



SEPSIS and the Flu

We have all been more than inundated with information about this year's dangerous flu, but are you aware of all that can result from contracting this year's flu? Health experts aren't sure why this year is different than others, but it is now evident that it can be deadly and taking precautions could save a life. **Get your flu shot**-although the flu vaccination isn't likely to be as effective this year as in the past, it's still very important. The flu can weaken the immune system which leaves people of all ages more vulnerable to serious infections. One of complications of these infections is called **SEPSIS** and has been mentioned often during this year's flu epidemic. Severe sepsis strikes more than a million Americans every year and 15 to 30 percent of those people die. Here's what you need to know.

SEPSIS, what is it? According to the Mayo Clinic **Sepsis** is a potentially life-threatening complication of an infection. **Sepsis** occurs when chemicals released into the bloodstream to fight the infection trigger inflammatory responses throughout the body. This inflammation can trigger a cascade of changes that can damage multiple organ systems, causing them to fail.

If you know someone who has the flu, watch closely for any symptoms that may indicate that they are getting worse instead of better. If you see two or more of these symptoms, seek emergency medical help as soon as possible and very importantly, say, **"I am concerned about sepsis."** The symptoms include:

- S** – Shivering, fever, or feeling very cold
- E** – Extreme pain or general discomfort ("worst ever")
- P** – Pale or discolored skin
- S** – Sleepiness, difficulty rousing, confusion
- I** – "I feel like I might die" feeling
- S** – Short of breath

Severe sepsis strikes more than a million Americans every year, and **15 to 30** percent of those people will die. So, do your research, be aware, and take action when necessary, it could save a life.



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