Stop Sepsis. Save Lives.

Sepsis is –
- A leading cause of death due to infection;
- A medical emergency;
- Triggered by an infection;
- More common than a heart attack; and
- The cause of more deaths than prostate cancer, breast cancer, and AIDS combined.

Sepsis is a systemic response to infection – the presence of systemic inflammatory response syndrome in addition to a documented or presumed infection. Sepsis can lead to shock (septic shock) and may include organ dysfunction, mental status changes, and a drop in blood pressure.

To identify severe sepsis, document the suspected source of infection and note any manifestations of systemic inflammation, including –
- Fever (>38°C, 100.4°F) or low body temperature (<36°C, 96.8°F);
- Fast heart rate (pulse >90 bpm);
- Rapid or difficult breathing (respirations >20 per minute); and/or
- White blood cell count >12,000 or <4,000 or >10% bands.

Be alert for signs of organ dysfunction that can readily be assessed, including –
- Systolic blood pressure (SBP) < 90 mmHG;
- SBP decrease of more than 40 mmHG;
- Urine output < 0.5 mL/kg/hr;
- Ileus (absent bowel sounds);
- Mental status change, confusion, disorientation, drowsiness, and/or headache; and/or
- Skin rash, bruising, and/or mottling.

Time is critical in treating sepsis to not only sustain vital organs and treat the infection, but to implement appropriate infection control and prevention measures for communicable diseases. The following are some resources you may find helpful in implementing a process to assess for and identify sepsis in your residents.

CDC website  [www.cdc.gov/sepsis](http://www.cdc.gov/sepsis)
Includes basic information about sepsis, patient resources data reports, clinical guidelines and tools, related links

Surviving Sepsis  [http://survivingsepsis.org](http://survivingsepsis.org)
Includes sepsis bundle information, clinical guidelines, protocols, checklists, policies, published research on best practices

Includes information and resources about sepsis for patients, family members and medical professionals

Need more information? Qsource can help! For technical assistance with developing a process for assessing for and identifying sepsis in your residents or if you’re just looking for more information, contact Scott Gibson at 502-680-2669 or scott.gibson@area-G.hcqis.org.

Learn more at [www.atomAlliance.org](http://www.atomAlliance.org).