



BRITISHROWING

Safety Alert - Sepsis

There was recently an incident in which a sculler suffered quite a few blisters on her hands. The next day her hand was sore and she began to feel unwell and noticed red blotchy streaks going up her arm.

Within 30 minutes she had seen her GP, by this time the red streaks had reached her armpit. She was stabilised in the local hospital and was transferred to a major hospital where she spent the next eight days in the acute unit being treated for sepsis.

Sepsis is a life-threatening reaction to an infection. It happens when your immune system overreacts and starts to damage your body's own tissues and organs. You cannot catch sepsis from another person. Sepsis is sometimes called septicaemia or blood poisoning.

Sepsis can be hard to spot; there are lots of possible symptoms that can be vague. They resemble those of other conditions, including flu or a chest infection. The NHS website says:-

Call 999 or go to A&E if an adult or older child has any of these symptoms of sepsis:

- acting confused, slurred speech or not making sense,
- blue, pale or blotchy skin, lips or tongue,
- a rash that does not fade when you roll a glass over it, the same as [meningitis](#),
- difficulty breathing, breathlessness or breathing very fast.

They may not have all these symptoms.

Call 111 if you, your child or someone you look after:

- feels very unwell or like there's something seriously wrong,
- has not had a pee all day (adults and older children) or in the last 12 hours (babies and young children),
- keeps vomiting and cannot keep any food or milk down (babies and young children),
- has swelling, redness or pain around a cut or wound,
- has a very high or low temperature, feels hot or cold to the touch, or is shivering.

The sculler reported: "I have had a week of having non-epileptic fits and am left very weak but much better. I can get up and do a bit but then must rest, but at least I am here because up to 30% of people don't make it. If I had left it even a couple of hours more my prospects would have been very grim indeed."

Returning to rowing after such a long time away can be like starting again. We all remember the blisters we had when we first started rowing. Wounds and blisters should be kept clean and, where possible, covered with a suitable dressing. Please be kind to yourself and take extra care but remember that this is a condition to be treated seriously at all times.

Sepsis is a life-threatening condition and any delay in treatment can make recovery more problematic. Please be aware of the signs and symptoms and seek medical advice immediately if you, or someone else, has them.

Act Fast, it could save your Life.

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