

The UK Sepsis Trust aims to save lives and improve outcomes for survivors of sepsis. Their guide for recognising sepsis is below;

SEPSIS IN ADULTS IS A SERIOUS CONDITION

that can initially look like flu, gastroenteritis or a chest infection. Sepsis affects 150,000 people every year in the UK.

Seek medical help urgently if you develop any or one of the following:

- S**lurred speech or confusion
- E**xtrême shivering or muscle pain
- P**assing no urine (in a day)
- S**evere breathlessness
- I**t feels like you're going to die
- S**kin mottled or discoloured

JUST ASK
"COULD IT BE SEPSIS?"
IT'S A SIMPLE QUESTION, BUT IT COULD SAVE A LIFE.

The UK Sepsis Trust registered charity number (England & Wales) 1158943

<http://sepsistrust.org/>

Cheryl was otherwise fit and well when she first developed her symptoms. Sepsis is indiscriminate and can harm anyone. It is not clear why sepsis happens but it is known that for each hour without treatment in patients with septic shock, survival rates fall by 8%.

It is important to identify symptoms early and seek medical attention as soon as possible if you are concerned that you may have sepsis.

Photograph of Cheryl reproduced with kind permission from UK Sepsis Trust

Patient advice and liaison service (PALS)

If you have a compliment, complaint or concern please contact our PALS team on 020 7288 5551 or

whh-tr.whitthealthPALS@nhs.net

If you need a large print, audio or translated copy of this leaflet please contact us on 020 7288 3182. We will try our best to meet your needs.

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**JUST ASK:
Could it be SEPSIS?**



Cheryl's Story



"Why? This is the question I ask myself every day. I never imagined spending my life without Cheryl. She was more than my wife, she was my best friend. I miss her smile, her laugh, her touch. I have not come to terms with her sudden death and I don't think I ever will. However what I can do for Cheryl is to turn the Why into How? How can I stop this happening to anyone else? It means so much to me that Cheryl's story can be used to raise awareness of Sepsis, anything I can do to prevent anyone having to resign themselves to never seeing the person they love again is the right thing to do. I am still taking every day at a time, remembering that grief is just love with nowhere to go and trying to gain strength from knowing that Cheryl's story will make a positive difference to people's lives."

Cheryl and her husband were both battling what they thought was a bad bout of "flu" for around two weeks. She had a headache; aching limbs; a sore throat, runny nose and she was coughing. She was laid up in bed and could not walk the dog. At night, Cheryl would develop a fever.

Three days before she was admitted to hospital, Cheryl noticed a rash of red rings on her skin and called 111.

She told the call advisor that she felt 'as poorly as she had ever felt in her life.' Cheryl was advised to attend a local walk-in centre within six hours.

Still under the impression that she had the flu, Cheryl too ill to leave the house did not get the medical attention she needed.

Cheryl continued to struggle with a fever, headaches and aching legs. She was restless at night and could not get comfortable.

On the morning of 27th February 2016, Cheryl was too weak to walk and was using the walls for support. Her husband drove her to hospital, and had to help her walk from the car to A&E.

Cheryl was admitted to hospital with a **sepsis diagnosis**. She passed away in the early hours of 28th February 2016.

What is sepsis?

Sepsis is when the body's response to infection injures its own tissues and organs. If left untreated sepsis can lead to shock, multi-organ failure and death.

Am I at risk of sepsis?

Sepsis touches around 150,000 people every year in the UK. It can affect anyone. Sepsis is more common if:

- If you are very old, very young or have chronic medical problems
- If you have had recent surgery
- If you are pregnant
- If you have diabetes
- If you have immune system problems
- If you have severe unhealed, recent burns
- If you drink alcohol excessively
- If you inject recreational drugs
- If you have an indwelling line or catheter
- If you take certain medications, such as steroids

How do I know it is sepsis?

The symptoms of sepsis can be very vague. You may feel generally unwell, with diarrhoea, tiredness, sickness and/or stomach pains. You may get worse very quickly.