

Sepsis





Also called: septicemia



A life-threatening complication of an infection.

Common

More than 200,000 US cases per year

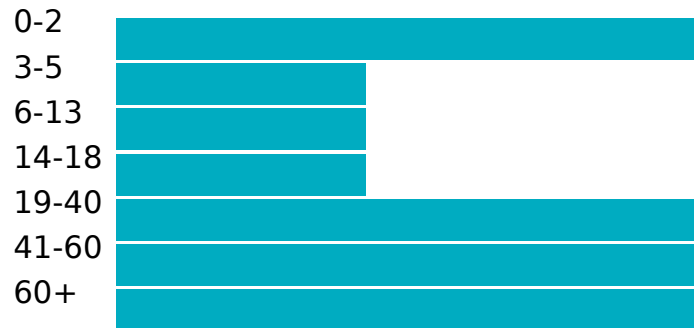
-  Requires a medical diagnosis
-  Lab tests or imaging always required
-  Treatable by a medical professional
-  Short-term: resolves within days to weeks

Sepsis occurs when chemicals released in the bloodstream to fight an infection trigger inflammation throughout the body. This can cause a cascade of changes that damage multiple organ systems, leading them to fail, sometimes even resulting in death.

Symptoms include fever, difficulty breathing, low blood pressure, fast heart rate, and mental confusion.

Treatment includes antibiotics and intravenous fluids.

Ages affected



Symptoms

Requires a medical diagnosis

Symptoms include fever, difficulty breathing, low blood pressure, fast heart rate, and mental confusion.

People may experience:

Whole body: chills, dizziness, fatigue, fever, flushing, low blood pressure, low body temperature, or shivering

Respiratory: fast breathing, rapid breathing, respiratory distress, or shortness of breath

Cognitive: altered level of consciousness or mental confusion

Also common: delirium, fast heart rate, insufficient urine production, organ dysfunction, skin discoloration, or sleepiness

Treatments

Treatable by a medical professional

Treatment includes antibiotics and intravenous fluids.

Prescription

Antibiotics by injection: Ceftriaxone (Rocephin), Meropenem, Ceftazidime (Fortaz), Cefepime (Maxipime), Cefotaxime (Claforan)

Other treatments: Norepinephrine by injection (Levophed), Fludrocortisone, Phenylephrine by injection (Neo-Synephrine)

ALSO COMMON

Lifestyle: Fluid replacement

Devices: Central venous catheter

Procedures: Mechanical ventilation

Other treatments: IV fluids, Antihypotensive agent

Specialists

Critical care doctor: Monitors and treats those in intensive care.

Primary care provider (PCP): Prevents, diagnoses, and treats diseases.

Pediatrician: Provides medical care for infants, children, and teenagers.

Emergency medicine doctor: Treats patients in the emergency department.

Critical: consult a doctor for medical advice

Note: The information you see describes what usually happens with a medical condition, but doesn't apply to everyone. This information isn't medical advice, so make sure to contact a healthcare provider if you have a medical problem. If you think you may have a medical emergency, call your doctor or a emergency number immediately.