Sepsis

Catching Sepsis Early

- Sepsis can affect anyone at any time. Sepsis can be triggered by something as minor as a playground scrape or a nicked cuticle.

- Sepsis affects more than 750,000 Americans each year and kills more than 215,000 each year. That is more deaths than occur from breast cancer, lung cancer and prostate cancer combined.

- Sepsis is a medical emergency. Since there is no single test to diagnose sepsis, evaluation and treatment must begin as soon as sepsis is suspected.

- **A 2010 Sepsis Alliance/Harris Interactive poll indicated that only one-third of Americans had ever heard the word "sepsis." To overcome this lack of awareness, health care professionals must use the word "sepsis."**

Risk

Sepsis is an equal opportunity killer. Some patients are more prone to sepsis, including those over the age of 65, people with cancer, liver disease, and conditions and medications that lower the immune system. Post-operative patients are ten times more likely to die of sepsis than of pulmonary embolism or heart attack.

Diagnosis

Suspect sepsis in patients with abnormalities of:

- Body temperature
- Heart rate
- Respiratory rate
- White blood cell count

Sepsis frequently causes organ dysfunction. Some warning signs are:

- Heart – hypotension, tachycardia
- Lungs – hypoxemia, dyspnea
- Kidneys – oliguria
- Brain – confusion, coma

Treatment

Sepsis is a medical emergency. Rapid treatment with antibiotics and fluids can be life saving. For every hour that passes without appropriate antibiotics, the risk of dying from septic shock goes up by almost 8%.

In addition to antibiotics and intravenous fluids, other evaluations and treatments include:

- Cultures
- Measurement of urine output
- Lactate
- Other labs
- Supplemental oxygen
- Mechanical ventilation
- Vasopressors
- Renal replacement therapy
- Recombinant human activated Protein C

For additional sepsis information, visit sepsisalliance.org.

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SEPSIS ALLIANCE
Suspect Sepsis. Save Lives.

THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
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