

Vantage Pharmacy

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Opening Times

Monday - Friday 8.30am to 7pm

Saturday, and Sunday Closed

Bank Holidays Closed

Your FREE Healthy Living Leaflet for January 2024

1. What is sepsis?
2. How many people die from sepsis every hour in the UK?
3. Why is there such a high death rate?
4. Who is more likely to get sepsis?
5. What are the symptoms of sepsis in an older child or adult?
6. What should I do if I see any of these symptoms?
7. In whom is it especially difficult to spot sepsis?
8. Can you catch sepsis from somebody else?
9. What is the treatment?
10. What happens if sepsis is not treated early?



**Just ask
“Could it be Sepsis?”**

Answers on the bottom of P2

Sepsis

Sepsis is a life-threatening reaction to infection that can be hard to spot. There are lots of possible symptoms which can mimic other conditions like flu or a chest infection. The problem is that the infection can spread very quickly and needs to be treated rapidly.

Despite recommendations by the health ombudsman 10 years ago about the need to

address the problem of sepsis, the number of people dying from sepsis is still about 37,000 per year or 4 people every hour at a cost of £2.5 billion to the NHS.

Simple interventions like the administration of antibiotics within one hour of diagnosis have



been shown to save lives and reduce hospital length of stay but are delivered in less than one fifth of people in studies across many institutions.

Who is more likely to get sepsis?

The people who are more likely to get an infection that could lead to sepsis include:

- Babies under 1, particularly if they are born early or their mother had an

infection while she was pregnant

- People over 75
- People with diabetes
- People with a weakened immune system, such as those having chemotherapy treatment or who recently had an organ transplant

- People who have recently had surgery or a serious illness
- Women who have just given birth, had a miscarriage or had an abortion

You cannot catch sepsis from another person.

What symptoms should I look out for?

For an adult or older child, the symptoms to look out for are:

- ◆ Acting confused, slurred speech or not making sense
- ◆ Blue, grey pale or blotchy skin, lips or tongue - on brown or black skin, this may be easier to see on the palms of the hands or soles of the feet
- ◆ A rash that does not fade when you roll a glass over it, the same as meningitis
- ◆ Difficulty breathing, breathlessness or breathing fast.

For a baby or young child look out for these symptoms:

- ◆ Blue, grey or blotchy skin, lips or tongue - on brown or black skin, this may be easier to see on the palms or soles of the feet
- ◆ A rash that does not fade when you roll a glass over it, the same as meningitis
- ◆ Difficulty breathing (you may notice grunting noises or their stomach sucking under their rib cage), breathlessness or breathing very fast
- ◆ A weak high-pitched cry, that's not like their normal cry
- ◆ Not responding like they normally do, or not interested in feeding or normal activities
- ◆ Being sleepier than normal or difficult to wake.

In both cases the person may not have all the symptoms but if you think they may have sepsis call 999 or go to A&E. If sepsis is not spotted early it can turn into septic shock and

cause their organs to fail. Trust your instincts. Sepsis can be especially hard to spot in babies or young children, people with dementia or a learning disability and people who have difficulty communicating.

Treatment for sepsis and recovery

Sepsis needs treatment in hospital straight away because it can get worse very quickly. You should get antibiotics within one hour of

arriving at hospital. You may need other tests or treatments depending on your symptoms including treatment in intensive care, a machine to help you breath and surgery to remove areas of infection.

Most people make a full recovery from sepsis, but it can take time. You might continue to have

physical and emotional symptoms which can last for months, or even years. These long-term effects are sometimes called post-sepsis syndrome and can include:

- * Feeling very tired and weak and having difficulty sleeping
- * Lack of appetite
- * Getting ill more often
- * Changes in your mood or anxiety or depression
- * Nightmares or flashbacks
- * Post-traumatic disorder (PTSD).

Things you can do to help:

- Do ask your work about changes to your working hours or conditions while you are recovering
- Do some gentle easy exercise to build your strength
- Get regular sleep
- Try to prevent infections – e.g. washing your hands regularly.

For more information about this or any other health issue you might have, contact one of our trained team.



Answers: Q1, It is a life threatening reaction to an infection. Q2, 4. Q3, Because it is very hard to spot. Q4, Babies under 1, people over 75, diabetics, people with a weakened immune system, people who have recently had surgery or a serious illness, women who have just given birth, had a miscarriage or an abortion. Q5, Acting confused, blue, grey or blotchy skin, lips or tongue, a rash that does not fade, difficulty breathing, breathlessness or breathing very fast. Q6, Call 999 or go to A&E. Q7, Babies and young children, people with dementia, people with a learning disability and people who have difficulty communicating. Q8, No. Q9, You should get antibiotics within one hour of arriving at hospital. Q10, It can turn into septic shock and cause your organs to fail.