

Sepsis

Take-home guide for patients



**MAURY REGIONAL
HEALTH**



SEPSIS is a serious medical condition requiring an extended period of recovery that continues after you leave the hospital.

This guide is provided as a source of information for patients and their family members. Use this information along with the instructions provided by your physician at discharge.

In addition to taking medications as directed and watching closely for signs of infection, it is important to schedule a follow-up appointment with your primary care physician.

Do you need a primary care physician?

Visit *MauryRegional.com*

OR

Call the Physician Referral Line: 931.840.5300



What is Sepsis?

Sepsis is the body's toxic response to an infection.

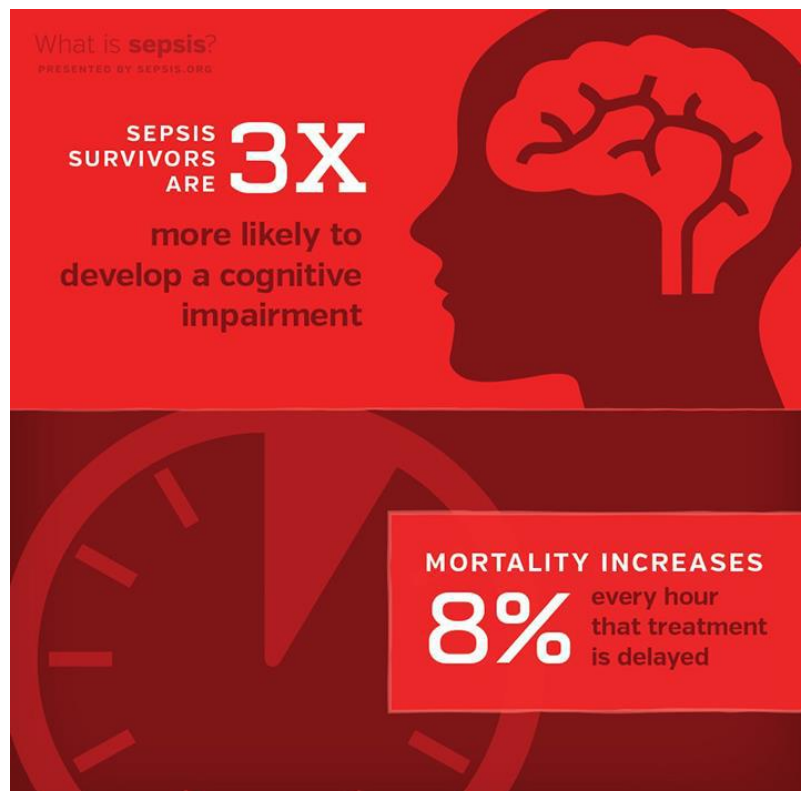
Sepsis kills approximately 270,000 Americans each year.

Many sepsis survivors are left with long-lasting effects, such as amputations or post-traumatic stress disorder.

Sepsis is a medical emergency.

There is no simple test or cure for sepsis.

Sepsis can be prevented by preventing infections and can often be successfully treated with early recognition and treatment.



Graphic courtesy of the Sepsis Alliance

Symptoms of Sepsis

- S** Shivering, fever or very cold
- E** Extreme pain or general discomfort
- P** Pale or discolored skin
- S** Sleepy, difficult to rouse or confused
- I** “I feel like I might die.”
- S** Short of breath

When it comes to sepsis, remember
IT'S ABOUT TIME. Watch for:

T	I	M	E
TEMPERATURE higher or lower than normal	INFECTION may have signs and symptoms of an infection	MENTAL DECLINE confused, sleepy, difficult to rouse	EXTREMELY ILL “I feel like I might die,” severe pain or discomfort

Watch for a combination of these symptoms. If you suspect sepsis, see a doctor urgently, CALL 911 or go to a hospital and say, “I AM CONCERNED ABOUT SEPSIS.”

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There is no single sign or symptom of sepsis. It is a combination of symptoms.

