

Could it be SEPSIS



Sepsis is a medical emergency and needs immediate treatment.

Sepsis happens when the body has an extreme response to an infection and starts to injure its own tissues and organs. Sepsis can damage many parts of the body and can result in death. The best chance of getting better from sepsis is to treat it quickly.

Knowing if your child has sepsis can be difficult because many of the symptoms in the beginning are the same as mild infections. The difference is that your child's symptoms don't improve or may worsen.

Sepsis is rare, but any child can develop sepsis and we all need to know what to look out for.

You know your child best, so **trust your gut feeling**. If your child is more unwell than ever before or this illness is different from other times – ask your doctor or nurse **“Could it be sepsis?”**.

Any ONE of these symptoms may mean your child is very unwell and could have sepsis:



Paediatric Sepsis checklist

If you think your child is not getting better, or they are getting sicker, trust your gut feeling. Tick the boxes that apply to your child and ask your doctor or nurse **“Could it be sepsis?”**.



Temperature

- Shivering or shaking with a fever
- Low temperature (less than 36°C)
- For child older than 3 months, high temperature (more than 38°C) for 5 days or more
- For baby 3 months or younger, any high temperature (more than 38°C)



Breathing

- Grunting noises when breathing
- Working harder to breathe – sucking under the ribs or caving in of the breast bone
- Nostrils that move in and out (flare) with each breath
- Crackly noises from the chest



Activity and movement

- Can't concentrate
- Can't stay awake
- No interest in playing
- No interest in what is happening around them
- Irritable and won't settle
- Restlessness
- Unable to walk or refusing to walk
- Not using an arm, leg, hand or foot for no obvious reason
- Feeling more unwell than before



Pain

- Headache, neck, muscle, chest, bone or joint pain for no obvious reason
- Pain relief is not working



Skin

- Cold hands and feet
- Skin painful to touch
- Bright red skin all over
- Rash



Toileting

- No urine (wee) or wet nappies for 12 hours or more
- Fewer nappies and not as heavy as usual
- Blood in the faeces (poo)
- More than 5 watery diarrhoea (runny poo) episodes in 24 hours



Eating and drinking

- Unable to keep any fluids down because of vomiting
- Vomit that is green or black or has blood in it
- No interest in drinking or feeding
- Very thirsty
- Dry mouth, lips or tongue



Illnesses can change – trust your gut feeling. Even if your child has recently seen a doctor, if you think they may have sepsis, come back to hospital and ask **“Could it be sepsis?”**.

Visit www.childrens.health.qld.gov.au/sepsis