

UAB MEDICINE'S WAR ON SEPSIS

WHAT WE ARE DOING TO IMPROVE YOUR CARE, AND WHAT YOU CAN DO TO PREVENT SEPSIS

WHAT IS SEPSIS?

Sepsis is a life-threatening condition in which the body responds to an infection by attacking organs and tissue. It is difficult to diagnose; the signs and symptoms of sepsis can easily be confused with the signs and symptoms of other conditions.

Sepsis is a medical emergency. It is deadly if not recognized and treated quickly.

CAN ANYONE GET SEPSIS?

YES. Factors that put you at higher risk for sepsis include a recent hospitalization or surgery, a recent infection (such as pneumonia or a urinary tract infection), being 65 years of age or older or less than 1 year of age, a weakened immune system, and chronic medical conditions such as diabetes.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I THINK I OR A LOVED ONE HAS SEPSIS?

Sepsis is a medical emergency; call your doctor or go to the emergency room immediately. It is important for you to say, "I am concerned about sepsis."

WHAT CAN I DO TO PREVENT SEPSIS?

- n **WASH YOUR HANDS.** Hand hygiene is the easiest way to prevent the spread of infection.
- n **TAKE CARE OF SCRAPES AND WOUNDS.** Be sure to thoroughly clean scrapes and wounds to prevent them from leading to infection or sepsis.
- n **GET VACCINATED.** Getting the recommended vaccinations against flu, pneumonia, and other infections is important. Talk to your doctor about which vaccinations you should have and how often.

WHAT IS UAB MEDICINE DOING ABOUT SEPSIS?

At UAB Medicine, we recognize the importance of recognizing sepsis quickly and immediately taking steps to manage the condition. We screen our hospital patients for sepsis every 4 hours by monitoring for specific signs and symptoms that could indicate infection and sepsis.

If we suspect that you have sepsis, a special sepsis care team will speak with your doctors and nurses to evaluate your condition. If it is determined that you have sepsis, the sepsis care team will ensure that we are doing everything possible to treat it.

We encourage you to talk to your health care providers about sepsis. If you are concerned that you or a loved one might have sepsis, please let us know immediately.

WHAT ARE THE SIGNS & SYMPTOMS OF SEPSIS?

People with sepsis can show a variety of signs and symptoms, including diarrhea, vomiting, sore throat, fever and shivering, extreme pain or discomfort, clammy skin, confusion, shortness of breath, and an elevated heart rate.



SHIVERING,
FEVER,
OR
VERY COLD



EXTREME
PAIN OR
DISCOMFORT



CLAMMY OR
SWEATY SKIN



CONFUSION OR
DISORIENTATION



SHORTNESS
OF BREATH



HIGH
HEART RATE