

EMPOWERED PATIENT®

“Ten Things Patients Should Know” Series

SIGNS OF SEPSIS (SEVERE BLOODSTREAM INFECTION)

1. **CHILLS OR SHAKING:** The patient may develop pronounced chills and shaking, with or without a fever.
2. **RAPID RESPIRATORY RATE:** The patient has difficulty breathing and/or shallow, rapid breaths of more than 20 per minute.
3. **FAST HEART RATE:** A pulse at or above 90 beats per minute.
4. **HIGH OR LOW BODY TEMP:** The patient has a fever of 100.4 or greater or a body temperature below 96.8 degrees.
5. **RED SKIN RASH:** The patient may exhibit a rash that looks like individual red dots or a mottled red rash either all over the body or in an area of injury, recent surgery or trauma.
6. **REDUCED URINE OUTPUT:** The patient is making less urine and the urine may look darker in color or “concentrated.”
7. **KIDNEY FUNCTION TESTS:** Blood test shows elevated numbers for BUN and creatinine levels – a potential sign of kidney (renal) failure.
8. **LOW BLOOD PRESSURE:** The patient’s systolic blood pressure (top number) is below 90 and may be dropping.
9. **HYPOXIA OR LOW OXYGEN LEVELS:** The patient may look pale and have shallow breathing due to lack of oxygen in the bloodstream.
10. **ALTERED MENTAL STATE** including confusion, being disoriented or suddenly becoming dizzy.