

What is sepsis?

Sepsis is a medical condition that can result from any type of infection. Instead of fighting the infection, the immune system attacks its own organs and tissues, releasing chemicals that cause widespread inflammation. If not diagnosed early, sepsis can rapidly lead to tissue damage, organ failure and death. Any kind of infection can lead to sepsis: a small wound, a urinary tract infection, pneumonia, a dental abscess. When diagnosed early, sepsis can be treated with broad spectrum antibiotics and IV fluids.

The Stats on Sepsis

- Sepsis kills more than 258,000 Americans each year: more than breast cancer, prostate cancer and AIDS combined.
- There are more than a million cases of severe sepsis diagnosed each year in the United States.
- Hundreds of thousands of sepsis survivors are left with life-changing disabilities, including amputated limbs and cognitive damage.
- Sepsis is the number one cause of death in hospitals.
- Sepsis is the most expensive condition treated in U.S. hospitals, costing more than \$23 billion.
- 60% of American have never heard of sepsis.

Why are protocols important?

More than a million Americans develop sepsis each year. Approximately 30% die from the condition, many of them needlessly due to fatal delays in diagnosis in treatment. States and individual hospital systems that have enacted common-sense, evidence-based protocols have shown substantial reductions in mortality from sepsis:

- In New York State, where Governor Andrew Cuomo enacted Rory's Regulations in 2013, the Department of Health projects that between 5,000 and 8,000 lives will be saved each year.
- InterMountain Health in Utah reduced their sepsis mortality rate from 25% to 9% sepsis in 4 years.
- Northwell Health in New York reduced their sepsis mortality rate by 50%.
- Kaiser Permanente in California reduced mortality for patients admitted to hospitals with sepsis by more than 40%.

What do Rory's Regulations provide for?

Rory's Regulations were enacted in New York State in 2013. They require hospitals to adopt protocols that provide for:

- The screening and early recognition of patients with sepsis, severe sepsis and septic shock;
- A process to identify and document individuals appropriate for treatment through severe sepsis protocols; and
- Guidelines for treatment including for early delivery of antibiotics.

The protocols must be submitted to the state health department for approval and periodically updated; hospitals are required to train all relevant staff in the protocols. According the New York Department of Health, these measures are projected to save an estimated 5,000 to 8,000 lives in that state each year.

What is the Parents' Bill of Rights and why do we need it?

In addition to the protocols for early diagnosis and treatment of sepsis, a Parents' Bill of Rights was issued in New York to ensure quality and oversight of care provided to pediatric patients. Provisions are included to strengthen the ability of parents to play a meaningful and informed role in a child's healthcare decisions. The Bill of Rights requires hospitals to implement procedures to ensure that parents and primary care providers receive vital information about children's care, particularly by facilitating the communication of critical tests and lab results.