

## Child Sepsis Safety Net

If your child's condition has changed since they last saw a doctor, this leaflet will help you decide if they need further healthcare or assessment.

This leaflet has been produced in collaboration with [The UK Sepsis Trust](#). This is a UK charity that is committed to raising awareness of sepsis and improving the care patients with sepsis receive.

Sepsis is a life-threatening condition and needs emergency treatment, usually in hospital. The symptoms of sepsis may be vague and not specific. If your child is unwell with either a **fever** or very **low temperature** (or has had a fever in the last 24 hours), just ask: Could it be sepsis?

If your child has any of the following, **seek medical advice immediately (call 999 if you can't get immediate access to a doctor) and ask:**

### Could it be sepsis?

- Is breathing very fast.
- Has a 'fit' or convulsion.
- Has clammy, cold skin and looks blue, pale or patchy (mottled).
- Has a rash that does not fade when you press it.
- Is very lethargic or difficult to wake.
- Feels abnormally cold to touch.

Other symptoms to look out for include:

- Severe shivering.
- Severe muscle pain or tummy (abdominal) pain.
- Being confused or disorientated (not sure where they are).
- Slurred speech.
- Feeling very dizzy or faint

### Any child under 5 who:

- Is not feeding.
- Is vomiting repeatedly.
- Hasn't had a wee or wet nappy for 12 hours.

**might have sepsis.** If you're worried they're deteriorating call 111 or see your GP.

If your child does have sepsis they may also have other symptoms of infection such as a flu-like illness (cough, fever, muscle aches and joint pains) or diarrhoea and vomiting.

Early treatment saves lives. Call 999 if you are very concerned. Call your GP immediately if you're concerned, but don't think your child needs to go straight to hospital. If there is any delay in talking to a doctor then call 999.

## Further reading & references

- [Jawad I, Luksic I, Rafnsson SB](#); Assessing available information on the burden of sepsis: global estimates of incidence, prevalence and mortality. J Glob Health. 2012 Jun;2(1):010404. doi: 10.7189/jogh.02.010404.
- [Sepsis - recognition, diagnosis and early management](#) NICE Guideline (July 2016)

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