

Sepsis

Sepsis is the body's overwhelming and life-threatening response to infection which can lead to tissue damage, organ failure, and death. Patients are given a diagnosis of sepsis when they develop severe clinical signs of infections or systemic inflammation. Sepsis can occur in response to incidents as seemingly benign as a playground scrape or a nicked cuticle from the beauty parlor.

Sepsis is costly monetarily as well as in terms of mortality and quality of life. Sepsis treatment costs exceed \$20 billion each year in the United States. Forty percent of patients diagnosed with severe sepsis do not survive. Until a cure for sepsis is found, early detection is the surest hope for survival.

Early symptoms of sepsis are represented in the acronym from the Sepsis Alliance:



If you or someone you know experience the early signs of sepsis, call your doctor or go to an emergency department immediately. It is also important to be aware of and point out these symptoms if you are seeing a doctor or are visiting a patient in the hospital. Early treatment of sepsis includes diagnostic testing, medications and administration of intravenous fluids. Early treatment can be the difference between life and death.

For more information about Sepsis, visit the Sepsis Alliance at <http://www.sepsis.org>.