Skilled Nursing Facility Care Pathway: Symptoms of Sepsis and Septic Shock

**Symptoms or Signs of Sepsis**
- Infection (confirmed or suspected)
- Fever or feeling very cold
- Rapid heart rate
- Rapid breathing
- Shortness of breath
- Confusion or difficulty to arouse
- Complaints of extreme pain
- Pale/dischcolored skin

**Vital Sign Criteria (any met?)**
- Infection (confirmed or suspected)
- Two or more of the following:
  - Altered Mental Status (Glasgow Coma Scale less than 13)
  - Hypotension (systolic less than 100mmHg)
  - Tachypnea (RR greater than 22)
  - Decreased urine output or darkened/concentrated urine

**Tests Ordered**
- WBC
- Blood cultures X2 (prior to antibiotics)
- Lactate
- Coagulation tests (aPTT/INR)
- Serum Creatinine
- Platelet count
- Bilirubin
- Urinalysis
- Urine culture
- Blood glucose

**Manage In Facility**
- Monitor vital signs, fluid intake/urine output
- Oral, IV or subcutaneous fluids if needed for hydration
- Update advance care plan and directives if appropriate

**Evaluate Results**
- WBC > 12,000 or < 4,000 or > 10% bands
- Lactate > 2mm/L
- Platelets < 100,000
- Serum Creatinine > 2.0mg/dL
- aPTT > 60sec or INR > 1.5
- Bilirubin > 2mg/dL
- Hyperglycemia (not diabetic)

**Notify MD/NP/PA**

**Notify MD, obtain orders as necessary, monitor for change in condition.**

**Monitor Response**
- Sepsis criteria met
- Worsening condition

**Consider Contacting MD/NP/PA for orders**
- For further evaluation and management

**Sepsis** = Infection + life-threatening organ dysfunction
**Septic Shock** = Sepsis + persistent hypotension despite fluid resuscitation and need for vasopressors to keep MAP > 65mmHg.

Adapted from: Third International Consensus Definitions for Sepsis and Septic Shock - Singer et al. JAMA 2016;315(8) 801-810

This resource is not all inclusive and may not apply to all patients/residents and/or situations. It is intended for educational purposes only and as guidance to support investigation for performance improvement—not as a substitute for treatment or advice from a physician or healthcare provider.

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