

UNDERSTANDING SEPSIS FOR ESRD PATIENTS

What Is Sepsis?

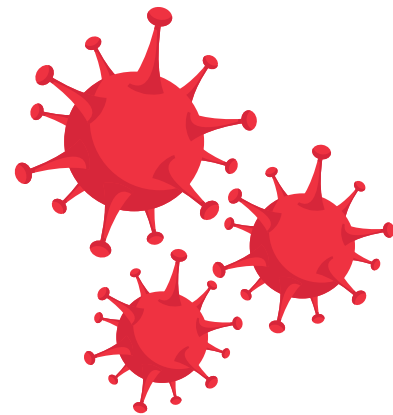
Sepsis is a very serious illness. It happens when your body has a strong reaction to an infection. The infection can start anywhere in your body. Sepsis can be very dangerous, so it's important to get help fast.

Why People on Dialysis Are at Higher Risk

If you get dialysis, your body may not fight germs as well. You also have a place on your body (like a catheter or fistula) where germs can get in. These germs can cause infections, and infections can lead to sepsis. But you can help stop infections by staying clean and careful.

Signs to Watch For

- Fever, chills, or feeling very cold
- Feeling confused or very tired
- Fast heartbeat or trouble breathing
- Pain or feeling very uncomfortable
- Pale or blotchy skin



Why You Need to Act Fast

Sepsis can hurt your body and make you very sick. It can even cause death. Getting help quickly gives you the best chance to get better.

What to Do If You Think You Have Sepsis

- Call your doctor right away and say you're worried about sepsis.
- Be ready to go to the hospital if your doctor says to.
- At the hospital, you may get medicine through an IV, and doctors will do tests to find the infection.

CHECKLIST: HOW TO STAY SAFE FROM SEPSIS

Keep Your Dialysis Site Safe

- ☐ Wash your hands before and after touching your dialysis site
- ☐ Make sure your care team wears gloves and cleans your site
- ☐ Keep your site clean and dry
- ☐ Tell your care team if you see redness, swelling, drainage, or feel pain

Stop Germs from Spreading

- ☐ Get your vaccines, like the flu and pneumonia shots
- ☐ Keep cuts and wounds clean and covered
- ☐ Take all your antibiotics if your doctor gives them to you

Take Care of Your Health

- ☐ Go to all your dialysis appointments
- ☐ Take care of other health problems like diabetes or heart disease
- ☐ Tell your care team if you feel different or notice new symptoms

Know the Signs and Speak Up

- ☐ Watch for signs like fever, pain, or confusion
- ☐ Go to the doctor or hospital right away if something feels wrong
- ☐ Ask your dialysis center if they have a sepsis response plan

Be Part of Your Care

- ☐ Ask if your dialysis center follows safety rules
- ☐ Join learning events about handwashing and staying safe
- ☐ If you see a staff member skip a safety step, speak up—it's okay to ask them to be safe

