

Amber symptoms

Contact your GP Practice, or call NHS 111 **today**, if your child has any of these symptoms, or if you feel that your child may be seriously ill, or if something concerns you and is not on these lists -

Just Ask: "Could it be sepsis?"

Temperature

- Raised temperature (more than 37.5°C) for five days or more
- Shivering or shaking

Breathing

- Nostrils change size with each breath
- Breathing that's noisy or sounds 'crackly'
- Cough that sounds like a seal barking

Skin, Lips and Tongue

- Unusually pale skin. On darker pigmented skin it may be easier to spot changes on the inside of the forearm or palms
- Dry mouth, lips and/or tongue

Eating and Drinking

- Baby who is not feeding (taking less than half their usual amount of milk)
- Eating much less than normal
- Has vomited (been sick) more than twice in the last 24 hours

Toilet / Nappies

- More than five watery poos (diarrhoea) in the last 24 hours in babies younger than one year of age
- Only one wee or wet nappy in eight hours

Activity and Body

- Less interested than usual in playing
- Difficult to wake up or unusually sleepy
- Swelling of a limb or joint
- Not using/putting weight on an arm, leg, hand or foot



Scan the QR code for more information, or visit abuhb.nhs.wales/sepsis or sepsistrust.org

Red symptoms

Many (but not all) children with these symptoms are seriously unwell.

Take immediate action.

Dial 999, or go to the Children's Emergency Assessment Unit at The Grange University Hospital.

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 (in newborns this may sound like a lamb bleating)
- Very fast breathing (more than one breath each second in babies)
- Can't say more than a few words at once (for older children who normally talk)
- Breathing that obviously 'pauses'

Skin, Lips and Tongue

- Skin is blue, mottled (purplish, red) or very pale. On darker pigmented skin it may be easier to spot changes on the inside of the forearm or palms
- Lips or tongue are bluish
- Eyes look 'sunken'
- Hands and feet are unusually cold to touch
- Rash that does not fade when pressed firmly (use a clear glass)

Toilet / Nappies

- Not had a wee or wet nappy for 12 hours

Eating and Drinking

- New baby under one month old with no interest in feeding
- Not drinking for more than eight hours (when awake)
- Extremely thirsty
- Unable to keep fluids down
- Persistently vomiting for more than 24 hours
- Bile-stained (green), bloody or black vomit/sick

Activity and Body

- Soft spot on a baby's head is bulging
- 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
- Hard to wake up, won't stay awake or doesn't seem to recognise you
- Stiff neck, especially when trying to look up and down



"Before falling ill in December 2022, Dylan was a healthy 9-year-old with a loving, endearing, and sensitive nature. He loved coding, speedcubing, and exploring the world with a curious mind. Tragically, many failures occurred when Dylan became unwell.

We want Dylan to be remembered for the unique person he was. Driven by a sense of justice, Dylan sought to right wrongs. I am now his voice, working to improve safety for others. It should not take the preventable death of any child so others can live, but we also want 'DYLAN' remembered as an acronym: Deterioration can be rapid, You know your child best, Learn the signs and symptoms of sepsis, Act fast, Never doubt your instincts." - Dylan's mum, Corinne Cope.

Content in this guide is shared from the UK Sepsis Trust.

Spotting the unwell child

What is sepsis?

Sepsis is an emergency medical condition where the immune system overreacts to an infection. It affects anyone and, without urgent treatment, can lead to organ failure and death.

However, sepsis is often treatable if caught quickly, so always ask: **'could it be sepsis?'**



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