

HOW CAN I GET AHEAD OF SEPSIS?

1. Talk to your doctor or nurse about steps you can take to prevent infections. Some steps include taking good care of chronic conditions and getting recommended vaccines.
2. Practice good hygiene, such as handwashing, and keeping cuts clean until healed.
3. Know the symptoms of sepsis.
4. ACT FAST. Get medical care IMMEDIATELY if you suspect sepsis or have an infection that's not getting better or is getting worse.

Always remember, sepsis is a medical emergency. Time matters. If you or your loved one suspects sepsis or has an infection that's not getting better or is getting worse, **ask your doctor or nurse, "Could this infection be leading to sepsis?"**

To learn more about sepsis and how to prevent infections, visit www.cdc.gov/sepsis.

This project has been funded in whole or in part with Federal funds from the National Center for Emerging Zoonotic and Infectious Diseases (NCEZID), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), under Contract No. 200-2016-F-90343.



FOR PATIENTS AND FAMILIES

IT'S TIME TO TALK ABOUT SEPSIS.

Infections put you and your family at risk for a life-threatening condition called sepsis.

GET AHEAD
OF SEPSIS

KNOW THE RISKS. SPOT THE SIGNS. ACT FAST.



More than **1.5 million** people get sepsis each year in the U.S.

At least **250,000** Americans die from sepsis each year.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

There is no single symptom of sepsis. Symptoms of sepsis can include a combination of any of the following:



CONFUSION OR
DISORIENTATION



SHORTNESS OF BREATH



HIGH HEART RATE



FEVER, OR SHIVERING,
OR FEELING VERY COLD



EXTREME PAIN OR
DISCOMFORT



CLAMMY OR
SWEATY SKIN

WHAT IS SEPSIS?

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

Sepsis happens when an infection you already have—in your skin, lungs, urinary tract or somewhere else—triggers a chain reaction throughout your body.

WHAT CAUSES SEPSIS?

When germs get into a person's body, they can cause an infection. If that infection isn't stopped, it can cause sepsis.

WHO IS AT RISK?

Anyone can get an infection, and almost any infection can lead to sepsis. Certain people are at higher risk:

- Adults 65 or older
- People with chronic conditions, such as diabetes, lung disease, cancer and kidney disease
- People with weakened immune systems
- Children younger than one

The most frequently identified germs that cause infections that can develop into sepsis include *Staphylococcus aureus* (staph), *Escherichia coli* (E. coli), and some types of *Streptococcus* (strep).

FOR PATIENTS AND FAMILIES

GET AHEAD OF SEPSIS

START THE CONVERSATION TODAY.

KNOW THE RISKS. SPOT THE SIGNS. ACT FAST.

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

Below are questions and answers you can use to start a conversation with your doctor or nurse.

“I want to keep my family safe. How can I protect them from sepsis?”

- Talk to your doctor or nurse about steps you can take to prevent infections. Some steps include taking good care of chronic conditions and getting recommended vaccines.
- Practice good hygiene, such as handwashing, and keeping cuts clean until healed.
- Know the symptoms of sepsis.
- **ACT FAST.** Get medical care **IMMEDIATELY** if you suspect sepsis or have an infection that's not getting better or is getting worse.

“My elderly father has diabetes. Could he be at higher risk for infections that can lead to sepsis?”


Anyone can get an infection, and almost any infection can lead to sepsis.

People with chronic conditions such as diabetes, lung disease, cancer, and kidney disease are at higher risk of developing infections that can lead to sepsis. Sepsis almost more commonly occurs in:

- Adults 65 or older
- People with weakened immune systems
- Children younger than one

“I have an infection that doesn't seem to be getting any better. I am concerned this could be leading to sepsis. What can I do to make sure this does not happen?”

Always remember, sepsis is a medical emergency. Act fast. Get medical care immediately if you suspect sepsis or have an infection that's not getting better or is getting worse.



