

# Spotting the signs of Sepsis – guide for Homecare workers

There is growing awareness that the life threatening condition sepsis needs to be recognised promptly. Here Dr Ron Daniels, CEO of The UK Sepsis Trust and world expert on sepsis, considers which people are more likely to get sepsis, and how domiciliary care workers can spot the signs.

Sepsis, or blood poisoning, is the reaction to an infection in which the body attacks its own organs and tissues. If not spotted and treated quickly, it can rapidly lead to organ failure and death. The numbers are staggering – every year in the UK 250,000 people are affected by sepsis; 44,000 people die because of sepsis and 60,000 suffer permanent, life-changing after-effects.

Sepsis is an indiscriminate killer, claiming young and old lives alike and affecting the previously fit and healthy. It's more common than heart attacks and kills more people than bowel, breast and prostate cancer and road accidents combined. Current practice for diagnosis and treatment could be costing the UK economy up to £15.6 billion annually.

But despite the statistics and the condition's devastating impacts, awareness of sepsis is astonishingly low. Dr Ron Daniels BEM founded the charity in 2012 after seeing too many people die needlessly from sepsis in his role as an NHS Consultant.

The UK Sepsis Trust has a clear mission to save lives and improve outcomes for survivors of sepsis by instigating political change, educating healthcare professionals, raising public awareness, and providing support for those affected.

Earlier identification and treatment across the UK would save 14,000 lives and result in 400,000 fewer days in hospital for patients every year.

It isn't just healthcare professionals who should be able to recognise the signs, it's everyone. For domiciliary care workers in UK, being able to spot the signs quickly is crucial as with every hour that passes before the right antibiotics are administered, risk of death increases.

It's important to know the signs and symptoms but also important to know the common causes of sepsis. Sepsis can happen as a response to any infection or



Dr Ron Daniels

injury, anywhere in the body.

## It can result from:

- a chest infection causing pneumonia
- a urine infection in the bladder
- a problem in the abdomen, such as a burst ulcer or a hole in the bowel
- an infected cut or bite
- a wound from trauma or surgery
- a leg ulcer or cellulitis

## Seek medical help urgently if the person you are caring for develops any of these signs:

- Slurred speech or confusion
- Extreme shivering or muscle pain
- Passing no urine (in a day)
- Severe breathlessness
- It feels like you're going to die
- Skin mottled or discoloured

Sepsis strikes indiscriminately regardless of age or state of health. However, some people are more likely to get sepsis, and it is helpful for domiciliary careworkers to know if those they're caring for are more at risk.

## Be more alert if those you're caring for:

- are very young or very old
- are diabetic
- are on long-term steroids or on drugs to treat cancer or other conditions
- have had an organ transplant and are on anti-rejection drugs
- are malnourished (their body hasn't had enough food)

- have serious liver disease
- have a serious illness which affects their immune system (the way the body protects itself from infection), such as leukaemia
- have an infection or a complication after an operation
- are pregnant or have just given birth

Our goal, at the UK Sepsis Trust, is to end preventable deaths from sepsis and improve outcomes for survivors and, with better awareness, we can save 14,000 lives a year and transform the way sepsis is handled in the UK. If you need support, resources or more information, you can find it on our website at [www.sepsistrust.org](http://www.sepsistrust.org) or you can phone us on 0800 389 6255 or email us at [info@sepsistrust.org](mailto:info@sepsistrust.org).

Dr Ron Daniels  
CEO, The UK Sepsis Trust



## Save time & increase revenue by up to 50%

- ✓ Cloud based & 100% secure
- ✓ Increases efficiency by automating admin
- ✓ Improves cash flow, payroll and billing
- ✓ Increases your carers' efficiency
- ✓ No hidden costs - affordable monthly pricing plan per carer

Call **03300 885 767** or visit [carelinelive.com](http://carelinelive.com) to arrange a demo

\* Results achieved by UKHCA Member agency, 2017  
\*\* Offer ends 31/12/18. Full Terms and Conditions apply. Offer is available on contracts with a minimum number of 5 carers and a maximum number of 100 carers

GET ONE MONTH FREE

FREE

Offer ends 31/12/18

