

Sepsis is a medical emergency

WHAT IS SEPSIS ?

- Sepsis is a life-threatening condition that arises when the body’s response to an infection injures its own tissues and organs.
- It occurs when the body’s immune system – which normally helps to protect us and fight infection goes into overdrive. It can lead to shock, multiple organ failure, and sometimes death, especially if not recognised early and treated promptly.

Symptoms :

Sepsis is more likely to affect very young children, older adults, people with chronic illnesses, and those with weakened immune systems

T	Temperature: Higher or lower than normal
I	Infection: May have signs and symptoms of an infection
M	Mental Decline: Confused, sleepy, difficult to rouse
E	Extremely Ill: "I feel like I might die," severe pain or discomfort

WHAT CAUSES SEPSIS?

- Sepsis is caused by an infection.
- The infection can be viral, bacterial, fungal, or parasitic.
- It can be an infection that started in a paper cut or bug bite, or a larger infection, like pneumonia or meningitis.

There is no single sign and no single diagnostic test – symptoms can also present differently in adults and children.

CHILDREN

A child may have sepsis if he or she:

- Is breathing very fast
- Has a ‘fit’ or convulsion
- Looks mottled, bluish, or pale
- Has a rash that does not fade when you press it
- Is very lethargic or difficult to wake
- Feels abnormally cold to touch

ADULTS

An adult may have sepsis if they show any of these signs:

- S**lurred speech or confusion
- E**xtrême shivering or muscle pain
- P**assing no urine (in a day)
- S**evere breathlessness
- I**t feels like you’re going to die
- S**kin mottled or discoloured

CRITICAL FACTS ABOUT SEPSIS :

- The Academy of Medical Royal Colleges in 2022 estimated that we may see as many as 66,096 deaths each year from sepsis.
- Sepsis Claims more lives than lung cancer ,and more that bowel , breast and prostate cancer combined.
- York Health Economics Consortium (YHEC) estimated, given that there are at least 200,000 cases of sepsis every year, that sepsis costs the NHS between £1.5 and £2 billion each year, and our wider economy at least £11 billion and possibly as high as £15.6 billion.

SEPSIS PREVENTION:

- Sepsis can’t always be prevented, but the risk drops when you take steps to prevent or treat infections as quickly as possible.
- You can do this by staying current with vaccinations, practicing good hygiene, and seeking medical help when you suspect you have an infection



CURTAINS, BLINDS AND SCREEN CLEANING STANDARDS



How to prevent the risk of cross contamination of curtains, blinds and screen

Introduction

Privacy curtains are widely used in hospitals, clinics and social care settings. These curtains are frequently touched by staff members and easily become contaminated. Studies have shown that privacy curtains could become contaminated with dangerous bacteria including multidrug-resistant organisms like MRSA, *C. difficile*, etc. Further, lack of hand hygiene and direct contact with the curtain can lead to cross contamination.

As a general rule, all curtains (fabric or disposable), screens and blinds should be:

- Visibly clean and free of stains, blood, bodily fluids, dust, dirt and spillages.
- Included on cleaning schedules and records should be maintained for evidence/assurance.
- The frequency of changing/cleaning should be determined by assessing each functional area including window blinds, curtains and screens, and establish the frequency of cleaning/changing based on risks.
- Any curtains, blinds or screens that are visibly soiled should be changed/cleaned immediately.
- If disposable curtains are used, the date should be clearly entered and they should be replaced six-monthly.
- If re-usable curtains are used, they should be taken down and cleaned at 60 degrees at least six-monthly and immediately when soiled.
- Blinds should be vacuumed weekly as part of the general cleaning schedule.
- Curtains should be well maintained, free of tears and clear of the floor.

World Hand Hygiene Day – 5th May 2024

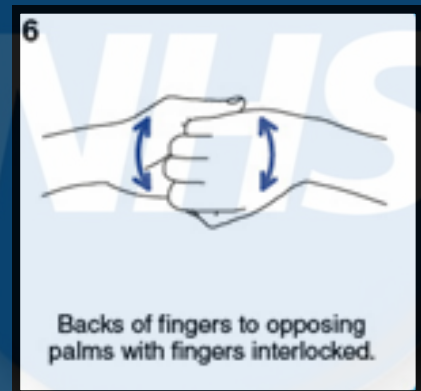
- The IPC Team celebrated the Hand Hygiene day with Care Homes across NEL.
- We focused on the 5 moments of hand hygiene and hand hygiene technique.
- Staff took part in showing us how they wash their hands, before identifying areas missed using UV light.
- The photos below reinforce the importance of ensuring all hand washing steps are followed – as we routinely miss areas such as thumbs, wrists, nail beds, fingertips, palms and the backs of the hands.



Hand Hygiene Facts:

- Out of every 100 patients, 7 in developed Countries will acquire at least one healthcare acquired infection in acute care hospitals. (WHO,2021)
- Appropriate hand hygiene prevents up to 50% of avoidable infections acquired during health care delivery, including those affecting the health work force. WHO,2021)
- On average, people touch their faces 23 times per hour. (CDC, 2022)
- Alcohol-based hand sanitiser does not kill C. cifficile or norovirus – soap and water should be used instead (NHSE 2019).
- Alcohol-based handrubs must have a minimum alcohol concentration of 60% and conform to the British Standard BS EN 1500:2013. (DoH 2022)

Don't forget this step!



Links to handwashing posters:

- © Infection Prevention and Control 5 moments Poster: [5 Moments Poster \(who.int\)](#)
- © How to hand wash poster : [Hand Wash Poster \(who.int\)](#)
- © How to handrub poster: [_Hand Rub Poster \(who.int\)](#)

(Posters must be laminated)



IPC Team contact details
Generic email for advice: nelondonicb.ipc@nhs.net

Sandra Smith
Deputy Director of
Infection Prevention
and Control
Tel: 07769 382399

Gyanu Adhikari
IPC Clinical Nurse
Specialist
Tel: 07551 564659

Luca Comisi
IPC Clinical Nurse
Specialist
Tel: 07551 593253

Loredana Nechita
IPC Support
Officer
Tel: 07939 196461

References :

- [Sepsis-Manual-7th-Edition-2024-V1.0.pdf \(sepsistrust.org\)](#)
- [Education Resources | The UK Sepsis Trust](#)
- An effective and automated approach for reducing infection risk from contaminated privacy curtains - American Journal of Infection Control (ajicjournal.org)