

# SEPSIS:

## PATIENT DISCHARGE INFORMATION - ADULTS

### IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Sometimes the body's reaction to an infection can cause injury to healthy tissue and organs to stop working normally. This is called sepsis. Without fast treatment, sepsis can cause organ failure and even death.

Because you have been diagnosed with an infection, you need to be aware of the symptoms of sepsis.

It might not be obvious to you if you have sepsis because many of the symptoms are like those seen in common infections, which will get better with simple treatment and care.

Sepsis can progress very quickly, so if you think you could have sepsis, go straight to the closest hospital Emergency Department and ask: *"Could this be sepsis?"*

**Sepsis is a medical emergency and  
needs immediate treatment**

### WHO IS AT RISK OF SEPSIS?

Sepsis can affect anyone with an infection - it doesn't matter what type of infection you have. Some people are more at risk than others. This includes people who:

- > are very old or very young
- > have a weakened immune system or are being treated for cancer
- > have just had surgery or given birth
- > have a wound or injury
- > identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait islander.

# WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF SEPSIS?

There is no single sign or symptom of sepsis. Sepsis can initially look like the flu, gastro or a normal urinary, skin or chest infection. If you have an infection, look out for one or more of the following things:

	fast breathing and/or heartbeat		weakness or aching muscles
	confusion, slurred speech or disorientation		not passing much (or any) urine
	difficult to rouse or wake		a new rash, discoloured skin or clammy sweaty skin
	feeling very hot or cold / fever or shivering chills		feeling very unwell, extreme pain or like you're 'going to die'

**GO TO HOSPITAL IF YOU HAVE THESE SYMPTOMS**

## WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I AM CONCERNED?

If you feel like you could have sepsis, go to the closest hospital Emergency Department straight away.

Ask your doctor or nurse: *“Could this be sepsis?”*

It is important that you bring a record of your discharge information and medications from your recent admission to hospital.

If you are unsure, call Healthdirect (1800 022 222) anytime for free, confidential advice from a registered nurse.

For more information, visit

[sahealth.sa.gov.au/couldthisbesepsis](http://sahealth.sa.gov.au/couldthisbesepsis)



This document has been reviewed and endorsed by SQCAG\* for consumers and the community February 2022.

\*SA Health Safety and Quality Community Advisory Group.

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