Risk Factors

While anyone can develop sepsis, some people are at greater risk, including:

- Elderly adults
- Very young children
- People with chronic or serious illnesses (such as diabetes or cancer)
- People who have had recent surgery or dental work
- People with an impaired immune system (such as those living with cancer or HIV or those who have had their spleen removed or an organ transplant)
- Pregnant or postpartum women
- Hospitalized patients or people living in close quarters, such as nursing facilities, rehabilitation centers, dormitories or prisons

People who have had sepsis before are more likely to develop it again.

Sepsis Prevention

Prevent Infections

Talk to your doctor or nurse about steps you can take to prevent infections that can lead to sepsis.



Take care of chronic conditions.



Get recommended vaccines.

Practice Good Hygiene



Remember to wash your hands.



Keep cuts clean and covered until healed.

Treating Infections

Bacterial Infections

You will be prescribed antibiotics. Follow the instructions on how the medication should be taken (with or without food, before or after meals, etc.).

- ✓ Take the medicine on time, as prescribed.
- ✓ Finish the full course of medicine even if you feel better sooner. The symptoms will disappear before the bacteria have been completely eliminated from your body.
- ✓ Store antibiotics as directed to preserve the medication's strength.

What not to do with antibiotics

- ✓ Do not ask for a prescription for an infection not caused by bacteria.
- ✓ Do not take someone else's antibiotics. It may not be the correct type or dosage or it may have expired. It can be dangerous to take expired antibiotics.

Viral Infections

Most viral infections run their course without treatment, but some viral infections may be treated with anti-viral medications.

Fungal and Parasitic Infections

Infections caused by fungi or parasites must be treated with specific medications that will eliminate the cause.

What to Expect After Discharge

Post-sepsis syndrome (PSS) is a condition that affects up to half of all sepsis survivors. These individuals may be left with long-term physical and/or psychological effects. Someone who has had sepsis may experience:

- Difficulty sleeping, either getting to sleep or staying asleep
- Nightmares or hallucinations
- Panic attacks
- Disabling muscle or joint pain
- Disabling fatigue and chronic pain
- Difficulty concentrating
- Decreased mental function
- Memory loss
- Loss of self-esteem
- Depression
- Symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)

People who were admitted to a critical care unit and those who have been in the hospital for extended periods of time are at higher risk for having PSS.

Sepsis Survivors

Many sepsis survivors are left not only with physical challenges, but mental and emotional challenges too.

Learn more at sepsis.org



In the United States, more than **1.4 million people survive sepsis every year.**



Up to 60% of sepsis survivors experience worsened cognitive (mental) and/or physical function.¹



Older sepsis survivors experience on average **1 to 2 new limitations** on their daily activities.² (e.g. bathing, dressing, managing money)



Every day, there are an average of **38 amputations** in the U.S. as the result of sepsis.³



1/3 of all sepsis survivors are re-hospitalized within three months of the initial sepsis.⁴

47% of children who have been diagnosed with severe sepsis **are re-hospitalized.**⁵



References: 1. Iwashyna, Tj et al. JAMA Network. 2010;304(16):8. 2. Prescott, H and Angus, D. JAMA. 2018;319(1):62-75. 3. Healthcare Cost and Utilization Project, Nationwide Inpatient Sample, 2012. Accessed April 6, 2016. 4. Prescott, H and Angus, D., JAMA. 2018;319(1):91. 5. Czaja, AS et al. Pediatrics. 2009;123(3):849-857.

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Your Treatment Plan

What you can do after being hospitalized for sepsis:

- Rest and rebuild your strength.
- Set small, achievable goals for yourself each week, such as taking a bath, dressing yourself or walking up stairs.
- Talk to your family and friends about what you are feeling.
- Record your thoughts, struggles and milestones in a journal.
- Learn about sepsis to understand what may have happened.
- Ask your family to fill in any gaps in your memory about what happened to you.
- Eat a balanced diet.
- Exercise, if you feel up to it.
- Make a list of questions to ask your health care provider at your check-up.

Signs of Infection & Sepsis at Home

GREEN ZONE



No sign of infection

YELLOW ZONE



Take action today

CALL

RED ZONE



Take action NOW!

