Sepsis is the body’s overactive and extreme response to an infection. It’s unpredictable and can progress rapidly. Without prompt treatment, sepsis can lead to:

- Tissue damage
- Organ failure
- Death

More than 1.7 million people get sepsis each year in the United States. Nearly 270,000 Americans die from sepsis each year.

What Causes Sepsis?

Sepsis is triggered by an infection, though it may not be apparent to doctors or patients. Many types of microbes can cause sepsis:

- Bacteria
- Fungi
- Viruses

However, bacteria are the most common cause.

What’s the Future of Sepsis Research?

Identify biomarkers or other measurable health indicators of sepsis to optimize treatments.

Develop electronic tools and point-of-care devices for faster diagnosis.

Study how cellular and molecular processes lead to different types of sepsis—because it isn’t a single condition.

Analyze large amounts of patient data to understand sepsis and the recovery process.


Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Emerging and Zoonotic Infectious Diseases, Division of Healthcare Quality Promotion, accessed September 2019.