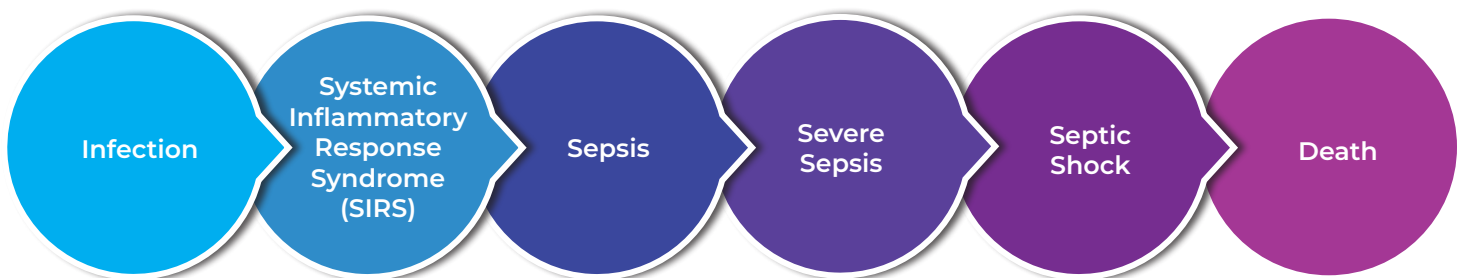




# Sepsis Early Recognition and Response Pathway FOR NURSING FACILITIES

Sepsis is the body's extreme response to an infection, which happens when an infection triggers a chain reaction throughout the body. It is a **life-threatening medical emergency** that can rapidly lead to tissue damage, organ failure, and death. Anyone can get an infection, and almost any infection can lead to sepsis. When the body releases chemicals into the bloodstream to counteract an infection, it can lead to widespread inflammation, a condition known as Systemic Inflammatory Response Syndrome (SIRS). SIRS can rapidly progress to severe sepsis and septic shock, resulting in damage to multiple organ systems and subsequent death.



Pathogens such as bacteria, viruses, and fungi can cause infections that may lead to sepsis. The most common infections that cause sepsis in adults are respiratory infections, urinary tract infections, gastrointestinal infections, and skin infections. Residents with suspected sepsis should be urgently evaluated and treated by the health care team.

**You play a critical role. Protect your residents by ACTING FAST when you identify signs and symptoms of sepsis.**

## Know the Signs and Symptoms of Sepsis



**Shivering, fever or very cold**



**Extreme pain or discomfort**



**Clammy or sweaty skin**



**Confusion or disorientation**



**Short of breath**



**High heart rate**

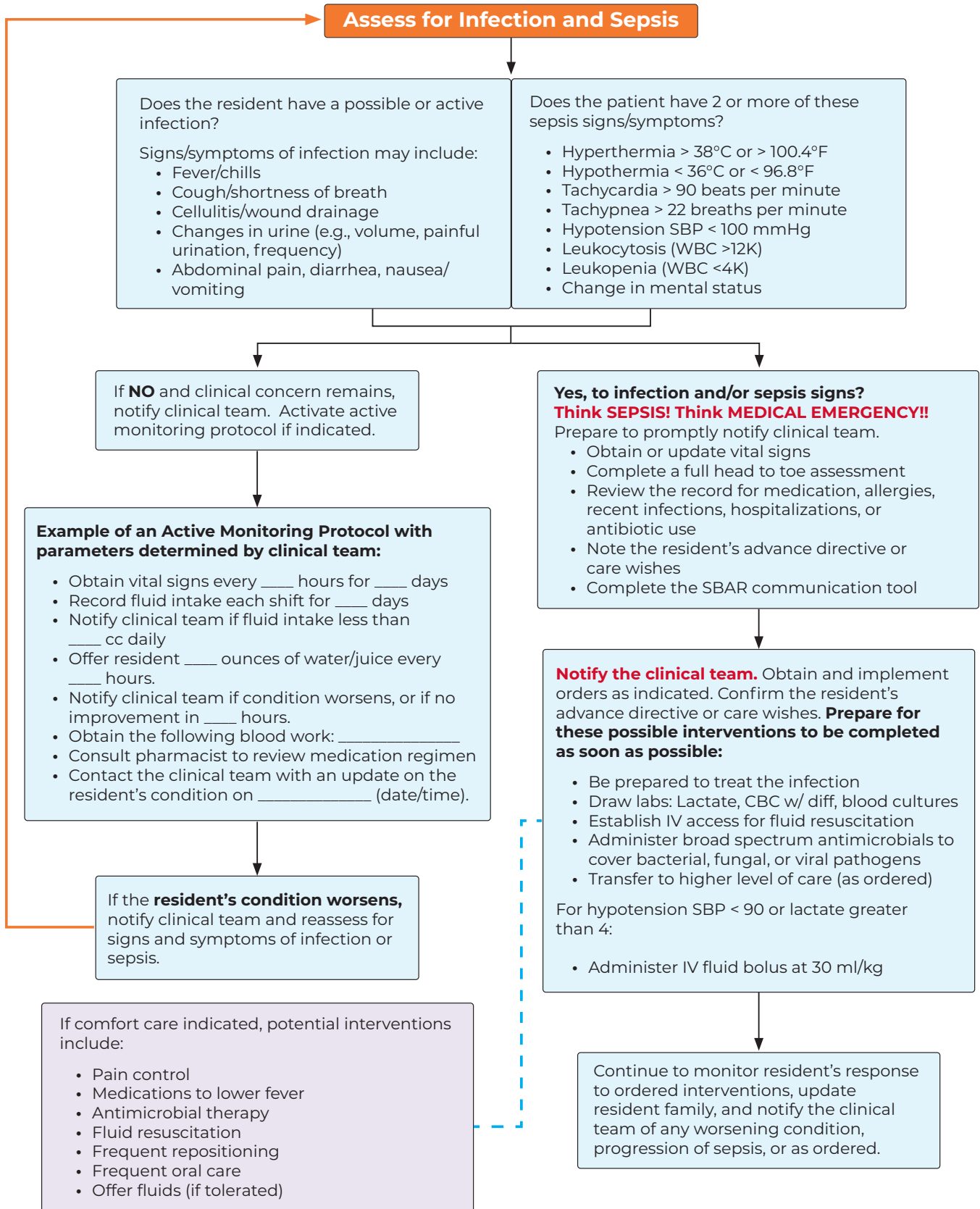
## Anyone with an infection is at high risk for sepsis.

Examples of conditions that can lead to infection and sepsis include but are not limited to:

- Pneumonia
- Wounds and non-intact skin
- Urinary tract infection
- Any infection with a multi-drug resistant organism
- *C. difficile* infection
- Invasive lines or devices
- Weakened immune system
- Chronic illnesses, such as diabetes, cancer, and kidney disease
- Recent hospitalizations

## Sepsis Early Recognition and Response Pathway for Nursing Facilities

The Sepsis Early Recognition and Response Pathway for Nursing Facilities is designed to help staff quickly identify signs and symptoms of an infection that could lead to sepsis. This pathway also serves as a guide for staff to promptly screen, identify, and immediately respond to sepsis with evidence-based interventions once sepsis is identified in a resident. This resource is intended for educational and quality improvement purposes to raise sepsis awareness. Before using this resource, please consult your facility's medical director and/or clinical leadership team for additional considerations and interventions.



**Disclaimer:**

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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[Skilled Nursing Facility Care Pathway-Symptoms of Sepsis and Septic Shock \(ipro.org\)](#)