

# What Is Sepsis?

Sepsis is the body's **overactive** and **extreme response** to an infection. It's **unpredictable** and can progress rapidly.

**Without prompt treatment, sepsis can lead to:**

tissue  
damage

organ  
failure

death



people get sepsis  
each year in the  
United States.



Americans die  
from sepsis  
each year.

## What Causes Sepsis?

Sepsis is triggered by an **infection**, though it may not be apparent to doctors or patients.

**Many types of microbes can cause sepsis:**



bacteria



fungi



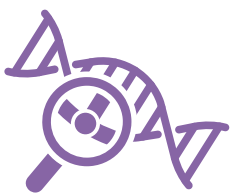
viruses

However,  
**bacteria**

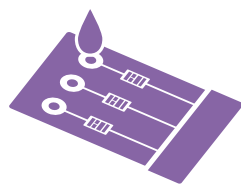


are the most  
common cause.

## What's the Future of Sepsis Research?



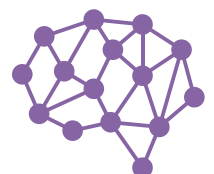
**Identify** biomarkers or other measurable health indicators of sepsis to optimize treatments.



**Develop** electronic tools and point-of-care devices for faster diagnosis.



**Study** how cellular and molecular processes lead to different types of sepsis—because it isn't a single condition.



**Analyze** large amounts of patient data to understand sepsis and the recovery process.

Read more about sepsis at  
<https://www.nigms.nih.gov/education/Pages/Sepsis.aspx>

Source:  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, 25 August 2023.



National Institute of  
General Medical Sciences