

What you should know about **sepsis**



Key Points

- **Anyone can get an infection, and almost any infection can lead to sepsis.** Some people are at higher risk for sepsis, including people with recent severe illness, surgery, or hospital care.
- **Between 10-15% of adult sepsis cases start in the hospital each year.**

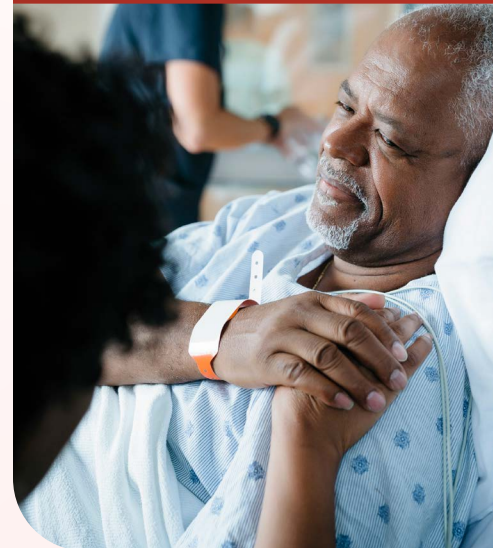
If you are having **surgery**

Before your surgery

- **Avoid shaving** near where you will have surgery. Shaving with a razor can irritate your skin and make it easier to develop an infection. If someone tries to shave you before surgery, ask why this is necessary.
- **Discuss any chronic conditions** you may have, such as diabetes, lung disease, cancer, and kidney disease, with a healthcare professional. These issues can affect your surgery and your treatment.
- **Follow your doctor's instructions** for cleaning your skin before your surgery. For example, if your doctor recommends using a special soap before surgery, make sure you do so.
- **Get recommended vaccines.** Vaccines can prevent or reduce the seriousness of some infections that can lead to sepsis.
- **Quit smoking.** Patients who smoke are a higher risk for infections.



Sepsis is the body's extreme response to an infection. It is a life-threatening medical emergency.



**GET AHEAD
OF SEPSIS**

KNOW THE RISKS.
SPOT THE SIGNS.
ACT FAST.

After your surgery

- **Always clean your hands** before and after caring for your wound.
- **Ask family and friends to clean their hands** before and after visiting you.
- **Do not allow visitors to touch** the surgical wound or dressings.
- **Make sure you know who to contact** if you have questions or problems after you get home.
- **If you have any signs or symptoms of an infection, act fast.** Call a healthcare professional immediately and ask if you should go to the emergency room.
- **Ask a healthcare professional to clean their hands** before they examine you or check your wound.
- **Discuss with a healthcare professional** if it is okay to get out of bed or walk.
- **Know the signs and symptoms of sepsis.** A person with sepsis might have one or more of the signs or symptoms shown below.
- **Review the discharge instructions** and how to care for your wound before you leave the medical facility. Keep cuts, surgical wounds, or dressings clean and covered until healed.

Know the signs and symptoms of sepsis

A person with sepsis might have one or more of the following signs or symptoms:



Clammy or sweaty skin



Cloudy fluid draining from a surgical wound



Extreme pain or discomfort



Fever, shivering, or feeling very cold



High heart rate or low blood pressure



Increased swelling, redness, and pain around your surgery site or in areas where the skin has broken down after a long hospital stay



New onset or increased confusion



Shortness of breath

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Learn more at
cdc.gov/sepsis

