-19, such as:

1 | PREVENT INFECTIONS

Talk to your healthcare professional about steps you can take to prevent infections that can lead to sepsis.



Take good care of chronic conditions



Get recommended vaccines

2 | PRACTICE GOOD HYGIENE

Remember to wash your hands and keep cuts clean and covered until healed.



Wash your hands



Keep cuts clean and covered until healed

3 | KNOW THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

A patient with sepsis might have one or more of the following signs or symptoms. A medical assessment by a healthcare professional is needed to confirm sepsis.



High heart rate or low blood pressure



Fever, or shivering, or feeling very cold



Confusion or disorientation



Shortness of breath



Extreme pain or discomfort



Clammy or sweaty skin

4 | ACT FAST

Sepsis is a medical emergency. **ACT FAST.**

If you or your loved one has an infection that's not getting better or is getting worse, **ACT FAST.** Get medical care **IMMEDIATELY** either in-person, or at minimum, through telehealth services. Ask your healthcare professional, "Could this infection be leading to sepsis?" and if you should go to the emergency room for medical assessment.