

# Sepsis Fact Sheet

**Definition:** Sepsis is the body's overwhelming response to infection, which can lead to tissue damage, organ failure, amputations, and death.

**Who it Hurts:** While sepsis is more likely to affect very young children, older adults, people with chronic diseases, and those with a weakened immune system, sepsis is an equal-opportunity killer impacting people of all ages and levels of health.

**Prevention:** The risk of sepsis can be reduced by preventing infections, practicing good hygiene, and staying current with vaccinations.

**Treatment:** Sepsis is a medical emergency that requires urgent attention and rapid treatment for survival. Sepsis can be treated and, in many instances, lives are saved by using existing and proven protocols

**Recovery:** Many individuals fully recover from sepsis, while many others are left with long-lasting effects, such as missing limbs or organ dysfunction, like kidney failure. Other after-effects of sepsis are less obvious, such as memory loss, anxiety, or depression.

Symptoms: Symptoms of sepsis include:

- S Shivering, fever, or very cold
- **E** Extreme pain or general discomfort ("worst ever")
- **P** Pale of discolored skin
- S Sleepy, difficult to rouse, confused
- I "I feel like I might die"
- **S** Shortness of breath

If you **suspect sepsis** (observe a combination of these symptoms), see your medical professional immediately, CALL 911, or go to a hospital with an advocate and say, **"I AM CONCERNED ABOUT SEPSIS."** 

### **Critical Facts:**

- Sepsis is the leading cause of death in U.S. hospitals.<sup>1</sup>
- 62% of people hospitalized with sepsis are re-hospitalized within 30 days.<sup>2</sup>
- As many as 92% of sepsis cases originate in the community.<sup>3</sup>
- Mortality from sepsis increases 8% for every hour that treatment is delayed. As many as 80% of sepsis deaths could be prevented with rapid diagnosis and treatment.<sup>4</sup>

## Human Cost:

- Sepsis affects over 26 million people worldwide each year and is the largest killer of children – more than 5 million each year.<sup>5</sup>
- More than 1.6 million people in the U.S. are diagnosed with sepsis each year

   one every 20 seconds and the incidence is rising 8% every year.<sup>6,7</sup>
- 258,000 people die from sepsis every year in the U.S. one every 2 minutes; more than from prostate cancer, breast cancer and AIDS combined.<sup>8,9</sup>
- More than 42,000 children develop severe sepsis each year and 4,400 of these children die, more than from pediatric cancers.<sup>10</sup>
- Sepsis causes at least 75,000 maternal deaths every year worldwide and is driving increases in pregnancy-related deaths in the U.S.<sup>11,12</sup>
- Every day, 38 sepsis patients require amputations<sup>13</sup>
- Sepsis survivors have a shortened life expectancy, are more likely to suffer from an impaired quality of life, and are 42% more likely to commit suicide.<sup>14,15</sup>

# **Economic Cost:**

- Sepsis is the #1 cost of hospitalization in the U.S. consuming more than \$24 billion each year.<sup>16</sup>
- The average cost per hospital stay for sepsis is \$18,400, double the average cost per stay across all other conditions.<sup>17</sup>
- Sepsis is the #1 cause for readmissions to the hospital costing more than \$2 billion each year<sup>18</sup>

### Awareness:

Just 55% of U.S. adults have heard of sepsis.<sup>17</sup>

#### Sources:

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- <sup>3</sup> http://jama.jamanetwork.com/article.aspx?articleid=1873131&resultClick=3
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- <sup>6</sup> https://www.med.unc.edu/pediatrics/news/2015/june/june-10/code-sepsis
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# To find out more please visit Sepsis.org