

Sepsis Train the Trainer Manual

Module H: Patients at Increased Risk for Sepsis

SLIDE 2—WHO IS AT RISK

SCRIPT

There are a lot of factors that seem to be important if we are looking to identify people who are at greater risk for developing sepsis. Many people in long term care settings fall into one or more of these categories. Let's talk a bit more about some of these factors.

SLIDE 3—FACTORS COMPLICATING RECOGNITION OF SEPSIS

SCRIPT

Unfortunately, many of the residents with infection who we may be assessing for sepsis have other conditions that may complicate the picture and resemble sepsis.

For example, patients who have baseline cognitive deficits are going to be difficult to assess for changes in cognition.

Some conditions like asthma or COPD may cause a person to have an increased respiratory rate even if no infection is present.

Many are taking medications for heart conditions or psychological disorders which can lower the blood pressure.

Some heart medications cause a rapid heart rate.

SLIDE 4—CANCER AS A SEPSIS RISK FACTOR

SCRIPT

Cancer is noteworthy as a predictive factor for death in sepsis survivors. Many cancer patients have compromised immune systems limiting their ability to resist infection. Overwhelming infection is part of the pathway leading to sepsis.

SLIDE 5—DIABETES AND SEPSIS MORTALITY

SCRIPT

Any chronic disease, however, can function to reduce the ability of the immune system to resist infection. Any chronic disease can limit the ability of the immune system to clear infections. This makes it more likely that infections will overwhelm the body leading to systemic disease.

SLIDE 6—WHY IS CHRONIC DISEASE A RISK FACTOR FOR SEPSIS

SCRIPT

Read Bullets

SLIDE 7—OLDER AGE OR IMMUNOSENESCENCE

SCRIPT

Read Bullets

SLIDE 8—IMUNOSENESCENCE AS A RISK FACTOR FOR SEPSIS

SCRIPT

- Our immune systems decay with age. This is called immune senescence. We have two types of immune functions. One takes care of infectious organisms that are inside cells and the other functions outside our cells. Both decline with age increasing our susceptibility to infection.

SLIDE 9—BEING A SURVIVOR OF SEPSIS IS A RISK FACTOR FOR SEPSIS

SCRIPT

- Having had sepsis makes it more likely that you will develop sepsis in the future.
- Sepsis seems to convey some long-term immunosuppression that lasts past the acute episode. So, they are more likely to get reinfected and also more likely to develop sepsis again.
- This is true of more than ½ sepsis survivors.
- There is also the issue of cognitive impairment in people who survive sepsis.
- Cognitive impairment is a risk factor in and of itself.