CALL

Are there changes in my heartbeat or breathing?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My heartbeat is as usual. • Breathing is normal for me. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heartbeat is faster than usual. • Breathing is a bit more difficult and faster than usual. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heartbeat is very fast. • Breathing is very fast.
Do I have a fever?	I have not had a fever in the past 24 hours and I am not taking medicine for a fever.	Fever between 100° to 101.4° F.	Fever is 101.5° F. or greater.
Do I feel cold?	I do not feel cold.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I feel cold and cannot get warm. • I am shivering or my teeth are chattering. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temperature is below 96.8° F. • Skin or fingernails are pale or blue.
How is my energy?	My energy level is as usual.	I am too tired to do most of my usual activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am very tired. • I cannot do any of my usual activities.
How is my thinking?	Thinking is clear.	Thinking feels slow or not right.	My caregivers tell me I am not making sense.
Are there changes in how I feel after a hospitalization, procedure, infection or change in wound or IV site?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I feel well. • I had pneumonia, a urinary tract infection (UTI) or another infection. • I had a wound or IV site. It is healing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I do not feel well. • I have a bad cough. • My wound or IV site looks different. • I have not urinated (peed) for 5 or more hours. When I do urinate, it burns, is cloudy or smells bad. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I feel sick. • My wound or IV site is painful, red, smells or has pus.

Signs of Infection & Sepsis at Home


SPOT THE SIGNS

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




ACT FAST

80% 
of patients had symptoms of sepsis prior to hospitalization

Risk of death increases **8%** 
every **hour** that sepsis goes untreated

 **1 person every 2 minutes** dies from sepsis in the U.S.

Only **55%** of U.S. adults 
have heard of sepsis

911 *If you spot the signs of sepsis, call 911.*

Spotting the signs of sepsis early and getting treatment **saves lives!**



If you suspect sepsis or have an infection that is not getting better or is getting worse, **seek medical care IMMEDIATELY!**

My plan for preventing infection at home

Things I can do to prevent infection:

- Wash my hands often, using soap and water, especially after touching door knobs
- Stay away from people who have coughs or colds. Stay away from crowds unless your doctor says it's OK
- Get recommended vaccines (shots) like flu, whooping cough and pneumonia
- Eat healthy foods and drink water
- Keep my wounds or I.V. site clean
- Have a plan for getting help when I am in the yellow zone

Look for signs of infection:

- Do a daily check up using this stoplight form
- Report any signs of an infection in the yellow right away!
- Watch for sepsis. Sepsis is a very dangerous response to an infection by your body. Sepsis can lead to tissue damage, organ failure and death. **Any one of the signs in the red zone can be a sign of sepsis.** Tell your doctor "I am concerned about sepsis."

How I will do these things:

Your care team will work with you to set goals to help you stick to your plan.

Treatment Plan

ACTION	CHECK OFF
<p><i>Complete your antibiotic as prescribed</i></p> <p>Antibiotic _____</p> <p>Dose _____</p> <p>Frequency _____</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>_____</p> <p><i>Date completed</i></p>
<p><i>Get your FLU vaccine yearly and EARLY</i></p> <p>Flu season is October through March</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>_____</p> <p><i>Date received</i></p>
<p><i>Get your PNEUMONIA vaccine</i></p> <p>As recommended by your health care provider</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>_____</p> <p><i>Date received</i></p>
<p><i>Manage your chronic illness</i></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Diabetes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> COPD</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Urinary tract infection risk</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Pneumonia risk</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Skin/wound/cellulitis risk</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other risk factors</p>	<p><i>Follow Up</i> appointment with your health care provider</p> <p>Date: _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Wash hands frequently</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Monitor for infection</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Stop smoking</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Drink plenty of water daily</p>
<p><i>If you suspect sepsis, see a doctor IMMEDIATELY, call 911 or go to a hospital!</i></p>	

Learn More About Sepsis

Sepsis Alliance

Sepsis.org



**Centers for Disease
Control & Prevention**

CDC.gov/Sepsis



Global Sepsis Alliance

Global-Sepsis-Alliance.org



World Health Organization

WHO.int/Sepsis



**Find an interactive video and educational module
on sepsis at *MRH.how***





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