Sepsis is a medical emergency. Be alert to the signs and, if you suspect sepsis, act fast and initiate care.

More than **1.5 million** people get sepsis each year in the U.S.

At least **250,000** Americans die from sepsis each year.

**SPOT THE SIGNS**

Sepsis is the body’s extreme response to an infection. It is life-threatening, and without prompt treatment, often rapidly leads to tissue damage, organ failure, and death. It happens when an infection your patient already has—like in their skin, lungs, or urinary tract—triggers a chain reaction throughout their body.

**KNOW THE RISKS**

Anyone can get an infection, and almost any infection can lead to sepsis. Sepsis more commonly occurs in:

- Adults 65 or older
- People with chronic medical conditions, such as diabetes, lung disease, cancer, and kidney disease
- People with weakened immune systems
- Children younger than one

The most frequently identified pathogens that cause infections that can develop into sepsis include *Staphylococcus aureus* (staph), *Escherichia coli* (E. coli), and some types of *Streptococcus* (strep).

To learn more about sepsis and how to prevent infections, visit [www.cdc.gov/sepsis](http://www.cdc.gov/sepsis).

**PREVENT INFECTIONS AND ACT FAST**

You play a critical role. Remember to:

- **Act fast if you suspect sepsis**, or if your patients’ infections are not getting better or are getting worse. There is no single symptom of sepsis. Signs of sepsis can include a combination of any of the following:
  - Confusion or disorientation
  - Shortness of breath
  - High heart rate
  - Fever, or shivering, or feeling very cold
  - Extreme pain or discomfort
  - Clammy or sweaty skin

- **Prevent infections** by following infection control practices (e.g., hand hygiene, catheter removal) and ensuring patients receive recommended vaccines.

- **Ensure patients’ scrapes and wounds are kept clean until healed.**