What every parent needs to know about sepsis.

If your child is unwell with a bug or infection, is rapidly getting worse and you are worried that their illness seems different to any previous illness, it could be sepsis.

Sepsis is a rare but serious complication of an infection.

Use this leaflet to check your child's symptoms and find out what to do next.

THE UK SEPSIS TRUST

If your child has any of these symptoms you should take IMMEDIATE ACTION:

- Looks mottled, bluish or pale
- Is very lethargic or difficult to wake
- Feels abnormally cold to touch
- Is breathing very fast
- Has a rash that does not fade when you press it
- Has a fit or convulsion

GO TO A&E IMMEDIATELY OR CALL 999

Sepsis is rare in children, but if your child is unwell with a bug or infection, watch your child closely. These symptoms may be signs of sepsis:

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
- Can't say more than a few words at once (for older children who normally talk)
- Breathing that obviously 'pauses'

TOILET/NAPPIES

- Not had a wee or wet nappy for 12 hours

EATING & DRINKING

- New baby under one month old with no interest in feeding
- Not drinking for more than eight hours (when awake)
- Bile-stained (green), bloody or black vomit/sick

ACTIVITY & BODY

- Soft spot on a baby's head is bulging
- Eyes look 'sunken'
- 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
- Stiff neck, especially when trying to look up and down

If your child has any of these symptoms, is getting worse, or is sicker than you would expect (even if their temperature falls), trust your instincts and seek medical advice urgently from NHS 111.

For more information visit **nhs.uk/sepsis** or **sepsistrust.org**

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