

IF YOUR CHILD HAS:

AMBER
symptoms

**SEEK MEDICAL ADVICE
AND JUST ASK:
“COULD IT BE SEPSIS?”**

RED
symptoms

**GET YOUR CHILD TO
HOSPITAL QUICKLY**

**Dial 999 for an ambulance
if necessary**

This information is derived, with permission, from the SAM leaflet produced by NHS England (South West) to improve recognition of sepsis in children. Contributors include paediatricians, sepsis experts, nurses, GPs and parents of children who've had sepsis.

If you've been affected by sepsis, visit sepsistrust.org/get-support, or call **0808 800 0029** to speak to our specialist support team with many years' experience. They're passionate and dedicated to help those struggling with grief, having problems with recovery or trying to support a loved one.

sepsistrust.org

**Protect your child's health.
Just Ask “Could it be Sepsis?”**



Spotting sepsis in children

Kind thanks to 11-London for the design of this leaflet – we hope you found it helpful.

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**THE UK
SEPSIS
TRUST**



What is sepsis?

Sepsis – sometimes confused with septicemia or blood poisoning – is the immune system's overreaction to an infection or injury. Simply put, the body starts attacking its own organs and tissues. We don't as yet, understand why this happens but if not treated immediately, sepsis can result in organ failure, amputation and death.

Whilst the majority survive, 25,000 children are admitted to hospital with sepsis every year in the UK.

Please use this leaflet if you're concerned about your child's symptoms, especially if their illness seems unlike anything they've had before, and they're 'just not right' – even if their temperature falls again.

This information will help you monitor your child's condition so you know:

- When to ask for help
- Where to go
- How to describe the symptoms



Some (but not all) children with these symptoms are seriously unwell.

Ask for an assessment TODAY from a trained health professional, and Just Ask: "Could it be Sepsis?"

Temperature

- Raised temperature (more than 37.5°C) for five days or more
- Shivering or shaking

Breathing

- Nostrils change size with each breath
- Breathing that's noisy or sounds 'crackly'
- Cough that sounds like a seal barking

Skin, Lips & Tongue

- Unusually pale skin
- Dry mouth, lips and/or tongue

Eating & Drinking

- Baby who is not feeding (taking less than half their usual amount of milk)
- Eating much less than normal
- Has vomited (been sick) more than twice in the last 24 hours

Toilet/Nappies

- More than five watery poos (diarrhoea) in the last 24 hours in babies younger than one year of age
- Only one wee or wet nappy in eight hours

Activity & Body

- Less interested than usual in playing
- Difficult to wake up or unusually sleepy
- Swelling of a limb or joint
- Not using/putting weight on an arm, leg, hand or foot

It's sometimes hard to be sure about particular signs and symptoms. If you feel that your child may be seriously ill, or if something that concerns you is not on these lists, call NHS 111, contact your GP, or go to your local Walk-in Centre or Minor Injury Unit depending on your level of concern.

Many (but not all) children with these symptoms are seriously unwell.

TAKE IMMEDIATE ACTION. DIAL 999 STRAIGHT AWAY. DON'T DELAY.

Temperature

- Temperature over 38°C in babies under three months
- Temperature over 39°C in babies aged three to six months
- Any high temperature in a child who cannot be encouraged to show interest in anything
- Low temperature (below 36°C, check three times in a 10 minute period)

Breathing

- Finding it much harder to breathe than normal – looks like hard work
- Making 'grunting' noises with every breath (in newborns this may sound like a lamb bleating)
- Very fast breathing (more than one breath each second in babies)
- Can't say more than a few words at once (for older children who normally talk)
- Breathing that obviously 'pauses'

Skin, Lips & Tongue

- Skin is blue, mottled (purplish, red) or very pale
- Lips or tongue are bluish
- Eyes look 'sunken'
- Hands and feet are unusually cold to touch
- Rash that does not fade when pressed firmly (use a clear glass)

Eating & Drinking

- New baby under one month old with no interest in feeding
- Not drinking for more than eight hours (when awake)
- Extremely thirsty
- Unable to keep fluids down
- Persistently vomiting for more than 24 hours
- Bile-stained (green), bloody or black vomit/sick

Toilet/Nappies

- Not had a wee or wet nappy for 12 hours

Activity & Body

- Soft spot on a baby's head is bulging
- Child cannot be encouraged to show interest in anything
- Baby is floppy
- Weak, 'whining' or continuous crying in a younger child
- Older child who's confused
- Not responding or very irritable
- Hard to wake up, won't stay awake or doesn't seem to recognise you
- Stiff neck, especially when trying to look up and down