

### Winning the Fight Against Sepsis: What Every Nurse Should Know

Melissa Moye

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Sepsis occurs when an invading organism is introduced into the bloodstream and causes an overwhelming reaction from the immune system. It can be caused by many different organisms such as bacteria, fungi, viruses, or parasites. There are certain obvious signs and symptoms of sepsis; the Surviving Sepsis Campaign has outlined bundle therapies that need to be initiated when these signs and symptoms have been identified.

If left untreated, sepsis can initiate a cascade of events that may result in septic shock and death. It begins with an inflammatory reaction to bacterial or other toxins, altered blood clotting, and, finally, organ death as the immune system is pushed into overdrive. Survival depends on immediate and accurate treatment.

In 2002, the European Society of Critical Care Medicine and the Society of Critical Care Medicine (SCCM) conducted an international survey of physicians' views of sepsis. The results verified that sepsis is a challenging and frustrating syndrome that is often misattributed to other conditions and that physicians were eager to have a breakthrough in the treatment regime of this syndrome. Many physicians also agreed that a common definition for sepsis in the medical community would be a beneficial step in the right direction.

The Surviving Sepsis Campaign was spearheaded by the ESICM (European Society of Intensive Care Medicine), the ISF (International Sepsis Forum), and the SCCM with a goal of improving the diagnosis, survival, and management of patients with sepsis.

This book will review the history of sepsis as it dates back into ancient years, discuss the physical symptoms and clinical signs to be alert for, and list the treatment as outlined by the Surviving Sepsis Campaign. The goal is to inform nurses and family members of the sepsis process, common symptoms, and the importance of beginning the sepsis bundle therapies to improve patient outcomes.



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