

SEPSIS IN KENTUCKY

Sepsis is the body’s overwhelming and life-threatening response to infection which can lead to tissue damage, organ failure and death. In the U.S. alone, sepsis affects **1.7 million people** and takes **350,000 lives every year.** However, as many as 80% of sepsis deaths could be prevented with rapid diagnosis and treatment. Costs to treat sepsis total **\$62 billion annually in the U.S.**¹

Sepsis happens when an infection you already have – in your skin, lungs, urinary tract, or somewhere else – triggers a chain reaction throughout your body. Without timely treatment, sepsis can rapidly lead to tissue damage, organ failure and death. It’s important to look for a combination of the warning signs of sepsis. Spotting these symptoms early could prevent the body from developing septic shock and could save a life. Symptoms of sepsis include fever, difficulty breathing, low blood pressure, fast heart rate and mental confusion. Other symptoms may include chills, dizziness, low body temperature, shivering, delirium, organ dysfunction and skin discoloration. Screening patients for sepsis immediately when the patient presents to the emergency department (ED) allows providers to identify and begin treatment immediately.

All Kentucky hospitals are currently screening patients for sepsis at time of triage. Kentucky started this practice in 2022 and hospitals now successfully screen at least 92% of patients at time of triage in the ED.

SEPSIS IN KENTUCKY HOSPITALS:

— 2017 Total Sepsis Inpatient Discharges =	31,950	.....	Total Charges	\$1,471,677,945
— 2018 Total Sepsis Inpatient Discharges =	34,212	.....	Total Charges	\$1,632,382,667
— 2019 Total Sepsis Inpatient Discharges =	35,429	.....	Total Charges	\$1,760,809,254
— 2020 Total Sepsis Inpatient Discharges =	36,022	.....	Total Charges	\$1,091,421,894
— 2021 Total Sepsis Inpatient Discharges =	35,511	.....	Total Charges	\$2,425,208,370
— 2022 Total Sepsis Inpatient Discharges =	35,372	.....	Total Charges	\$2,326,124,175

Sepsis Unspecified Organism Primary diagnosis ranks the highest in the number of inpatient discharges and first in total charges.

NUMBER OF 2022 INPATIENT DAYS FOR SEPSIS PATIENTS:

Average Sepsis Inpatient Length of Stay	5.97 days
Average Inpatient length of Stay	6.95 days
Total Number of Days	245,911

2022 RACE OF SEPSIS PATIENTS:

Caucasian	91.2%
African American	7.2%
Other Races.....	0.8%

2022 PAYER DISTRIBUTION:

Commercial	5,011 (14.2%)
Medicare	22,042 (62.3%)
Other	938 (2.7%)
Medicaid	6,948 (19.6%) (including Medicaid Managed Care)
Self Pay/Charity	433 (1.2%)

2022 GENDER OF SEPSIS PATIENTS:

Women.....	18,497 (52.3%)
Men	16,873 (47.7%)

2022 AGE RANGE OF SEPSIS PATIENTS:

Age 0-5 142	Age 18-24 463	Age 35-44 2,396	Age 55-64 6,828	Age 75-84 7,435
Age 6-17 103	Age 25-34 1,435	Age 45-54 3,776	Age 65-74 9,042	Age 85 + 3,752

Data Source: KHA InfoSuite

While sepsis predominantly affects older adults, 57% age 65 +, it also affects younger adults and children. Sepsis can have devastating consequences for children. Each year, approximately **75,000 children** develop sepsis in the United States alone. More children die of sepsis than pediatric cancer according to Sepsis Alliance. **That's more than 205 children per day.**

According to CDC², **in 2021 Kentucky ranked as the fourth highest state** for Septicemia Mortality at an age adjusted death rate of 16.9 (the number of deaths per 100,000 total population) with a **total of 923 deaths.**



It is time to raise awareness of sepsis and the urgent need to seek treatment when symptoms are recognized. Early detection is the best hope for survival and limitation of disabilities when sepsis is present.

The Sepsis Kentucky Consortium is working with Kentucky hospitals statewide to reduce the morbidity and mortality caused by sepsis. The consortium focuses on improving sepsis outcomes through collaborative learning to achieve appropriate, timely and reliable implementation of evidence-based interventions.

In early 2020, the Kentucky State Senate unanimously passed Dayo's Resolution, named after a two-time sepsis survivor. This Resolution recognizes and supports Kentucky Hospital Association's creation of the statewide Sepsis Consortium with the goal of reducing the incidence of and harm from sepsis through education and quality improvement for Kentucky hospitals and their communities. All Kentucky hospitals have signed a letter of commitment to participate in the program. Teams at each hospital are now working to create and improve processes to quickly screen, identify and treat sepsis.

For more information about the **Sepsis Kentucky Consortium** and **KHA Data Center**, contact:

Sepsis Kentucky Consortium

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¹ Sepsis Alliance. Sepsis Fact Sheet. 2023. <https://www.sepsis.org/education/resources/fact-sheets/>

² CDC/National Center for Health Statistics. https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/pressroom/sosmap/septicemia_mortality/septicemia.htm