If you or your loved one suspects sepsis or has an infection that's not getting better or is getting worse, ask your doctor or nurse, **“Could this infection be leading to sepsis?”**

“My 6-month-old son had a low-grade fever and cough yesterday. But, today, he is not alert, is making fewer wet diapers, and is having difficulty breathing. Could this be leading to sepsis?”

Talk to your doctor or nurse and ask if this could be leading to sepsis.

There is no single symptom of sepsis. Symptoms can include a combination of any of the following:

- Confusion or disorientation
- Shortness of breath
- High heart rate
- Fever, or shivering, or feeling very cold
- Extreme pain or discomfort
- Clammy or sweaty skin

“My grandmother has a urinary tract infection. She has had a fever for the past few days. She has also been confused and disoriented. Could her infection be leading to sepsis?”

Infections put you and your family at risk for sepsis. Sepsis happens when an infection you already have—in your skin, lungs, urinary tract or somewhere else—triggers a chain reaction throughout your body.

To learn more about sepsis and how to prevent infections, visit **www.cdc.gov/sepsis**.

GET AHEAD OF SEPSIS

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FOR PATIENTS AND FAMILIES

PROTECT YOURSELF AND YOUR FAMILY FROM SEPSIS.

When infections and illnesses don't improve, ask your doctor or nurse, **"Could this infection be leading to sepsis?"**

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WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

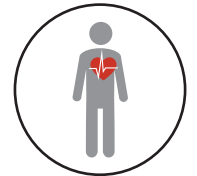
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To learn more about sepsis and how to prevent infections, visit www.cdc.gov/sepsis.

GET AHEAD OF SEPSIS

FOR PATIENTS AND FAMILIES

KNOW THE RISKS. SPOT THE SIGNS. ACT FAST.

STAY HEALTHY. PROTECT YOURSELF FROM SEPSIS.

It's time to talk about sepsis. Ask your doctor or nurse, **"How can I prevent infections?"**

Take charge of your health. Chronic conditions, such as diabetes, put you at risk for infections that can lead to a life-threatening condition called sepsis.

WHAT IS SEPSIS?

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Sepsis happens when an infection you already have—in your skin, lungs, urinary tract or somewhere else—triggers a chain reaction throughout your body.

AM I AT RISK?

Anyone can get an infection, and almost any infection can lead to sepsis. People with chronic conditions such as diabetes, lung disease, cancer, and kidney disease, are at higher risk of developing infections that can lead to sepsis. Sepsis also more commonly occurs in:

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4 WAYS TO GET AHEAD OF SEPSIS

**GET AHEAD
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KNOW THE RISKS. SPOT THE SIGNS. ACT FAST.

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Anyone can get an infection, and almost any infection can lead to sepsis.

1 | PREVENT INFECTIONS

Talk to your doctor or nurse about **steps you can take to prevent infections.**



Take good care of chronic conditions



Get recommended vaccines

2 | PRACTICE GOOD HYGINE

Remember to **wash your hands and keep cuts clean.**



Handwashing



Keep cuts clean until healed.

3 | KNOW THE SYMPTOMS

Symptoms can include a combination of any of these:



Confusion or disorientation



Shortness of breath



High heart rate



Fever, or shivering, or feeling very cold



Extreme pain or discomfort



Clammy or sweaty skin

4 | ACT FAST

Get medical care **IMMEDIATELY** if you suspect sepsis or have an infection that's **not getting better or is getting worse.**

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“DO YOU KNOW ABOUT SEPSIS?”

It's time to talk about sepsis. Why?

Because any infection – like a wound, pneumonia, or a urinary tract infection – can lead to sepsis. Because sepsis is a medical emergency.


If you or a loved one suspects sepsis or has an infection that's not getting better, **ask your doctor or nurse, “Could this infection be leading to sepsis?”**

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[CDC.gov/sepsis](https://www.cdc.gov/sepsis)



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A photograph of two men sitting outdoors. The man on the left, with grey hair and a mustache, is wearing a blue polo shirt and is gesturing with his hands while speaking. The man on the right, who is balding, is wearing a light grey polo shirt and is listening attentively. The background is a blurred green landscape.

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