

Mayo Clinic Medical Edge

N31 Surviving Sepsis

Intro: Our bodies are very good at fighting infections. The immune system reacts and attacks the bacteria and viruses that make us sick. But sometimes the immune reaction is so strong that it damages the body too. This is called a septic reaction, or sepsis. And the mortality rate associated with it can be high. Doctors at Mayo Clinic want to change that. They've organized a sepsis response team in the intensive care unit. Their goal: to stop sepsis and save lives.

Video

Audio

TRT 2:10 Voice of Vivien Williams	The medical team in this Intensive Care Unit at Mayo Clinic is on high alert 24/7, watching for signs of sepsis.
Kannan Ramar, MBBS, M.D. Mayo Clinic Pulmonary & Critical Care Medicine	"Sepsis is a potentially life-threatening complication related to an infection."
Voice of Vivien Williams	Dr. Kannan Ramar says every year, close to three-quarters of a million people in the U.S. develop a septic reaction. It happens when an infection prompts the immune system to kick into overdrive, causing problems such as kidney failure, liver failure, severe drops in blood pressure and even death.
Kannan Ramar, MBBS, M.D Mayo Clinic	"It becomes very important that this is recognized early."
Voice of Vivien Williams	That's because the death rate can be very high. Up to 75% for people who develop sepsis at home and up to 25% for those who get it in the hospital.
Kannan Ramar, MBBS, M.D. Mayo Clinic	"It's similar to treating a heart attack or a stroke, where you have a very short window within which you take the necessary steps to prevent significant damage from happening down the road."
Voice of Vivien Williams	That window is 6 hours. Dr. Ramar's team uses what are called sepsis sniffers; technology that monitors things like fever, heart rate and blood pressure,

	and alerts the medical team when a patient's in danger. If blood tests confirm that's true, the Septic Response Team launches into action.
	"We have a patient in room 31."
Kannan Ramar, MBBS, M.D. Mayo Clinic	"It's a big multidisciplinary approach to do this, and so all members of the ICU team are actively involved to get this aggressive resuscitation going and to get all the things done within that six-hour window period."
	"Let's get the central line ready."
Kannan Ramar, MSSB., M.D. Mayo Clinic	"We follow what we call the Surviving Sepsis Resuscitation Guidelines."
Voice of Vivien Williams	Methods of best practice developed by the Society of Critical Care Medicine to ensure the best possible treatment for patients.
Kannan Ramar, MBBS, M.D.	"If the necessary things are done, then the mortality drops down dramatically."
Voice of Vivien Williams	Sniffing out sepsis and saving lives. For Mayo Clinic News Network, I'm Vivien Williams.

Anchor tag:

By following the best practice guidelines, Dr. Ramar says the Sepsis response team has made Mayo Clinic's Medical ICU a leader in successful sepsis treatment.

Who's at risk for developing sepsis? Dr. Ramar says it can happen to anybody, but people whose immune systems are compromised and those with diseases such as diabetes are at increased risk.

He also says, signs of infection you should take seriously include persistent fever, nausea, vomiting, chills, confusion and worsening condition. If you experience these things, see your health care provider or seek emergency medical care.

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