

# WHAT IS SEPSIS?



**Sepsis** is a complication caused by the body's overwhelming and life-threatening response to infection, which can lead to tissue damage, organ failure, and death.



**Sepsis is DIFFICULT TO DIAGNOSE** because it happens quickly and can be confused with other conditions.



**Sepsis is a medical emergency and is DEADLY** when it's not quickly recognized and treated.

## WHAT CAN YOU DO TO **PREVENT** SEPSIS?



**1 Get vaccinated** against the flu, pneumonia, and any other infections that could lead to sepsis. Talk to your doctor for more information.



**2 Prevent infections** that can lead to sepsis by

- **Cleaning** scrapes and wounds
- Practicing good **hygiene** (e.g., hand washing)



**3 Know that time matters.** If you have a severe infection, **look for signs** like: shivering, fever, or very cold, extreme pain or discomfort, clammy or sweaty skin, confusion or disorientation, short of breath, rapid breathing, and high heart rate.

## WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF **YOU THINK** YOU HAVE SEPSIS?

Seek medical treatment if you have signs of sepsis following an infection.



U.S. Department of  
Health and Human Services  
Centers for Disease  
Control and Prevention

[www.cdc.gov/sepsis](http://www.cdc.gov/sepsis)