AFT Nurses and Health Professionals

KNOW SEPSIS
The Mayo Clinic provides the following criteria to both identify and differentiate among the three levels of sepsis:

**Sepsis**
To be diagnosed with sepsis, a patient must exhibit at least two of the following symptoms:

- Body temperature above 101 F (38.3 C) or below 96.8 F (36 C)
- Heart rate higher than 90 beats a minute
- Respiratory rate higher than 20 breaths a minute
- Probable or confirmed infection

**Severe Sepsis**
The diagnosis will be upgraded to severe sepsis if the patient also exhibits at least one of the following signs and symptoms, which indicate an organ may be failing:

- Significantly decreased urine output
- Abrupt change in mental status
- Decrease in platelet count
- Difficulty breathing
- Abnormal heart pumping function
- Abdominal pain

**Septic Shock**
To be diagnosed with septic shock, the patient must have the signs and symptoms of severe sepsis—plus extremely low blood pressure that doesn’t adequately respond to simple fluid replacement.